

PODCAST Episode 412


📅 Sat, Jan 11, 2025 9:19AM ⌚ 50:18


SUMMARY KEYWORDS


new cowbell, cowbell orchestra, 2025 resolution, COVID recovery, staph infection, cellulitis, Innosearch overview, accessibility platform, AI technology, web scraper, product navigation, AI chatbot, voice command, return process, community feedback


SPEAKERS


Rob Mineault, News Reporter, Steve Barclay, Brain Ellison, David Leposky, Patrick Long, Minister, Ryan Fleury


 **Rob Mineault** 00:20
Hey and welcome to a another episode of AT Banter.


 **Steve Barclay** 00:26
Banter, banter.


 **Rob Mineault** 00:32
Oh, we got a new cowbell. Wait, where's the old cowbell?


 **Ryan Fleury** 00:39
It has been retired.

 **Rob Mineault** 00:42
Did you packed it away without checking whether or not we liked the new one?


 **Ryan Fleury** 00:47
You don't have a choice. Yeah.


 Rob Mineault 00:50
Fleury, okay, well, can we try that again?


 Steve Barclay 00:54
The whole purpose of the new cowbell was so that we would have variety of cowbells so there would be more cowbell.


 Ryan Fleury 00:59
Oh, I see it's gang up on Ryan, Happy New Year.


 Steve Barclay 01:04
Now, it's just another cowbell. It's not more cowbell.


 01:07
Oh, so you want me to have all the cowbells here?

 Rob Mineault 01:19
It would compliment the old one really well too. It's just that, you know, looks, listen, we're, we're all old here. We don't like change

 Ryan Fleury 01:27
All right, next week we'll have all the cowbells on the desk ready to go.

 Rob Mineault 01:31
Okay, cool. Well, how many do we have in total?

 Ryan Fleury 01:35
Now, three or four.

 Rob Mineault 01:39
Nice. See, look at that. We can have, like, a little cowbell orchestra going

Well, see, look at that. We can have, like, a little cowbell orchestra going.

R

Ryan Fleury 01:42

A cowbell orchestra. You guys, should, I should send one to each of you. Then each week, each of us just go, bong bong bong.

R

Rob Mineault 01:49

Exactly, and especially with our, you know, our 2025 New Year's resolution to bleed away listeners, I feel like that would be a perfect plan, all right, to bore the audience with something they don't care about. Some cowbell fans out there maybe, sure, I'm sure there are a few people listening that that's all they listen for. Why not? Hey, how are you guys?

R

Ryan Fleury 02:15

I'm disappointed now.

R

Rob Mineault 02:16

Oh, stop it. You love it. How is 2025 treating everyone now?

S

Steve Barclay 02:25

it's running over me like a freight train.

R

Rob Mineault 02:28

Oh, really? So what's, what's, what's, what's shaking over there?

S


Steve Barclay 02:32


Well, let's see, I launched into Christmas by having COVID before Christmas, got a cold over Christmas, got through Christmas, and then first thing in the New Year, got a staph infection in my foot, which caused cellulitis and kept me from being able to walk on my left foot, and just starting to get that resolved. And now my birth father's wife died this morning, so I've got to fly to Ireland. Holy, yeah, it's exciting.


R


Ryan Fleury 02:56


So things can only get better.


 Rob Mineault 02:59
That's right. it's just my instinct. I just feel like 2025, is going to be real slow news year.


 Ryan Fleury 03:08
Oh, I don't think so. Yeah, I don't think so.


 Rob Mineault 03:10
No, I'm kidding it's crazy. I we I don't even want to talk about the news. It's just insanity, what's going on and everywhere. It's just nuts, for sure. So you know what here at AT Banter, folks, the biggest problem that you're gonna hear about is we don't have the right cowbell. So consider this, you know, a brief respite from the news. All right, well enough of that. Let's dive right into the content of the show this week. Hey, Ryan?


 Ryan Fleury 03:49
Yeah, Rob?

 Rob Mineault 03:50
just what the heck are we doing today?

 Ryan Fleury 03:52
Today we are speaking with the fine folks from Innosearch, Patrick Long, who is the Co-founder and CEO. Welcome to the show.

