One Knight in Product - E145 - Shaun Smith-Taylor

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SPEAKERS

Shaun Smith-Taylor, Jason Knight

Jason Knight 00:00

Hello and welcome to the show and an episode where after a couple of weeks pretending to get on with salespeople, we're back amongst our own and talking about the future of Product Management recruitment. Speaking of Product Management recruitment, this episode is sponsored by me. I'm currently looking into consulting and would love to help you with any of your product management, product leadership or product team problems. You can check out one night consulting.com If you want to find out more book a no commitment intro call. Make sure you share with your friends, colleagues and even your enemies. That's one night consulting.com Hundreds night with a cane. But anyway, enough about me if you want to find out more about whether the future of recruitment is in the metaverse get those VR goggles strapped on your head and come with us on what's important.

Jason Knight 00:53

So my guest tonight is Shawn Smith Taylor. Sean's a self described sports obsessed product geek and barbecue enthusiasts, which leaves open the exciting possibility of being resurrected my product manager barbecue question, you can press the red button for that premium content. Sean once worked, doing data entry for a bank and was so horrified at the inefficient processes and multiple stakeholders who decided to go all in with AI and even God forbid, the metaverse. He's now here to save us from the horrors of recruitment with my product path, which I'm sure you can find their office on a second life island near you. Hi, Sean, how are you tonight?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 01:25

I'm really good. And thanks for having me.

Jason Knight 01:27

No problem. It's good to have you here. But before we get too chummy, I want to find out a bit about yourself. So you are the co founder of my product path. What problem does my product path? So for me, specifically?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 01:41

Quite a few. Oh, good. So I think if you if you're there, yeah. So we'll start with we'll start with a couple first. So my product clouds specialises in helping by the candidates. And then also companies, right. So as a candidate, we've got a really slick user interface that the candidate can go from one end of the recruitment process, ie applying for a role to going all the way through to signing the contract. And being on boarded with that institution. For a company, it's a little bit different. So we provide a SAS interface to the company, they can view they can track, they can progress their applications. And then they can also combine it with sourcing. So my career path is a technology company, but it's also a recruitment services company so we can find the talent for you. And then we can provide you with technology that allows you to go through the process and unboard them in a way that doesn't make the candidate want to, you know, do very bad things to themselves, because it takes far too long. And it's horrible. Yeah. So yeah, in a nutshell, that's what we do.

Jason Knight 02:41

So that's interesting. The services product mix. So what would you say the percentage balance there is between the two things? Like, are you very heavy on the services, or there's a lot of itself serving that services is kind of a bit of a premium offering?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 02:53

I think it's evolving. So we've got three strategic customers that are very much on the service element. And then we've got a lot of, you know, well, not a lot, but we're in now increasing them number of plug and play customers. So we're onboarding about one a month in terms of plug and play, because when he started two months ago, and we've got three very strategic customers that are massive, yeah, that require the more premium service,

Jason Knight 03:17

the white gloves on? Exactly. But why should people use my product path and not say one of the other ways that they can go and get a job like, for example, LinkedIn, or auto, all these other companies that are out there that can probably, in some ways, legitimately and in some ways, non legitimately claim to do much the same stuff that you just said?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 03:37

Yeah, well, I think the depends on the motivations, of course. But I think, you know, the reason that my product factor was started was that I as a, somebody that hired people, was just really

