
Jaime: Welcome to *Eventual Millionaire*! I am Jaime Masters, and I am ridiculously excited to have Wade Foster of Zapier on. It's "Zapier makes you happier," and I use it, and I recommend it to everyone. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Wade: Yeah, thanks for having me, Jaime.

Jaime: Thanks for giving me that little thing, "Zapier makes you happier." It is funny how often I talk about this. Was it a pain in the butt when you named the company to hear somebody say it "Zape-ee-ur" afterwards, and then go, "Oh, no!"

Wade: After a while, you sort of just get used to it. It's kind of like, "All right, I get it. There's not two Ps." We're a bunch of technology nerds, and we built the company on top of APIs, so we wanted to have "API" in the name.

Jaime: I didn't even realize that! Oh my gosh, you are geeks.

Wade: Yeah, that's kind of a nod. But, now we have to deal with this.

Jaime: You're too clever. You guys are too clever. Everybody spells my name wrong. You get over it after a while. But, it does make me have conversations. I just posted on Instagram, "What is it called?", and I've heard it over and over. This is what everyone's reply is, just so you know: "Well, they're called Zaps, so it has to be 'Zap-ee-ur,'" and I'm like, "Thank you very much." So, let's dive into it because you guys even got rejected from Combinator. Give me your origin story a little bit.

Wade: We started Zapier in October 2011. Before that, Bryan and I – one of my two cofounders – had been just freelancing, doing anything to make a buck, basically – any internet work in Columbia, Missouri – and we got asked to build these one-off integrations from time to time. I remember building a WordPress forms plugin that could push info into Salesforce. We built a QuickBooks/PayPal connector. It sort of dawned on Bryan one day – he's like, "People keep hiring us for this stuff, and we can probably make a site that makes it really easy for them to do it themselves, set it up themselves without needing engineering help."

And so, he messaged me on iChat one day, and I was like, "Oh my God, that would be awesome." I was using the Marketo API at work and struggling with it. I'm not a great engineer myself. I'm

just barely competent, if even that.

Jaime: Phew! Makes us feel better about that, because we all suck at it too. Awesome, thanks.

Wade: And so, it was like, “Oh wow, if we had something like this – if I had something like this, my life would be a lot easier.” And so, we teamed up with Mike and, at a startup weekend, built out the initial prototype. When you’re in Columbia, Missouri, you don’t go out and raise beaucoup bucks like you do in Silicon Valley. And so, we just set off nights and weekends, plugging away at this thing, trying to get it off the ground, and one by one, get some beta testers, get a launch list going, and trying to get the product ready for launch. That’s kind of where it’s started.

Jaime: Everybody loves the story, by the way, because everybody’s like, “Oh, kids in their basement that don’t really know business that create this thing” – that’s what all the geeks, because I hang out with all the geeks, are like, “Yes, we can do it too!” How did you know that the market would love it so much and that it was ready for it at the time?

Wade: So, we – a big reason – 1). People were already hiring us to build this stuff, so we were already getting hired to do it anyway, 2). You would go to the message boards for these products – so, if you went to the Salesforce message boards, the Evernote message boards, the MailChimp message boards, the Wufoo message boards – these message boards don’t exist anymore. All these companies got rid of them, by the way.

But, at the time, you could go find them, and people would have feature requests, and there would often be people saying, “When are you gonna have an integration with X?” And then, the threads would be like, “Oh, I want this too, me too. When’s it gonna be? Hey, you haven’t replied to this in six months. Is it coming?” And, some product manager would get in there, fall on their sword, and say, “Hey, we’re thinking about it. Maybe someday, we’ll get to it. We hope we’ll have it.” That’s code for, “It’s not on the roadmap. It’s not gonna happen.”

And so, we saw all those happening, and it was just like, “Customers want this stuff, the products themselves are struggling to prioritize it, trying to get this stuff built out. If we could make it easy to facilitate all these connections, then there might be something to that.” So, to us, that was enough insight that this

could be useful.

Jaime: How do you go from that – “Hey, I think I got an idea that’s useful” – to building it? Don’t get me wrong, the people that have programming skills – it’s really cool for them to be able to start building it. You already knew how to do it, so you’ve got that piece. But then, there’s the whole other piece of you were freelancers, and you grew from zero to 600,000 users in three years – that’s insanity. Tell me about that trajectory because you must have had to evolve as a human big-time on that.