 Patrick Long 04:01
Hey, happy to be here.

 Ryan Fleury 04:02
So glad we could have you.

 Rob Mineault 04:03
Maybe we can just start out by you just giving us a little bit of a broad overview of Innosearch and what it actually does.

P

Patrick Long 04:11

Yeah, sure, happy to do that. So a bit about Innosearch. You guys might have heard some videos and different collaborations we've done, but basically, in a nutshell, our mission is to empower those who are disconnected or underserved, like those who are blind and visually impaired, regain their independence and their confidence online. So Innosearch is accessibility first platform. And basically what we do our current product, is we help the challenge, overcome the challenges when navigating shopping sites and retailers. So as you know, a lot of websites like Amazon, like Walmart, 98% of them. Are inaccessible, very difficult to navigate, very difficult to use, because of the user experience is very complicated, lots of ads, lots of unrelated information that you just don't really need. So Innosearch uses AI, proprietary technology, web scraper technology to help take only the most relevant information and represent that to you in a very accessible format that is super simple, super easy, and you can quickly navigate to what you're looking for and make your purchase. You can very confidently navigate the digital world with Innosearch. Today, we support over 500,000 retailers, and we also have 1 billion products that you can browse from. You can also book flights on end of search. So any international flights, your Spirit Airlines, Frontier Airlines, Delta Airlines, you can browse them all and find exactly what you're looking for very quickly. Everything can be done all without leaving the Innosearch experience. So there's no need of a lot of back and forth and difficulty, as you know, talking with different customer service agents, everything is done on Innosearch platform, and it's super easy to use with your screen reader or magnifier.

R

Rob Mineault 06:24

So tell me a little bit about the inception of it. So what inspired the creation of Innosearch?

P

Patrick Long 06:30

Yeah, so myself, I've always been fascinated with technology, especially to see how it can make other people live lives more efficient, more productive, more confident, independent. Prior to this, I founded a nine figure blockchain peer to peer lending startup. And as you know, Blockchain makes sending money very efficient across borders and allows lots of people from all around the world to collaborate. So that was very exciting to me, the recent advancements in AI, particularly ChatGPT, and just the vast different applications that can be created from that really inspired me to investigate it further and see what it can do to help people with disabilities. So I'm sure some of you might have played with the Meta AI glasses, and that has been transformational, right? Helping, you know, people see, quote, unquote, see in the real world without actually being able to see clearly, right? It helps translate everything out there. And, you know, basically read out what's going on, and we can wear it with you. It's super compact. It allows you to take pictures, take videos, and just really have an AI companion everywhere you go. So that is just so powerful. And sort of the genesis of innosearch is to see how we can apply this to make the digital world just a lot more easier for people who have a visual impairment access.

R

Rob Mineault 08:01

So what was it specifically about the old fashioned e commerce platforms like, what challenges did you really see people with disabilities having there that you address in Innosearch?

P

Patrick Long 08:14

Yeah. So when we first launched, we got a lot of reception from, you know, people with visual impairments, saying, giving us feedback, that Amazon would take them two to three hours to find something as simple as tennis balls, right? Because a simple search on Amazon has so much information that comes out right? You see, I don't know, hundreds of results, a lot of which are even relevant, and when they're browsing, there's so many product details, so many product images that say are not labeled properly, right? And all of that just takes a lot of time, and it's very cumbersome for the user. So that's sort of the inspiration behind in a search, realizing that that was such a big problem. And the power of AI of basically going through all this information for you, right, and then basically representing it in a way that is super simple, right, that goes straight to the point and also allows an AI companion to help you out in the event you need to drill down into particular details, like a product's weight, a product, what it looks like, right? Asking, are there any competitors? Is there a better price? All these information can be distilled from all the different web pages out there without you actually having to navigate. It

R

Rob Mineault 09:37

Sounds like it's the clutter. A lot of these platforms are sort of built for sighted folks, built in a way that they want to cram as much information into that screen as they possibly can.