that my product factor was started was that I as a, somebody that hired people, was just really lost with what I had at my disposal to do it, right, because you either need an internal function, that, let's be honest, the internal HR teams, whilst we love them dearly, are generally a function that don't really add, you know, a huge amount of value on top of carrying out instructions or what you tell them to do when they're the ones that I've worked with anyway. Yeah, I think so you've got that element, which we can help with, I think the other area is also around technology. So the what we saw a gap in the market was that there was nobody specialising in product management. And so my product path, the name gives it away, right? So we provide a user interface for candidates and customers to be on boarded through a product centric system. So all of the cultural side of the platform, all of the assessment side of the platform is based on specialist product management knowledge of somebody that has actually gone through the process themselves, both from a candidate and a hiring perspective. With LinkedIn, you don't get that. Yep. So I think that's, that's, that's probably one of the first differences. But I think the the other difference is we do an end to end journey, right. So you know, as a candidate, you can have both the human and the nonhuman to to have, you know, product specialists. from a company perspective, you have the same if you go to an indeed or LinkedIn or a storm, you're going to have somebody that is effectively a salesperson that's read a couple of bucks, right and might not get the buzz words that might try and woo you. But if you're any good at product, you'll see through it straightaway, and you've still got a pretty manual system where you're reviewing PDFs, emails, and it's not very intuitive, or it's not very, you know, I wouldn't want to use it. The reason we started my product path is I got really angry with the recruiters I was using. I've been them all. And I took a punt, actually, on a partnership with ash, who's my co founder. And the way he approached me was to do a podcast, right? He wanted to do a podcast now. He's a complete I love him dearly, simply media when it comes to technology. So we launched this podcast, you'll see brilliant, right? But this is this was epic. And the guy forgot to record it properly. So we had literally like 20 minutes of gold, which there was no context for. So it's nearly as bad as me for getting my headphones today, right? But it's not quite as bad. So sorry, long winded answer to what you asked.

Jason Knight 06:09

Now, that makes a lot of sense. And just for full disclosure, there's been at least two podcast episodes that I've released out of the 140 odd that I've done so far, that I've had to completely re record my half of the conversation because it came out, either. But actually not there's no either it was basically just unusable from, like the wrong microphone. And I'm never gonna say which ones they are. And hopefully people will listen to them all and try to guess but I completely feel your pain. I've also been interviewed on the radio before and not had the microphone turned on as well. So it's, there's got to be a solution to that. Like, there's got to be some kind of product out there that can help us with this sort of thing.

Shaun Smith-Taylor 06:43

Where if there's not maybe that's the joint venture, right for some time in the future.

Jason Knight 06:47

There you go. You saw her first Dragon's Den slash Shark Tank next. But you've touched on it already around being around product people and being a specialist for that area and that

industry or that, I guess that function? Is it just product people? Or do you cover a wider selection that you had developers and designers and maybe other people in and around product management and around product companies? Or do you really niche down on the product people themselves? The product managers?

S   Shaun Smith-Taylor 07:14

Yeah, so at the moment, it is just my product path. We have done rolls, decide of it. So we've done delivery managers, we've done software engineers, and we recently actually spun out a mortgage broker, which is this is completely different, right. But we mortgage broker side, which is called my mortgage path, right? Because it's pretty good. It makes sense. And the reason for that is the product market fit was absolutely outrageous, like the signup process was, you know, it was on bulk people recruiting like 4050 at a time. And it was, it was horrible. It was so painful. It was outrageous. So we've we've actually got decent market share within that market already. And what it's leading us to do now is we'll be rebranding in the next couple of months to my career path, which will have basically product verticals beneath them, which will be a product, it will be mortgages, it will be software, etc, etc, right. And if anybody has any need for a specific product vertical, then drop us a note. And we can we can have a thought about fast tracking it. But I think that's going to be fast. But underneath all of it is the technology. Right? So we have an ATS system. Yeah, and we have a product pipeline system. And those two can be used, you know, they've been they've been made by people that are just on product for a start, but they can actually be used on any of the verticals. But we started with product because it's what we knew very, very well. And it's also an area that is fundamentally understaffed.

J   Jason Knight 08:36

Yeah, that makes sense. But I was gonna ask, you know, you're building something for product people. And of course, I'm one of those and I know how product people think and or at least I think I do, I'm sure you do or think you do, too. But I guess the question is, when you're building stuff for product, people don't they know all the secrets that they can use to basically get you to build all their feature requests, ASAP? For you quite good at just finding those off?