Wade: Well, yeah. Between Bryan, Mike, and I, we actually all worked in marketing before this, so we were marketers who code, so we kind of had a couple different skillsets that, between the three of us, made us one – we basically became a mini-competent company pretty quickly. Not to say that we were great at everything. There was enough skills where we weren’t totally out of our depths.

So, for us, day one, it’s like, “How do you get a product that you know is good enough?” That started with our own intuition around what this could look like, and then, you just start getting it in front of potential customers. In our case, we would go into these message boards I was talking about and post comments and say, “Hey, we’re working on a project that could help get this connection happening, and if you wanna try it out, send me an email.”

And so, people would send me emails, I’d get a couple emails a day around this stuff, and I’d say, “Hey, what are you looking to set up?” If we had it, I’d be like, “Let’s jump on Skype, I’ll give you access to it, and see if you can build it – build a Zap.” At the time – I remember the very first time I did this, we had a customer who went – I didn’t volunteer to get on Skype the first time, and instead, he emailed me and said, “Hey, can we get on Skype? I’m struggling with this.”

So, I get on Skype, and I have to coach him through setting up his first Zap, and it’s going very poorly. Every click, he has no clue what to do next, and I’m like, “Well, click this button, click this drop-down, fill in this text, click ‘Next,’” walking him through all the way to the very end.

He gets to the end, and I’m like, “Holy cow, that could not have gone more poorly,” and he goes, “Oh my gosh, Wade, thank you so much for this. This is gonna change my business.” And, that’s

when I knew – I was like, “If we just make this easy enough, people are gonna eat this stuff up. It’s clearly not good enough yet because he needed help every step of the way, but I knew that if we could get there, we would have something.”

And so, we just sort of rinsed, washed, and repeated that. It took us about nine months until we felt good enough opening the door and saying, “You can sign up and not talk to Wade,” basically. Before that, you had to talk to me. Otherwise, you wouldn’t be able to set up a Zap.

But, I would just keep getting on these Skype calls, taking good notes, recording the sessions, going back to Bryan and Mike, saying, “Here’s what’s working, here’s what’s not working, this screen is still confusing, this button is confusing, this text is confusing, we don’t support this app, this trigger is not good enough” – all sorts of reasons why it’s just not ready yet – and just one by one, we methodically worked through it.

Eventually, you get about – in our case, it was nine months in – some people still needed some help, but more and more, I would get on those Skype calls, and people would just set it up, and I’d be like, “Okay,” and that’s when I felt like, “Okay, we’re ready. We can put this out there, and people are gonna be successful.”

Jaime: So, it was tweak after tweak after tweak for the beginning. What people do now, especially – they’re like, “I’m in a startup. I’m gonna go hire a UX/UI guy, and then I’m gonna do this, and they’re gonna tell me all the things,” but you spent hours and hours on the phone with customers, and I know we highlight that on this show all the time, but I have to highlight it again because a lot of people – especially if they’ve ever had a business before – they feel too good for that stuff. How many hours do you think you did on the phone with customers, trying to walk people through it?

Wade: I certainly put my 10,000 hours in front of customers in, and I still spend time with customers. It’s one of the best ways to just understand what’s working and not working. I don’t feel like you can – at a certain point, a year in, we did hire a customer support person to help who did – probably, at that point in time, he probably did two thirds of the support, but Bryan, Mike, and I were still doing the other third. You never wanna – I don’t think you ever wanna get too far away from that. Otherwise, you start to lose touch with what’s the reality of what’s going on.

Jaime: I really appreciate you saying that because a lot of people are like, “I don’t wanna talk to customers right now. I’m too important. I’m too busy,” as we go up the chain, and the fact that you guys still do that and care about it is huge. Tell me about –

Wade: I get it. I get that, too, because a company like Zapier now – we have 250 people, so for me, the management burden is heavy. You have to spend a lot of time with your team, making sure that goals are aligned and all that sort of stuff, so, finding time to talk to customers when you have this whole org that you’ve hired – at a certain point, you’re like, “They’ve got it covered. They’re good at this. They’re better at working with customers than I am.” But, even still, you’re like, “I gotta find time to do it a little.”