P

Patrick Long 09:50

Yeah, that's right. Basically the world today as we see it, digital world is built for sighted individuals, right when you go. To your Amazons and Walmarts of the world, there's a lot of images, right? There's a lot of videos, there's a lot of advertisements, and to be honest, they neglect people that have a visual impairment or any sort of disability. But I think the innovation of innosearch is that we've reduced all that clutter, removed all that clutter, like you said, Rob, just using AI technology to extract the most important, the most relevant information, and for you to just learn about your product, you know, decide if you want it or not, and quickly check out. And this experience is standardized across all the 500,000 retailers on Innosearch, that checkout process, that research process, is exactly the same for every single product.

R

Ryan Fleury 09:50

So is innosearch acting sort of like an overlay for these other websites? And the reason I ask that is I'm wondering if, for example, if you're searching for a product on Amazon, there may be a discount coupon that gets applied at checkout. Or, you know, user reviews. Do those come across in Innosearch?

P

Patrick Long 11:16

Yes. So exactly right. You can think of us as an overlay, an accessibility overlay, on top of all the existing retailers. So the coupons we cannot, unfortunately pass that through. However, we do find the lowest possible price. So we calculate the lowest possible price for you, and Innosearch as our own promotion. So we try to match whatever retailer promotions are going on out there, but all the reviews, all the product information, all the exact product images, all that information passes through to innosearch. In fact, we even have a AI agent that runs in the background, basically it scrapes, you know, when you type in your search on in a search, you know, there's an AI agent that's spawned in the background. It's like a little worker. It downloads all the information, trains the AI on it. But when questions are asked, it can just answer it on the fly.

R

Rob Mineault 12:18

Yeah, that's very cool. I was playing with it earlier, and we haven't even really started to talk about that, but I feel like that's a really, a really huge benefit to people as well. That AI chat bot, because you're absolutely right. You can ask questions to the to the chat bot about the product, and you, you're getting information that's not even in the write up, which I think is really invaluable to anybody, regardless of their vision. I would say like, it's not only it's, it's an example of a great, accessible platform, but I would say it's, it's universally designed. I mean, because as somebody who's sighted, who went in and started playing with it, I would, I would much rather prefer to use innosearch than just going to Amazon, just because of those factors, the fact that it reduces a lot of the clutter, and it it aggregates from for multiple different retailers out there, and it has this AI chat bot component.

P

Patrick Long 13:24

Exactly. I mean, we pull information, not just from the Amazon website, but there's also information from web searches. So it basically, in the background, does a bunch of Google searches around that product and trains itself on that. Plus, if there's any, like, technical manuals, right, like, you know, a manual on how to use a toaster oven or coffee machine, it also has all that information as well. So there's a lot of context that the machine has, right? And it's literally all at your fingertips. You can, you know, just ask it a question by typing. But you know, soon, actually, we're working on, right now, a voice version of Innosearch. So instead of going to Innosearch.ai, you'll have another option. One of our New Year's resolutions for 2025 will be to 10x our accessibility. So we'll have a number, actually a phone number, that you can dial. And you know, you don't even need to to access a computer or anything, everything can be just done through voice. So you'll just be chatting with it, telling it what you need. It'll reply back, serve you different results, and then you can go through that checkout super seamlessly, all through dialing a number.

R

Ryan Fleury 14:46

Well, it's such a time saver. Like you mentioned, the number of products and retailers you have for the amount of time it would take me to go to Best Buy, Walmart, EBay, Amazon, looking for a product. It. It's just not worth it anymore. When you have something like innosearch that

cleans up all the clutter and searches all of those sites for you, it is so convenient.

P

Patrick Long 15:12

And not just the search. I also see Innosearch as like, end to end product journey support, so when it's time to say, make a return, right? Or if something's broken, a lot of times, you have to contact each retailer one by one. And I'm sure everybody here has experienced just, you know, the endless loop of chat bots you have to talk to to finally get a person on the line. And when you get that person on the line, it's just, you know, they don't provide the best support, right? And so in a search, we do that for you on the back end. And so we can save you a lot of time if you shop through in a search, if there needs to be a return, or if there's any issue with the product, we do that correspondence on your behalf, that we can help you save time, not just save time, but we can help you do it in an accessible manner. Because a lot of times, navigating to all those different spots to find those people, to find the right phone number or email, you know, can be pretty cumbersome and challenging.