S   Shaun Smith-Taylor 09:01

I think there's two things. So I think the user feedback is amazing. So as we were going through the betas, we had a group of 15 people that we were testing with, and that's the great thing about product people is they're always gonna give you your opinion, right? Whether you take that opinion, or you don't, you're gonna get it from good people anyway. Yep. So what we have done in terms of the second thing you said is sure, you know, some of the strategic customers, we went for the product. I'm never ever going to do that, because I've felt the pain historically, when that's happened. But we do develop everything on a module microservice level. So we might develop and we are developing actually different modules that may only be used by one or two strategic customers, but that's fine because the return on investment is okay, but it is plug and play. So again, I think the reality of the situation is you know, there is no recruitment company in the world today that offers the ability to source, find quality candidates and then put them through a piece of technology that's automated and actually, you want to use so from that perspective, the plug In plays, okay. I think as we scale as we go into different sectors, it's

going to be interesting how the technology and the architecture sets, we've got a really good development team at the moment, but they're going to have their work their hands full, over probably the next two to five years.

Jason Knight 10:14

Well, speaking of hands full, I also noticed there's a mentoring section on the website and was going to ask you about scope creep, because that feels like another thing that you've got going on, which maybe isn't part of your core mission, although obviously, really valuable and something that I massively support. So is that like a separate part of the platform? Or just a service offering? Or like, how does that work?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 10:33

So at the moment, that's off system, so it's not part for your for that exact point of what you said, the technology scope creep, I get excited by things very, very quickly. Right. So I have to stop myself trying to build different components all the time. Yeah. Ultimately, though, when we've got the, when we've got the user level? Well, I think it's a critical mass than actually making it into a marketplace that has mentorship has training, why really liked the wording again, this manually today. But if somebody doesn't get the the pm role, for example, they're going for, then again, you know, positioning them to understand why, you know, the communication element isn't great for recruitment companies, right? You very rarely negotiate right? When you don't actually get a role. So actually providing a mechanism that actually will inform them, you know, how can they benchmark to that role in future and provide actually a marketplace that does that is really important to me. And that will be an area of focus going forward. And that will include the mentoring side, but at the moment, it's off system, because we need to take advantage of the use case we currently have. And if we, we don't have unlimited resources, so we can't get for that at the moment.

Jason Knight 11:39

Now, that makes a lot of sense, again, very interested in that as a concept. So obviously, keep an eye on that. But I don't think it's controversial to say, and something that I've chatted about on this podcast, with a few different guests in the past that put up job specs can be a real car crash bike, they can be confusing, they can be almost like a laundry list of just random capabilities or random tasks that they expect these people to do. Half the time they don't like they just stuck together from a bunch of different job specs and kind of cobbled together at the last minute. Now, I'm assuming that the job specs that come into your system, some of them are like that, because they're being submitted by the same companies. Right? So is that something that you feel that you can help us fix? Or is that just a fact of life? And we're just always gonna have to put up with it?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 12:32

I think it's, I think there's two parts to that. So you strategic customers, at the moment, we are effectively doing some of their job specs for them. Because, yeah, they think these can be too great. Right. But that some of them to your point are absolutely terrible, and actually confuse

great. Right. But that some of them to your point are absolutely terrible, and actually confuse applicants, and you actually get the wrong applicants going for the roles. So yeah, I think using our experience, using the feedback from other customers, we can add a huge amount of value in terms of coaching key customers on what they need to do to change their job specs. 50% of our customers at the moment will come to us for advice, we're redoing a lot of them. I think for plug and play, it's gonna be more difficult as we scale. So I think what we are looking at at the moment is we have the ability today and customers do I added jobs back onto our system. And that's then obviously flicked out in terms of the advert into into the wider echelons of the recruitment space. But in future, having a structure that we know that works that focuses on you know, what did the company what does the company actually do? First, what's its cultural values? I think that's often massively overlooked, and you get the wrong people. Yeah, you might get some of this capable, but they will be a bad apple, for example, we've seen that so so actually, that's something interesting we, we really, really double down on a cultural assessment of ethnic any candidate. So we actually, as part of our commercials, we offer a 12 month, effectively money back guarantee, we call it something different in the sales collateral, I come in what we call it, but actually usually that's like 90 days tops, but we're so confident from a cultural perspective, we'll get that right and competencies easy. So from that perspective, that's something we can do. And then also why a lot of our job specs are outcome based, rather than you will deliver X, which is effectively Yeah, I mean, we can go on to the POS EPM discussion, but that's probably a different topic. So I think two things a we do it and it's an off system process today. But we bet 50% of our customers that we for free effectively help with because they'll get it easy we our jobs easier right to source the candidate has done correctly. But we need to actually put that into the system to allow only a certain format to be entered with a specific values because that will make the plug and play more scalable and future.