Jaime: Yeah, because losing touch completely is not necessarily good, either. Tell me about the growth trajectory because from hiring that customer service person to 250 is a huge growth curve, and probably outside of your wheelhouse, I’m assuming, so tell me about you guys, the growth of the company, and how you decided to do what you did.

Wade: So, we – more or less, the headcount has a little less than doubled almost every year. The first three years, it was just the three founders, and then it’s seven, and then it’s 14, and then it was 25, and then was 60. It just kept going like that. The early days, though – we felt like we were going – it felt really slow, especially compared to other Silicon Valley companies that are like, “Raise a bunch of money, go hire the team, go take the market,” all that sort of stuff.

We had never hired people before, so we were going – we were really meticulous about it. I didn’t know – I’d never managed anyone, we’d never paid anyone a salary, really, we didn’t have health benefits, we didn’t have – any of the things that you need to have employees didn’t exist. We had to do that for the first time ever.

And so, that was all figuring that stuff out, and I didn’t wanna rush it. We wanted to make sure that when we added somebody, it like – okay, the team gelled, so when we hired that person, it was like, “Okay, there’s four of us now. How are we feeling about that?” It took us maybe four months, and were like, “Okay, this is working. We didn’t totally screw this up. We feel like we’re ready for one more.” We added one more, and it’s like, “Okay, this is working.” Four months later, we add a sixth person.

You're just sort of getting used to that, and we were very intentional in the early days about saying, "We are not gonna hire another person until it absolutely hurts." And, that's what helped keep our spending down because you can hire really fast, and get your spending way out of control, and go broke very quickly. We were like, "We will not hire until it literally is – until we cannot do this anymore."

That discipline helped us make sure we understood our business really well, we understood the types of people who, when they came into the company, what made them successful, what didn't make them successful. It really gave us a certain amount of confidence and a certain amount of identity in who we are, which, being totally new at this, we lacked confidence, we lacked an identity – those were things that we were just oblivious to, but that sort of meticulousness and that methodical pace – it wasn't necessarily slow, but it was definitely methodical.

I think it helped us so that eventually, we got to a point where it was like, "We can hire two people at a time now instead of one person at a time," and now, we've had weeks where 10 people will join in a given week, but now, we have all the systems and processes to accommodate that, where 10 people can come in and feel like, "This is normal, this is how it's supposed to work," and things don't just fall apart on you.

Jaime: I really appreciate you going back to that, because a lot of people – as they start making money, they have a skill set. You guys have a skill set. You're really good, especially with customers. Then, you go, "Oh, I have no skill set for hiring or managing," and that is a skill set that takes people a long period of time to learn, typically, and a lot of mistakes. Do you have any hiring tips or managing tips for people, especially people that are more engineer-like or more salespeople-like, and that's not their innate talent?

Wade: There's a great podcast, *Manager Tools*, that covers the basics. It's 30-minute podcasts on how to hire a person, how to give feedback, what to do when you think you have to fire somebody. All these – and, they're very specific, which is what I liked, because a lot of the management advice is so fluffy. It's hard to grasp. It's like someone just walked into my office and said, "I want a raise now or I'm gonna quit," and I need the advice on how to deal with that right now. I don't need this "People love having autonomy."

Great. I know that. I understand that people want autonomy, but I have a very tactical situation that I am not equipped to handle. And so, I just would – it took me a couple years to realize that I'm not good at management, and the *Manager Tools* podcast was a crash course in how to handle these situations that come up when you're a manager.

You can sort of – any manager who's done this for enough time will tell you that they constantly get surprised by situations that come up where they're like, "Whoa, I've never dealt with that before," and you need to have these toolkits – these conversational tools – to be able to navigate those things without screwing it up because it's easy to screw that stuff up. Sometimes it's not intuitive.

Jaime: It's so easy to screw that stuff up, and I love the action piece of it, too. "Just tell me what to say, people! I just wanna know actual things instead of fluffiness on the corporate side." I love that tip, too. How did you guys start figuring out where your strengths are? It sounds like you're all doing pieces – "We all hired together, we all did this" – but I'm sure each one of you had different strengths and different roles in the company. How did you make sure you went down the role that was best for you?