R

Ryan Fleury 16:16

So just to clarify, can you just give us a quick overview of what that process would be like, from find a product, add it to the cart, check out, and then returning it.

P

Patrick Long 16:29

Sure. So first, obviously, you'd navigate to Innosearch.ai. And on the home page you'll find all the best deals on the internet. So we've basically crawled the entire web and found best possible deals for a bunch of items. These come from all different retailers, Walmart, Amazon, you know, just all over the place, Best Buy, right? We try to find the lowest possible price that these items were at at any given point. That's the home page. If you're looking for a quick deal or, you know, a gift to give a friend, it's all there. However, if you're looking for something more specific, you can go ahead and type it into the search bar. You know, anything you want, anything under the sun, we basically have, since there's so just so many retailers that you know we can cover. And once you put in that query in a search will, in real time, look for the items for you. So it places that search and basically crawls a bunch of websites and pulls all those items together. Now the search results are populated, and there's actually another search you can do, basically a search within a search, if there's anything particular within that list that you're looking for. So just to give you an example, let's say you're looking for flashlights. All right, we type in flashlights, you'll see a bunch of flashlights pop up. They'll probably be like, a few 100 results. But if you're looking for, let's say, a lithium flash flight or a flashlight that, you know it has, I don't know, 1000 lumens, there'll be a nested search that you can make within that original one, and it'll pop out, you know, something even more specific. So now you might reduce it to only five once you pick the item that you're looking for, you can select it right if you're happy with it, you can just go ahead and buy now and it'll check out, or you can add to cart. You can click on the product page and continue to do your research right once you if you click on the product now, you can see all the key features, and there'll be a button to ask in a search right that ask in a search, button will allow you to drill down into that particular product. So if you're, I don't know, trying to make sure there's a good warranty on it, yeah, where it's made, what's the size? What are the dimensions, how much it weighs, what

color it is, you can just ask in a search and the AI will reply back with certain qualities of this item, right? Or you can even ask it for we've had a lot of folks actually buy clothing on Innosearch, yeah, you can ask it, you know, would this look good with, I don't know, jeans? Or it has some ability to help out on that regard as well. So let's say you're happy with your flashlight, you add it to cart. Now you could go to your cart and go ahead and check out. The checkout process is very simple. We use stripe as our payment processor. So as you know, stripe is international organization, and they do trillions of dollars of transaction volume every year. That's very safe. It has all the bank grade encryption. We do not store any of the customer information. All of that is handled on stripe, so your information is secure there, and once you go through that checkout process, it's super easy. Stripe actually keeps a little profile. Each person, so the next time you check out, you know that the shipping address and all that good stuff can be saved, so it'll be very smooth, and that's it. Now you've placed your order on the back end, and search will relay that order, all that information, all that payment to the respective retailer. The retailer will receive that information and then go ahead and ship it out to you. And throughout this whole process, you'll get emails from inno search telling you the status of it so once it's confirmed, once it's delivered, and finally, if there's any issue with the item, you can always initiate a return. And that's very easy. If you have an account on innosearch, let's just start the return process. You can also email us at support, just give the you know order ID number that's generated for each order that you place, and then we'll guide you through that return process. So that's basically it, and we guarantee all orders 100% satisfaction. So if there's any issue, yeah, we will do our best to help you resolve that.

R

Ryan Fleury 21:10

And so then, like with with Amazon, for example, how does the return work? Do we end up sending the product back to Innosearch, or does it go back to Amazon like the traditional form does?

P

Patrick Long 21:23

Yeah. So we will provide you return instructions. Obviously, return instructions can be different, sure, from retailer to retailer, so usually, if it's through Amazon, there'll be a QR code that you'll scan and you'll bring to, like a UPS, Whole Foods or, you know, they have different drop off locations.

R

Ryan Fleury 21:42

Okay, so nothing actually goes to Innosearch or gets shipped from Innosearch?

P

Patrick Long 21:48

No.

R

Rob Mineault 21:50

What about things like order history, like, you know, a lot of these platforms will, will you know,

what about things like order history, like, you know, a lot of these platforms will, will, you know, keep track of all your orders so that you can it's easy to sort of re-order something again. Does Innosearch track all of your your order data as well in your account?