Jason Knight 14:50

Now that's fair enough, but what about the other way around? Then of course then you've also got the CVS coming through as well. Now I've hired product managers before and continue to do so to this day and of course you You get a bunch of CVS do, some of them are really good. Some of them are really bad. What are some of the ways that you can help fix the bad I did offer the similar sorts of services then to try and help spruce up people's CVS or that I need to go to a CV doctor first and then submit whatever they come back with you?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 15:17

Well, fortunately, I've been to many CV doctors in my time, I've had some absolute the horrors of CVS over the last 20 years. So what will we do two things. So if we're actively going to pay anybody forward, as a tip for a role, then their CV has to be up to a specific standard, we've got eight different, it's like a checklist, right? You know, have you done this? Have you done this? Have you done this? And maybe that's something we can share afterwards? Because it would be useful for most people, I think. Yep. So there's that for the shortlisted candidates, for the ones that are just on the database. And they do don't get shortlisted, then we've talked about communication earlier, this is something we need to step up, quite frankly. And we need to make sure everybody has visibility to them. So we'll be at some point sending a link grant that allows ZODB to kind of improve the quality of their CV.

Jason Knight 16:07

But what are some of the big mistakes that you've seen or that you're aware of that people do make on their CVs? Like, obviously, you got the obvious ones is 25 pages long CVS or things that are just a big wall of text, or too many graphics all over them? So you can barely read them? But like, Are there any kind of more content based mistakes that you think are really worth calling out? And might help people to actually get hired quicker? Or is it so variable that you couldn't possibly comment?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 16:33

I think, no, I can definitely comment. But I think it is hugely variable. So you get lots of people that will focus on you know, these are my key achievements, and then just lists like 10 to 20. key achievements at the start of little tip takes up the first page, and you're like, Okay, well done. But, you know, who did you do that for? What was the problem that you actually fixed? And I don't think a lot of CVs are based on outcomes. We talk about outcomes a lot in product, right? Yeah, it's very common. I don't think CVs are really written in that way. And I think it really simple. We had one the last week. That was it looked as if it had been done on a typewriter. So we spoke to the candidate and said, you know, hey, can you just tell us why you do this from a formatting perspective? And he just said, Oh, I thought it looked cool. So I think there's like so many things that Yeah, from a presentation perspective, you know, the images, I've seen one that had like, the person's photo going four different places on the same page. Like it's nonsense. So I think there's, there's some key items, but I think making it more outcome based. Definitely. And just sticking to the basics, you know, what is a good introduction to you as a product person to very high level key skills, and then go through your actual credentials? Who do you work for? What have you delivered? What problem have you solved? I think that's really the key thing and make it two pages Max.

Jason Knight 17:49

Yeah, I was gonna say about maximum length, but you just beat me to it. So two pages Max, what would you do? If you found one with three? Would you reject it instantly? Or?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 17:58

I'm not I'm not that I'm not that much of an agar. So we might be alright, if you get into four or five years? Because nobody reads it? Well, I don't anyway, like you might get a CV, that's four or five pages. I won't read it, you're not going to do.

Jason Knight 18:11

Now, that's fair enough. And you know, as poor recruiting managers have got our own time to think about as well. But this then leads nicely into another topic around the dreaded ATS systems that you spoke about as well that you have won yourself. And it's something that you get a lot of negative stories about, certainly on social media around like, oh, I don't know, the ATS has automatically kicked me out. And it's biassed against me and didn't even look at my

CV and everything's just all being hired by AI now and nothing's fair. And I didn't get the job because of x y. Like, obviously, that isn't impossible. But do you think that your ATS or ATS is in general, get kind of unfair heat around some of this? Or do you think that it's a fair paranoia to have?