Wade: It was natural for us. We knew that we had different leanings going in. I was always on the business, go-to-market side of things, Mike was always really focused on the product, and user experience, and how do customers interact with this, and then, Bryan was really focused on the technology. How does the infrastructure work? How do we scale this out?

At the same time, each of us was still somewhat competent in the other things people were working on, so it made us good thought partners. Bryan and Mike could challenge me on go-to-market stuff. They could say, "Wait, you might try this, you might consider these types of things." I would step back and go, "That's actually a good idea. I should probably think about it this way," and vice versa.

So, having a bit of expertise in an area, but also, the ability to help other people in their specialty went a long way. And then, after that, we all just had to learn. General management skills were a thing none of us were good at, but all three of us had to become good at it because at a certain point in time, you need general management skills. So, a lot of that is just-in-time learning. It's

like grabbing the book on the thing, figuring out, reading it, and trying to stay just ahead of where the company is at in terms of your learning and your knowledge.

Jaime: Yeah, because there's always something, and that's the funny thing. The phases and the trajectories you go, you're like, "I learned this, I finally started feeling good about this – oh shoot, I know nothing about this now, and I'm in a totally new area that I'm trying to learn." So, what are some of the pivotal books or resources like *Manager's Tools* that you felt like were really lifesavers for you? Everybody that's listening is like, "I'm dealing with stuff right now. Give me the actionable stuff!"

Wade: *Manager Tools* was critical. *High-Output Management* was another good book that I really liked. That was from a longtime CEO at Intel, Andy Grove. That one was really practical, useful. There's – oh man, it's been years since I read it. *Don't Make Me Think* and *Rocket Surgery Made Easy* were both really good, practical U.S. user testings that were really useful for me.

In school – I don't talk about this much, but I do have an MBA, and most of the classes I took were not useful, but funny enough, the one that really was was Accounting 101 – how to read a P&L, how to deal with the balance sheet, how to deal with a cash flow statement, and understand how money is moving into and out of your business. I would definitely take a crash course on accounting best practices. That came in handy quite a bit.

Then, get a good accountant – a third-party accountant – a third-party lawyer who you can dial up and ask questions when you're confused on things, when you're like, "Hey, I was reading up on this." And then, get really good at googling.

Jaime: Thank goodness we have Google nowadays. Imagine running a company right now without that. So, it's interesting, especially on the accounting side, because this is the thing that especially small business owners that are just about gross revenue, top line, just keep running the sales mentality – they avoid the actual numbers, and they don't even wanna look at it. Even for clients of mine, I'm like, "You still need to send me your P&L because I have no picture of what you're working on." So, did you guys avoid that stuff because you were more programming side or marketing side, or did you actually lean into that and not have an issue with going after the numbers?

Wade: Every month, I would review our P&L and just take a look at it. In my mind, we were always very cost-conscious, so we tried to keep our spend intentionally low, so I was paying attention to where's the top line going. We wanted to grow revenue, but we wanted to keep our costs in check.

For us, we were so spend-worthy that we probably overdid it on that side of things. We probably could have spent more. In fact, one of the best things was when we finally hired a CFO – this was about four or five years in – she came in and actually gave us the confidence to deploy capital in a much more effective way. It was like, “You actually can spend more money and probably generate higher returns.”

But, for us, we were just like, “We don't wanna – we've got a good thing going on, we don't wanna overspend.” You hear the horror stories of these companies that overspend, and they have to do layoffs, and it just is brutal. And so, we were pretty – counting every penny, literally, in a lot of situations.

Jaime: That's an amazing thing, especially when you're saying you didn't hire someone until it hurt. How did you know when that hurt was enough hurt? It started to be like, “The team is busting at the seams, but where?” Who did you hire, and did you predict who you were hiring, and when?

Wade: Our CFO was the one that I had held onto running, basically. I was doing the books, I was doing a lot of the HR, even office management type stuff, like buying plane tickets and stuff like that for our team retreats and whatnot. That was probably around 30 people. It had gotten to where it was eating up huge chunks of my day, probably half my time was being spent on that, and I'm like, “That's not a good use of my time. I can be helping our customers, and there are a lot of people that can buy plane tickets.”