P

Patrick Long 22:04

Yeah, if you create an account, each order that you place, all the items are tracked and saved. So it's easy to be what you ordered. In the past, you may want to reorder them. That's also the place where you would, if you want to make a return, you can do that, or if the item has not shipped yet, you can also cancel your item. So yeah, it's, it's very convenient. Again, we our philosophy is simple, so everything is very easy and simple for you to use and navigate.

R

Rob Mineault 22:40

So, can we, let's talk a little bit about about the actual accessibility component of this, because, again, I'm curious. So what kind of specific build measures did you take when you built the platform itself, to ensure that it worked really well with with different screen readers?

P

Patrick Long 22:59

First of all, we build, you know, a lot of our team members are blind, actually. So our Assistive Technology front end engineer, he used to work, actually, at Freedom Scientific with the JAWS team. And he was born completely blind, and he actually taught himself how to code by reading a lot of the computer literature out there, because he's a techie, and he finds all that stuff super exciting. So, yeah, so he leads a lot of the front end development efforts in, you know, designing the headers, making sure it's simple enough, right? Because he uses screen readers, obviously, on a daily basis, that's how he navigates the net. So he builds that, he builds the experience on Innosearch with that in mind and with all the features we roll out, he's a integral part of testing everything and making sure it all flows nicely. And it's simple enough that a screen you know, elementary level screen reader, user without any of the advanced commands, can still use in a search. In addition, we also work with Dr Kirk Adams. You might have heard of him. He was the former CEO of the American Federation for the Blind. And also, Sam Seavy was a influencer at The Blind Life. So a lot of those folks we share our product ideas, product direction with, that they can help shape a direction and where we go to make sure we're delivering that, you know, five star experience for the blind and visually impaired, and that's just on our team, but also we have a large community of users, so on a daily basis, actually, they email us. They always give us suggestions about different places we can go, and we're always listening, because I think it's just so. Important to make sure, you know, we keep those who are actually using our product in mind all the time, to make sure the direction is really addressing the pain points that they have.

R

Ryan Fleury 25:10

Right. Yay, an organization listening to the community of users who use it on a daily basis use assistive technology. It's great to hear that you guys are listening to the community, and people like Sam and others who are really integral in shaping how something can work so well.

R

Rob Mineault 25:29

A lot of companies don't do it. So yeah, we always, we always love to hear when companies are sort of really tied into the community. How big is the team?

P

Patrick Long 25:39

We are actually a startup based in Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Bay Area. But our team is global. We have about eight team members at the moment, eight full time members, some on the engineering side, two co founders, some helping out with customer support. You know, front end, back end design. So, yeah, we are, we're small, but we're mighty, you know, we're very nimble, and we're moving very fast. So, and I think especially in the age of AI, it's just so powerful because, you know, AI basically, basically, can talk like a human, right? It's hard to differentiate what what is AI and what is real.

R

Rob Mineault 26:25

Yeah, just out of curiosity, though, like, do you feel like something like Innosearch could have even been possible, like, say, five years ago?

P

Patrick Long 26:35

Oh, no, absolutely not. And the reason is because, you know, as you know, there's just been massive acceleration in all those chips, and the power of the chips, right, especially those AI chips that NVIDIA has released. And there's they've just been building, like, massive data centers and training all these different AI models. They've been spending hundreds of millions of dollars right to train all these different models. And, you know, enables, actually, startups like us to fine tune these models to make them more applicable to different niche use cases, but without those core foundational models. You know, a lot of startups like this would be possible, right? Because, I mean, I don't have hundreds of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars to trade and buy those chips, which can be like, \$30,000 a pop. So, yeah I wouldn't say it would be possible five years ago, but now, definitely, I think now, there's just been an explosion of new opportunity and new applications with this kind of stuff.

R

Rob Mineault 27:48

Correct me if I'm wrong about this, but does the platform generate AI generated alt text for for different product images that say, don't have alt text?

P

Patrick Long 28:01

Yep, it does.

R

Rob Mineault 28:02

Wow.