S **Shaun Smith-Taylor** 19:02

I think it's it is fair. And I think it's the use of technology. So everybody talks about AI. But you know, from an ML perspective, specifically, ATS is aren't using unsupervised machine learning. And they're not if anybody says they are they're lying or if they if they do then show me right. Prove to me using unsupervised gives you not so and let's park unsupervised for a second, I think one of the main problems is with semi supervised, which is super important. I think there's lots of value to it. You are still reliant on labels and labels needs to be programmed by people that actually understand what they're doing. So having a product lead recruitment agency with an ATS is quite helpful. I think, you know, from our perspective, that's what we will be investing a lot of time in. I think the unsupervised part is something I'm really interested in. You know, I've had two years of experience AI company recently and it really opened my eyes you know, unsupervised is the absolute magic. But, you know, going back to I mean, that takes away the human bias right straight away, because it's unsupervised. As long as again, the red flags are programmed correctly upfront. But actually, you won't remove the human bias, we're not saying that human bias, you won't remove the human touch from the process, because at some point in the candidate journey, they're going to, they might want to speak to a human right. So you need to have the ability to contact your recruiter, you know, whoever it is your mentor as you go through the platform. And also the same, you know, from a customer perspective, we've got a lot of Generation X and Zed. Basically, they use it from a customer perspective. And they don't want to talk to me in the team, they've got no interest, right? Give them a slick user interface, they'll make their decisions and high five. Now there might be a stage where actually at the end, they're like, actually, I'm not really sure about this. Let me pick up the phone to Sean or let me pick up the phone to Ashe. And as long as you've given them the ability to do that, you're okay. Yeah, I think human bias can be removed from the process really easily. I think one of the key areas that is really not looked at a lot is subjectivity of the people using the ATS. And I think that's so when it's not the ATS has kicked it out. It's whoever's pulling the strings underneath is kicking out. So one thing we we actually put into our platform really quickly was the ability for the, for the candidate to mask their personal identity information. Yep. So then you are basically on skills rather than, you know, background or anything like that. So I think that's something really, really important. Our customers really liked that, as well. And of course, you need to know the identity at some point when you go into the as in like sending out a contract, that it shouldn't make any difference to you doing a review of the competency of the person in the first place.

Jason Knight 21:48

Yeah, I'm a big fan of anonymized or the adapted CVS to some extent, I mean, again, you're right, there's going to be a point where you're going to be speaking to that person, and you're going to be able to get to see a lot about at least their physical and cultural characteristics, I guess, although obviously, there could still be other stuff that you didn't get from, like background. But I think ultimately, if we accept that there's a level of bias within everyone, which of course there is, then it's not an attack on the recruiting manager, the hiring manager

to say, well, we want to remove bias from the equation, because everyone has biases. And I think it's absolutely fair to say that we should do what we can to minimise that. But I guess, on the flip side, with AI, there's always a fuzziness. You know, I've worked in machine learning AI companies in the past and know full well that there's a margin of error in this stuff. Now, if there's a margin of error when you have no calculating trends from social media that can help with brand campaigns for companies like that's one thing, but if there's a margin of error in an ATS in either supervised or unsupervised learning techniques, and the models that those techniques kick out, there's a real human cost there, right, that these people aren't going to get jobs, potentially, because of a misclassification. Do you think there's things that we can do to try to avoid that? Or is it always going to be almost like a breakage on the general process?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 23:14

I think look at the alternative. Right. So with ATS systems, they onboard and process millions of candidates collectively as a market on a daily basis. So if you remove the ATS, and you bring back what's happening 20 years ago, you have 1000s of humans that are far more valuable than technology. Now the technology has to be written. And, of course, you need some very clever data scientists that understand what the hell they do. And that actually, it's just a lot more accurate. But I think that I think the whole point goes away from you know, ATSC should not be completely plug and play. With no human interaction. I think the human human interaction in the recruitment, space is actually sometimes overlooked. So whilst I am a massive advocate of automating processes that can be 100%. That's what I've done my whole career. We need to be careful, but it's a lot more effective than the alternative that we could have. And I think that's what people need to think about. So is it completely 100% accurate? Nothing is no

Jason Knight 24:19

and I guess the thing with people as you say, like people don't need any excuse to be biassed themselves. We talked about that. Like some people are biassed some people are downright prejudiced. Right? So, I guess controlling for that is great. Although, if we're talking about supervised learning, then of course, this labelling has been done by people. You know, you've touched on that before. And it's not uncommon to see stories in the news around Hey, you know, Google's algorithms are flagging people with dark skin as monkeys and stuff like that. And obviously, then that all blows up and they try and take some of that stuff away. But do you feel that there's this other lurking problem that basically we're reinforcing some of the biases of the people because you The same biassed people are labelling the data which then is used to generate the models.