And so, then, I was like, “What type of person do you want for that role?” I went out and asked a lot of different types of people who were further along in their businesses than we were at the time – maybe a year ahead of us, not too far along, because if they were too far away, they wouldn't really remember it, but a year ahead, 18 months, two years ahead, just saying, “Hey, this is what I'm dealing with. How did you approach this? What worked for you? What didn't work for you? What skill sets are you looking for? What titles do these people tend to have?”

And, one of the people I actually happened to email to ask advice is now our CFO. I said, “Hey, you’ve gone through this, you dealt with this. How would you think about this problem?” She was like, “It turns out I actually just left the role I was in. I’m happy to advise, help coach, or see where this goes in the meantime.” And so, we did that for about two months, and it was going really well, and I was like, “Why don’t you come on full-time?”, so she did, and it worked great.

And so, we actually ended up over-hiring. I don’t know that I was looking for a CFO at that point in time. I was like, “Hey, I want someone to help with the books and the HR, and just some of the more basics of this stuff.” But, it was really helpful because she was willing to roll up her sleeves. I handed it off, and I was kind of embarrassed. I was like, “Look, I need you to help book plane tickets.” She was like, “It’s all good. I’ll do it.”

Jaime: Wow, yes, that’s amazing. Wow!

Wade: So, having someone that understood that building a company is partly just rolling up your sleeves – and yeah, we’re gonna hire a team, and we’re gonna eventually get to where we can grow, but it’s a journey. It’s not a thing where you can walk in on day one and expect to have 10-20 people that can do your bidding. You gotta come in and do some of this stuff, and over time, we’ll get to where we have that kind of team, but it’s not gonna happen.

Jaime: Everybody’s gotta clean the toilets for a little while until we can – you know what I mean? A janitor.

Wade: Exactly. That mentality that she had made her so well suited for Zapier at the time.

Jaime: So now, let’s talk about the actual technology that you’re using because I know a lot of people – especially people that are not tech-savvy – try and back away from anything having to do with this. When I say “automation,” they’re like, “Who do I hire? Give me a referral.” It’s a drag-and-drop interface. Can you tell me a little more about the types of avatar that would be good to really go in and look at Zapier, could get a lot of use out of it?

Wade: Almost any small business owner could benefit from something like Zapier. It really helps non-technical folks build things that they wouldn’t have been able to do before. So, a basic use case – one that I use all the time – is our team is in Slack all day, every

day. Slack doesn't have the concept of a queue, so it's easy to look at the different – it's easy to lose messages inside of Slack. If I'm on mobile, I'll see one, then forget about it, and I can't find it again.

So, I set up a Zap that says, "Hey, I'm gonna star these and have them send me an email, and then I can know which messages to follow up with," so I don't get lost. That took me less than five minutes to set up. You just say, "When I start a message, I want Slack to send me an email, and I want the email to say who sent me the message, what was the message, and a link back to the message so I can respond." Four or five clicks, you've got it set up, and you're good to go. So, any of these –

Jaime: So, I'm laughing hysterically – just to stop you for a second – because I need to set – I have made my assistant, which – dumb, I don't know why I've been doing this – in Slack, for our Mastermind members, make an Asana task for me when there's big things that I have to respond to. Man! I use Zapier!

Wade: There you go. So, you can set up a – well, this is what the fun part for me is about talking to our customers, because I used to be the best user of Zapier, but when I go talk to our customers now, they have so many different use cases that I never would have thought of. I was just talking to a fellow CEO the other day who, for his team, his sales team often likes to have him send emails to prospects to help close them because that helps them feel the love.

So, what he did was set up a little form on Google Forms where they can come in and say, "Here's the email of who you wanna send it to, and here's the subject line, and here's the message that you should send," and they submit the form, and that auto-creates a draft in his Gmail inbox, so he can come in real quick, review it, and press "Send." It doesn't have to give them access to his Gmail, but now, people can send emails on behalf of the CEO, so their prospects can feel the love because the CEO sent them an email. That feels amazing.

That's something that I had to deal with all the time – sending customers, partners, or potential candidates emails where people would be like, "Hey Wade, can you send a quick email for me?" I was like, "Man, why didn't I think of that?" I could have sent them a little form and said, "Here, fill this form out, and I'll press 'Send' for you."