P

Patrick Long 28:02

Yeah. So every single product, every single product image you see on innosearch has alt text description. You can just generate it, but if you don't like what it's generated, you can also regenerate it and continue to, you know, quote, unquote, talk with it, so that it can get to the detail that you're looking for. So, yeah, every single image, every single product there, has a alt text label.

R

Rob Mineault 28:28

Oh, that's, that's amazing. I love that. So how old is the actual platform? How long have you guys been doing this?

P

Patrick Long 28:35

Just about a year. Yeah. But yeah, we're moving incredibly quickly. So, I mean, the growth has been phenomenal. I think October to November, we had about a 300% increase just in users and now, so sales traffic, right? And then that, you know, that was a massive bump. And then to December, we had another 50% bump. So, yeah, it's just been incredible. And the community has also been incredible. They have been sharing a lot of features that they loved, you know, some features maybe they didn't love so much. So we are always just working as quick as possible to turn out something that can really help users.

R

Ryan Fleury 29:24

So are there apps for iOS or Android at this point yet, or is it still only web based?

P

Patrick Long 29:30

Yeah, at the moment, we're just web based, but we've been getting a lot of requests for an app, and that's yeah, definitely on the roadmap. Recently, we've been putting together a voice command feature so that what we've noticed actually is a lot of people, they struggle sometimes with doing certain things using their keyboard or their screen reader. And so we believe a voice command can really 10x accessibility because. A lot of them can speak right and can verbalize what they need out of, you know, the website. So anytime you're stuck with your screen reader, you just, you can just simply verbalize it, like, I want to check out now, or, oh, I don't want that item. Can you scratch that? Then AI can understand and execute on that command for you. So that's something that's really exciting. And we think, I mean, I think it can 10x the accessibility of Innosearch, just just from where we are right now.

R

Ryan Fleury 30:29

Well and I think too, if it's conversational, if anybody has ever spent any time with ChatGPT, I can lose half an hour, 45 minutes just asking questions and follow up questions and just talking to AI and just lose track of time. So, you know, it's so intuitive, it's informational. It is such an asset to us now.

R

Rob Mineault 30:56

Well, you know, it's funny, and I'll give an example of what I was fooling around with it earlier. I need a new litter box for my cat, and so I was searching for different litter boxes. And, you know, I came across this one that that where there's an entry door in the front, and then there's, there's sort of a door that the cat can climb out the top. And I started talking to the Chatbot about it, and, you know, it was able to answer questions, not just about like, oh, it's, it's this big by this big, but it was able to answer questions like, well, what's the advantage of having an extra exit out the top, like, like, very, very specific questions about the product that's not necessarily in the description. It was able to answer all of those questions. So, and it does really feel like you're actually talking to a person, as opposed to it's just spitting out dimensions.

P

Patrick Long 32:12

and I think that's the way it's able to do that, is because it has context, not just from the product page, right, but also has context from web searches, you know, so like things like Reddit, it has that context. So it's able to answer you as if you spent, you know, so much time reading a bunch of articles, it summarizes all that, and then, you know, gives you something that's relevant to the question you're asking.

R

Ryan Fleury 32:44

Here's the million dollar question that I'm sure somebody the audience is going to ask, because it's AI. Does it hallucinate? There? There is, there's talk of AI hallucinations, right?

S

Steve Barclay 32:55

Does it Dream of Electric Sheep? That's what we're asking.

P

Patrick Long 33:01

So we actually reduce the amount of hallucinations significantly. And the way we do that is, like I said, the context. The context is very strong, like we point the AI to the context, which is the Amazon page, right? So the hallucinations are very minimal, if not zero, because it's pointed directly to the Amazon page and it will, the way we build it is, if the information isn't there, it'll just tell you it doesn't know the answer. It's going, it's not going to make stuff up. Make stuff up, that's right.

R

Rob Mineault 33:39

Well, listen, you know what? None of that concerns me about, about AI anyways, because I just feel like, it's good that it makes a mistake occasionally. That's probably for the best. Like we want it to screw up once in a while, and who hasn't gotten bad advice from a friend? So if ChatGPT leads me astray once in a while, it's no worse than Steve.

S

Steve Barclay 34:05

Hey, I only just told you to marry that chick with the turkey farm.