Shaun Smith-Taylor 25:04

I think you've got to be very, very careful who you pick, as part of the team to do labelling. I think, you know, when you're talking about Google, for example, and the scale that Google are at, you know, of course, there's going to be some significant challenges at some point. And the example you brought up earlier is horrendous. Right? Yeah. Fortunately, that happened. And unfortunately, it will happen again, in a different way, sometime in the future. I think from a my product path perspective. At the moment, we're not at the scale of Google, right? I have very

ambitious hopes, of course, they are not at the moment. So actually, it's a lot easier for us to control. And it's a lot easier for us to learn. I'm a very big advocate of mining data, and actually understanding trends and analytics. So yeah, I mean, like, yeah, it is a lot more effective to use technology than not used technology. That's just a fact we all accept. And as product people we do that on a daily basis, will use in my product paths, ATS system 100% Remove human bias, no. Will it actually increase the effectiveness of your recruitment process and remove the majority of human bias? Yes,

Jason Knight 26:13

bold claim. I'm looking forward to the white paper in due course. But speaking of technology and stuff that may or may not work, you're into all things metaverse. Now, obviously, time has moved on. But when I think about recruitment in the metaverse, I'm thinking of all those cringe worthy Second Life gold rushes were all of the companies were trying to get on there and set up virtual presences. And then, two months later, it seemed like they're all collapsed again, and slunk off with their tails between their legs. But, I mean, you know, this, we're not gonna be able to cover the entire Metaverse in this chat. But from a recruitment perspective, what do you think the biggest benefits to the metaverse are like? And obviously, the augmented reality all into full on VR, like, what can it bring to recruitment?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 26:59

So I think we have to we have to accept Have you seen Ready Player One? The film? Yes. Okay, there we go. So I hope everybody that's listening to this has is not going to watch it, it's awesome. Really play a war on, you know, I think we have to accept as a society, there are individuals even today that want to live in that world, right? And actually going forward, there's gonna be an increasing number. And the pandemic has not helped that, though, actually has helped to depend on which side of the bench you sit on. So it is what it is, right. So I think from a recruitment perspective, there are individuals that do not want to engage in face to face interviews, they have no interest. They don't even want to use a tool like zoom, for example, again, they have no interest. They want to do everything within the metaverse itself, because that's where they can do other things that they enjoy. I think the technology itself, motion tracking has to be really advanced. To be honest. Gears. I think one of the key areas that I actually legitimately feel the metaverse will help with is assessments. So imagine assessment days, right? So if you do an assessment day, and this really happens very, this happens a lot in the mortgage world. So they will take let's say, I don't know, 50. Brokers, for example. And they'll do an assessment and they'll hire 20. That's kind of how it works. Now, you have to do that face to face at the moment, because you could do a zoom or a team's meeting, or you could use whatever that party thing was everybody was like jumping on what's called houseparty antichi kind of use something like that, but it's not going to work. So I actually think if motion tracking actually improves, then you will be able to engage in a way from an assessment perspective, read people's body language that you can't do effectively today. I mean, I can see right, great if there was another 10 windows and we have to do team exercise. This doesn't work as a channel. So I think that would help. I think, you know, there's a lot of data in the metaverse now. I am sure people are looking at data. But I do think from a data science perspective, there will be a lot of there'll be a lot of enhancements or advancements sorry, over the next five years in terms of how data is used. We talked about modelling before and what data you know the metaverse has a ridiculous amount of data and it's very, very

accessible. Which dat makes it very different from from other channels. So I think those two are good areas. We've seen a lot of noise around NF T's oh, you should know that. They made a lot of noise. Right? What a year 18 months ago people. I swear they throw straight somebody Snoop Dogg pour a property in the metaverse and this is not NFT related. But then somebody paid like 1.6 million for the plot of land next to Snoop Dogg. 1.6 million real money like the world has gone mad. So yeah, sorry, motion tracking data science. I think the two areas that need to be improved, but assessment days, things like that. I think it'd be perfect.