Jaime: You have common Zaps, too. That's the other thing. I remember looking through a list going, "Oh, I need to do that." I need to go back and do that again, too.

Wade: You can go to our app directory and point out the apps that you use. It's like, "I use Slack, Asana, G Suite," or whatever, and it has a list of recommended Zaps or common things that other people do.

Jaime: That's the key thing that I just wanna highlight. When I talk about this stuff, I used to use "If this, then that" for my Amazon Echo to go to my thing, but it would get so complicated, and I try to explain it to a client, like "I have it remind me for my goals," and they say, "No way in heck am I ever gonna do that, Jaime." And so, when you say that, I'm like, "I could have my assistant go in right now and do the Slack thing, and she's not technical, but she should be able to do it without a problem, without necessarily needing a whole tech team."

So, how can you start – especially because we have a lot of Zaps. We have so many, it's crazy. Once it gets to be a lot – my tech uses it, but what do you suggest for people that aren't tech-savvy? Once we start getting too much, it starts to get a little complicated. Do you have any tips for us on that?

Wade: Like managing a lot of Zaps at once?

Jaime: I'd have "Three of your Zaps had issues today." I'm like, "Oh no!", and then I forward it to my tech guy because I can't remember.

Wade: We've got a couple different things that can help you with this. You can use folders to help organize the Zaps. Our team's product – often, for groups like y'all's – you have multiple people who can have access to it, so it's like, "This folder is for our marketing team, this folder is for our sales team, this folder is for our support team," and if there are issues, it alerts those people instead of you because it's like, "Hey, I'm not the one – I actually don't know. Our support people set this one up, and they need to follow up and deal with this because it's one of their processes."

Jaime: Good point! "Why am I getting the emails? You're giving me tons of stuff to do now."

Wade: That's where the team's product comes in and helps out with some

of that management inside of an organization that happens when you grow and have some scale. There's a lot more going on, and you need some features to help navigate that.

Jaime: It's like an ever-evolving process, and that's the thing that I think is so difficult. These are super small things that shouldn't be that big of a deal that will optimize a lot of small things that I'm doing, and those micro moments really do add up, not only on the time space, but on the brain space, and I feel like small business owners are just stuck in the minute task-switching over and over again, so, setting it up once and having it done for a really long period of time is hugely important.

But, what I see mostly – and, I wonder if you have some things to say about this – they're like, "I'll get to that later. It's a low priority now because it's a small thing. Yes, it adds up, but I've got urgent matters right now." Do you have any tips for people for that stuff?

Wade: The funny thing is even I fell suspect to that myself. I remember one of the things – I went on a Zap-making tear when I hired an executive assistant for the first time because he joined and was like, "Wait, I can do this for you and this for you." He had a list of things where he was like, "I can help you with this stuff." Probably half the things on the list, I was like, "That seems dumb. Why would I have you do that? We have better things to do. You can make a Zap for that."

These are things I was already doing, but he sort of prompted me, and I was like, "That's dumb. Why would you do that?" The funny thing was, "I'm doing that!" So, I think for me, the act of sitting down with somebody and having them say, "Here's all the things that I could potentially do for you" force me to go, "Wow, there's a lot that goes on in a given day that I can delegate to Zapier," or, in this case, an executive assistant. It didn't matter which one. One of them needed to do it, but there was a set that could go to Zapier and not necessarily have to go to another person.

Jaime: So, you make me feel so much better about this, though, that the CEO of Zapier says the exact same thing. It is really going, "Hey, I need to be prompted to make it an urgency thing," because especially the beginning of the year, you start to feel, "Oh man, I wanna have a new, fresh start." So, taking a day – I've had clients of mine take a day and reorganize their Asana, and everybody on the team is like, "Yeah, we're reorganizing Asana!"

We should have a Zap day where everybody just does all their Zaps and everybody gets their questions because long-term, it saves so much time, but short-term, it's so hard to go, "I have to go in and do the thing. I know it'll save me a minute three minutes over a month and a half," but when you add them all up, you're paying other people to do this, or you're spending your time – how valuable is your time? Sorry, I get on rants on some of this stuff. Where do you think the industry is going? We talk about AI, we talk about automation, and we talk about implants in our body and crazy stuff like that. Where do you see that stuff, and do you really pay attention to trends?

