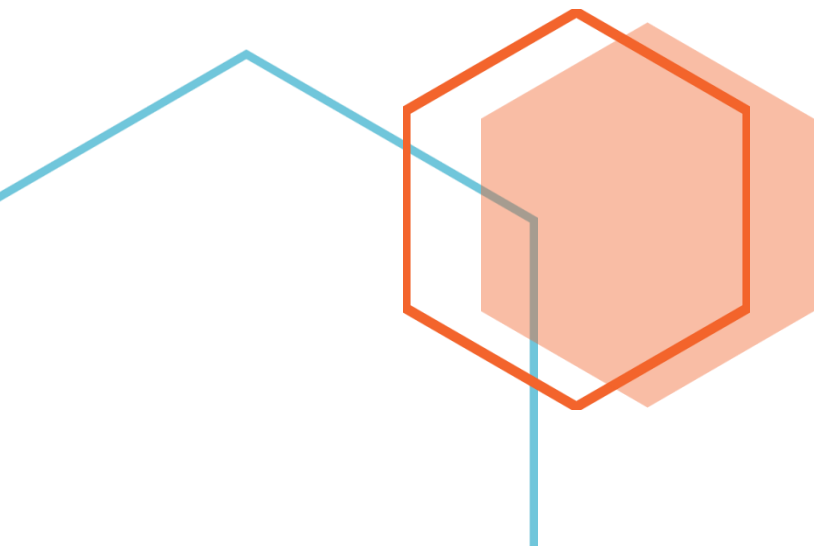




[Evan Williams]

[United States of America]

"Take a human desire, preferably one that has been around for a really long time...identify that desire and use modern technology to take out steps"





Person's background

Williams was born in Clarks, Nebraska, as the third child of Laurie Howe and Monte Williams. He grew up on a farm in Clarks, where he assisted with crop irrigation during the summers.

He attended the University of Nebraska–Lincoln for a year and a half, where he joined FarmHouse Fraternity, leaving to pursue his career.

Brief Introduction

Evan Clark Williams (born March 31, 1972) is a U.S. computer programmer and Internet entrepreneur who has founded several Internet companies. Williams was previously chairman and CEO of Twitter, one of the top ten websites on the Internet. He also founded Blogger and Medium, two of the largest and most notable blog distribution websites.

First steps in entrepreneurship and faced difficulties

After leaving college, Williams worked at various technology jobs and start-up firms in Florida, at Key West, and in Texas, at Dallas and Austin, before returning to his family farm in Nebraska. In 1996 Williams moved to Sebastopol, California in Sonoma County to work for the technology publishing company O'Reilly Media. He started at O'Reilly in a marketing position, later becoming an independent contractor writing computer code, which led to freelance opportunities with companies including Intel and Hewlett-Packard. While he was working at O'Reilly, he also started a website called EvHead.com, where he first began blogging about his personal thoughts.

Evan Williams and Meg Hourihan co-founded Pyra Labs to make project management software. A note-taking feature spun off as Blogger, one of the first web applications for creating and managing weblogs. Williams coined the term "blogger" and was instrumental in the popularization of the term "blog". Pyra survived the departure of Hourihan and other employees, and later, was acquired by Google on February 13, 2003.

In 2003, Williams was named to the MIT Technology Review TR100 as one of the top 100 innovators in the world under the age of 35. In 2004, he was named one of PC Magazine's "People of the Year", along with Hourihan and Paul Bausch, for their work on Blogger.

Among Obvious Corporation's projects was Twitter, a popular, free social networking and micro-blogging service. Twitter was spun out into a new company in April 2007, with Williams as co-founder, board member, and investor. In October 2008, Williams became CEO of Twitter, displacing Jack Dorsey, who became chairman of the board.

Williams left Google in June 2004, to co-found Odeo, a podcast company. In late 2006, Williams co-founded Obvious Corporation with Biz Stone and other former Odeo employees, to acquire all previous properties from Odeo's former backers. In April 2007, Odeo was acquired by Sonic Mountain.





Long before Twitter, Williams founded a podcast platform called Odeo. Shortly after, Apple announced the iTunes store would hold a podcast platform, making Odeo obsolete.

How and why the person has succeeded, lessons learnt

At a time when so many internet entrepreneurs are running around Silicon Valley trying to do something no one else has ever done, Williams believes that the real trick is to find something that's tried and true -- and to do it better. The bottom line, Williams said, is that the internet is "a giant machine designed to give people what they want." It's not a utopia. It's not magical. It's simply an engine of convenience. Those who can tune that engine well -- who solve basic human problems with greater speed and simplicity than those who came before -- will profit immensely. Those who lose sight of basic human needs -- who want to give people the next great idea -- will have problems. "We often think of the internet enables you to do new things," Williams said. "But people just want to do the same things they've always done."

After 20 years, the kind of people and groups you find online are basically identical to the people and groups you find in the physical world. What's now important are the connections between the people and the machines. "There are hardware connections, then there are all these interactions involved with data and software," Williams says. "And if you look at any big internet thing, you see it's basically a big hive of connections. A Follow is a connection. A Like is a connection. "What the internet is doing now is connecting everyone and everything, every event and every thought, in multiple ways".

Williams went through a tidy list of five Odeo errors:

1. "Trying to build too much" – Odeo set out to be a podcasting company with no focus beyond that.
2. "Not building for people like ourselves" – For example, Williams doesn't podcast himself, and he says as a result the company's web-based recording tools were too simplistic.
3. "Not adjusting fast enough" – The company thought its comprehensive web-based strategy would win out over the

competition, primarily Apple, in the long term. "It turns out long term is not soon enough for a startup if you're trying to get a foothold."

4. "Raising too much money too early" – Williams seeded the money with \$70,000 of his own money, and after the TED excitement added another \$100,000. After he tied up over a million in angel funding, a term sheet came through from Charles River Ventures at three times the angel round valuation. They took the money.
5. "Not listening to my gut" – "When you've got a bunch of money and you've hired a lot of people and you're talking to your board and you're talking to reporters, your gut can get drowned out."

Present situation and tips for success

On September 25, 2012, Williams created a publishing platform, Medium (at Medium.com)

Main tip for success:

"Take a human desire, preferably one that has been around for a really long time...identify that desire and use modern technology to take out steps."