Jason Knight 29:54

Yeah, that's really interesting. And I think obviously, let's leave aside the ridiculous prices that people Paying for tokens representing imaginary assets, because that really does start to sound a bit like Second Life. Again, I don't know if you're particularly big on Second Life back in the day, but I remember walking around for a while, even played a gig on it once and it was, frankly ridiculous. Now, obviously, technology has moved on. Not that you'd know from looking at Mark Zuckerberg his avatar, but it's still just a really interesting thing about love virtual ownership and all the things that you can do about that. But I guess back to the recruitment use case, it feels like, whilst I completely agree there are going to be some people out there that don't want to go to an office don't want to interact with people in that way. They do want to use these new technologies and the new capabilities that are out there, that the hiring managers and the companies hiring them by we're already seeing a blowback against remote working or hybrid working to some extent, like whilst the candidates may be ready for this, do we feel that the hiring side is ready for this?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 30:56

I think it's going to take time to evolve. I think it depends who the hiring manager is right? There will be hiring managers. They're more comfortable in that world. So if it's those then yeah, sure. But I think you mentioned the avatar of Zuckerberg, right? I think we need to get back to him. So you know, he started Facebook based on hearing a really good idea by the Winklevoss is right. And changed it slightly, but he knew it would be popular, right? Because, yeah, that made it super exclusive Harvard, whatever it's called, I remember. And then he decided, no, let's open it up to absolutely everybody. And of course, there was a good product market fit. He was always going to be super popular. Yeah, but what I feel he's doing this is my personal opinion, right? What I feel he's dealing with the metaverse, he's, he's creating his own fantasyland. He's been very public over, he doesn't really enjoy interaction with other people, right? He would happily and he says I'd like 10,000 people to build this thing. So I think it's gonna happen. Yeah. There's gonna people be people that use it. And it's absolutely cool, right? If a candidate or a hiring manager feels more comfortable doing their part of whatever the process is, in that world, I have no problem with that at all. Will it become commonplace in the next five years? Absolutely no chance in 20 years time? could it actually be a real realistic channel? I think the answer is yes. But I also really think it depends on Zuckerberg himself. You know, how many users does Facebook or met or whatever the hell they call themselves now have with that and Instagram? I think they own WhatsApp, right. So yeah, you think of all of those together, then if he wants to push it hard, he can increase the user base very, very quickly. And I think adoption across any channel, to any large degree is I personally think it's a couple of decades off. But

Jason Knight 32:47

well, we'll be still fresh faced enough to participate, I'm sure. But just to clarify, we expect in your platform to offer any kind of virtual reality job interviews anytime soon.

Shaun Smith-Taylor 33:00

It's not in the near term roadmap.

Jason Knight 33:01

Oh, well, hold on, see if I can sign up and then get on your feature list. And where can people find you after this? If they want to find out more about recruitment, maybe try and get a job? Tap you up about the metaverse, or maybe try and get some old war stories from your time in banking?

Shaun Smith-Taylor 33:15

Well, usually I can be found around a barbecue. So follow this smoke. Other than that, go to my product path.com. There is lots of resources there. There's the ability to sign up as a candidate and a customer. And there's a contact form to get in touch. Other than that, we've got some wonderful things happening on Instagram, not as wonderful as yours. We have we are aiming towards such high echelons of engagement. But yeah, I'd be interested to get feedback anyway.

Jason Knight 33:44

Absolutely. Well, I'll link that all into the show notes and hopefully get some feedback and maybe even some prototype avatars heading your direction. Well, that's been a fantastic chat. So obviously very grateful you spent some time talk a bit about your company and some general issues around recruitment and hiring. Hopefully we stay in touch but yeah, as for now. Thanks for taking the time.

Shaun Smith-Taylor 34:03

Thank you very much.

Jason Knight 34:06

As always, thanks for listening. I hope you found the episode inspiring and insightful. If you did again, I can only encourage you to hop over to one night in product.com Check out some of my other fantastic guests, sign up to the mailing list or subscribe on your favourite podcast app

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