Wade: I pay attention to those things, but I think for our customers, a lot of them are folks like you. We're busy people, we're using all these different tools, and for us, implants in our brains – that's sci-fi still. That would be lovely, but right now, I've got 100 emails in my inbox, my text is blowing up, and I've got this project that's behind, and I've got however many clients that are screaming at me, and there's a couple people on my team that are begging me for help on these things, and how do I get through all that?

So, having things like Zapier and these different tools, where you can create automations between them that sort of helps you route things to the right person, that automatically does some of these tasks for them, or gives your team the ability to tackle some of this stuff on their own, like that "email on behalf of the CEO form," things like that – I always like to think of it as you can get to this point where you can lean back, and arms sprout out of your sides and start doing some of these tasks for you, and you can lean back and drink your coffee a little bit. That's the visual image I always have.

Jaime: Robotic arms.

Wade: Exactly. And so, I think just – Most small business owners are just working so hard that we need tools like Zapier to help get control of the little things that are eating up our time, and more than our time, it's eating up our attention. We get caught in the minutiae, and if we don't take the time to step back and think, "What are the things that are gonna push my business forward? What are the things that are gonna help my customer that I need to be planning on for the next year or two years?"

If I get caught in this circle of approving expense reports, replying

to the latest email, putting out the latest fire, your business will – it won't plateau today, but you look a year down the line, two years down the line, and you'll start to realize you probably haven't made those investments that you really wish you would have. So, I think having tools like Zapier, Asana, Slack, G Suite, and whatever that help keep you organize and on task go a long way to helping you out.

Jaime: I completely agree. It's really interesting, especially because it's stuff we have to do. We do time audits for all our clients that come through, and they're like, "But I have to do it," which I totally get – you have to do it – but when you look this way, then it takes our focus off the actual things that we're supposed to do, even when we try and prioritize, and carve out time, and do all that stuff, because it still has to be done, we just need robots to do it, like Zapier, instead of you actually taking up your brain space.

So, I have another question before we start to wrap up. What comes up all the time is which software to use. My stance on software is whatever you use, just commit 100 percent because no software is perfect, ever. Is it Asana? Is it Teamwork PM? Is it Trello? Is it this? There are a million different things. But, have you seen any correlations for size of business, especially in the \$100,000.00 or less size of business, that are some core software that really works, or most common – I don't know if you're allowed to pick between which APIs you think work better, but do you have any tips on that kind of stuff? I feel like I get bombarded with questions about this.

Wade: I have a similar response to you. Find what works for you, what works for your mental model. Some people are Trello, some people are Asana, some people are Basecamp. Whatever works for your mental model. And, go in on it. Find a way to work it. Have your systems and structures, and then find software that matches how your brain thinks about the world. And then, tools like Zapier can help fill in the blank and automate things between them.

But typically, folks are generally looking for a group chat tool like Slack, they're looking for video conferencing like Zoom, they're looking for email, so it's probably G Suite, they probably need something for project management, so it's Asana or Trello, or maybe Air Table, which is pretty trendy these days. Those are the types of things I think folks are paying attention to. For email, MailChimp comes up a lot. For CRM, you're starting to look at things like Pipedrive, Base CRM, or whatnot.

So, these different tools are useful for helping and getting you started. There's a lot of great software now that has free plans or pretty inexpensive stuff – \$20.00 a month, \$50.00 a month – that works great for small businesses, and you shouldn't feel like software is the thing that's holding you back because it's so inexpensive, so easy to get started these days, that you really can just pluck something off the shelf and be a little bit more organized pretty quickly.

Jaime: I'm so grateful that we live in the world we do. I used to code my own blog back in the day. You know what I mean? WordPress is like, "Huh."

Wade: Yeah, and now, you can have it, and it doesn't cost that much.

Jaime: When you're more of a visionary, or not a tech, or not a detailed person, I feel like it can overwhelm – even just you naming those apps, which are very common, which most of my clients use anyway, but it can be overwhelming, especially to go, "And then, I don't even know what I'm supposed to do." And, I know Zapier helps with the integration of those, but even just having that many different things to log into is a lot. Do you have any tips for people that are more visionary that aren't the detail-oriented people?

Wade: At a certain point in time, you have to buck up and deal with the details. Running a company is filled with details. If you stay up here all the time, nothing will ever get done. Either you need to find it in yourself how to be organized and get some details, or you need to get a partner, or an assistant, or somebody that can enforce some structure on you.

I'm not one of those detail people, but I can force myself to do it when I need to. I'm like, "Okay, we're gonna buckle down, we're gonna get this done, and we're gonna power through it." And then, as we've grown the team and scaled it out, I've brought in more people who are really those workhorses, who think through these things, that helped me scale it out. So, that's been my approach. When I like to stay up here, I like to get people in who like the details.

Jaime: How do you do that? How do you just hunker down and do it? Do you have a bazillion cup of coffee next to you and just time yourself? Give me some actionable tips on that.

Wade: I think the biggest thing is for me, the mental model I have is I write down the night before what's the three most important things I need to get done, and if those three things get done, I can feel like it's a good day. And so, I just focus on that stuff, and if – then, the next day, I wake up, I'm like, "All right, first things first, I'm gonna do those three things. Before I go to Slack, before I go to email, before I take a meeting, these things are gonna happen." So, you do the thing you hate first, and then, the rest of the day's your oyster.

Jaime: Do you actually do it all the time though? That's the other thing. People are like, "Oh, you do this –"

Wade: I don't do it all the time, but I've gotten pretty consistent about it. Jerry Seinfeld has a thing – "Don't break the streak." That's the mentality you wanna get into. "Hey, I'm gonna create a streak out of this," and then you can feel a sense of motivation, at least around the streak. I may not wanna do the thing, but even worse than that would be breaking the streak.

Jaime: That's actually a good way to put it. I'm not a details person, so I have to make myself do it, but I'm like this. But, I love checking things off lists, so if I can at least check it off my list, I feel a little bit better about that, which is sad and small –

Wade: Get that dopamine hit.

Jaime: Exactly. It's all I got, people. But, there are things we have to do as business owners, unfortunately, as you said, that literally is like, "Now, you have to learn this whole new skillset." Oh, good. Even if you suck at it, good job. Keep working on it.

Wade: Right. Well, I think that's the sort of thing – all founders, CEOs – at a certain point, if your business grows in scale, you're gonna have to do almost every job at least a little bit, and you're not gonna love all of them, but you have to find a way to at least be interested in it a little bit and learn a little bit about it because you're gonna have to do it, and then you're gonna have to hire people whose full-time job it is to do that, and then you're gonna have to get excited about working with them on solving their problems and dealing with the things that they deal with.

So, I feel like my – one of my superpowers is that endless curiosity, where even if I don't like doing the thing, I can appreciate the craft of the thing itself.

Jaime: That's actually a really good way to look at it. That's what I was gonna say. At least entrepreneurs, in general, like learning – typically – and are cool with change. It's like, "I know this is gonna be short-term until I hire someone, so I'd better get good at it enough and grow the company enough so I can actually get this to go away." We know we can make change ourself, which is amazing. I know we have to start wrapping up and I told you I could probably talk forever, but we won't. I will be cognizant of your time. What is one action listeners can take this week to help them move forward toward their goal of \$1 million?

Wade: I think it would be my trick of before you go to bed tonight, write three things down – the things you've been dreading, the things you've been avoiding that you need to know – and tomorrow morning, do the thing. Before you do anything else, do that thing.

Jaime: "Do the thing." My friend has a tattoo that says "Do the thing" on it. I always remember that. "Go do that thing." Thanks so much for coming on the show. Everyone check out Zapier, please. I can say it; you don't have to say it. Go check it out right now because it's super easy and will save you so much time long-term. Where do we find out more? Spell it for everybody, just in case they don't know.

Wade: "Zapier," one "P" – Z-A-P-I-E-R.com. You can sign up for free, get started, play around with it. The blog has lots of great advice, tips, and things like that as well, too. Check it out, and hopefully, you can find something that helps you be a little more organized, saves you a little time, and gives you a little bit of that thinking time back in your day.

Jaime: Thank you so much for doing what you do in creating this company because I love it, and thanks for coming on the show today, Wade. I really appreciate it.

Wade: Yeah, thanks for having me, Jaime.

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Duration: 42 minutes