P

Patrick Long 34:17

Another thing we do at Innosearch to overcome that is we have human intervention as well. So we actually have people double check and also some of the customer service we pair with a human customer service agent. There are things that we do to ensure that hallucinations or mistakes to that degree is minimized, and there's definitely some human component as well to make sure, because I know that's a concern, right? And that's like you said, million dollar question. A lot of AI companies, they're trying to figure that out, but for us, we don't think actually AI can do 100 Percent of things, there's still some component, 5%, 10%, 15% that will require some human because, AI is not perfect. It does make mistakes, and there are issues, right? So we can definitely take advantage of that 85% or 90% of the tasks, but in some cases, that last mile, we have to use human intervention to get us to to 100% reliability, right?

R

Rob Mineault 35:29

So now you mentioned a roadmap, where sort of, are we on the roadmap? Is this kind of Innosearch 1.0, or are you guys working on a 2.0? Or are you just kind of making small tweaks and improvements as you go?

P

Patrick Long 35:46

Oh, we're, I think, doing all of that. So in a search, I would say our mission is to empower those who are disconnected or underserved communities regain their independence and confidence online. And that mission I see as never ending will never achieve that will always continue to strive to build experiences of folks, whether you have a physical disability, cognitive disability, whatever we want to make it so that you can experience internet access, basic services at the same level as somebody who is sighted or somebody who doesn't have that disability. So I don't think we'll ever achieve that. That's something that this company will continue to strive for, and we're always thinking of new ways of making that happen, right? So for the blind and visually impaired, we have this experience that makes it super screen reader friendly, but as we shared it with users, there are some that said, Hey, I would actually like it. If you know, I get stuck when I use my screen reader. Is there something you can do to make it even more accessible? So then the innovation of voice command came around, right and now we soon, in

the next month or so, we'll have this new feature. So if you get stuck, you can just read it out. And we're always iterating and always making our our product better. So that's sort of how we think of it. There will always be weeks and improvements, but if we find something we can do to really give you that 10x boost, we'll definitely do it. I mean, we're we're a startup, and we want to move quickly. And if there's something that we can do to really help our users, we'll do it.

R

Rob Mineault 37:29

Is there anything else that you guys are working on that you can talk about?

P

Patrick Long 37:33

Yeah, so something that we're really excited by is, first, the voice commands, and second is the AI chat agent that can be dialed into via landline. So that's something where you could call. In fact, we are already we bought the number 1-800-1855 or ShopGPT, and basically you can just call it, and it will be just as if you were calling into Best Buy or calling into whatever your favorite store, and that person, instead of just having that stores product at their fingertips, they'll literally have billions of products that you could shop from. So you can have this conversation with this AI. That AI will help you narrow down the exact product that you're looking for and then guide you through a very quick checkout process, and next day, you'll have that item at your door right. Next day or two, you'll have that item at your door. So that's something that's really exciting. And I think that not only can help people who are blind and visually impaired, but also, you know, seniors, people that are not so tech savvy, those are all potential audiences, yeah. But Rob, if you have any interesting ideas, I mean, we're game to entertain them.

R

Ryan Fleury 38:56

Yeah, and this is Ryan, and I'm the blind guy of the crew here. And so any word like, I guess part of the roadmap, possibly this year, is releasing an app? Because I like my phone doesn't leave me, right? I do my Amazon shopping, all my shopping online through my phone.

P

Patrick Long 39:11

Yeah. I mean, I think we need to first finish up this voice command or this phone line thing, and then after that, definitely, probably by the end of the year, for sure, we'll have an app for iOS and Android.

R

Ryan Fleury 39:26

Well, I guess I could just create a shortcut on my home screen too.

P

Patrick Long 39:30

P Patrick Long 39:50

Yeah. A lot of people have done that, actually, yeah,

R Rob Mineault 39:33

Yeah. But I mean, honestly, like, you know, the applications, like, even, you know, there's been so much talk about the idea of an accessible browser. And you know, if you can make a browser that really it when you, when you go to a website, it sort of does what you're talking about, scrapes out all of the white noise for people with disabilities. I mean, there's probably some potential there.

P Patrick Long 39:58

And as I think AI improves - I know OpenAI and Anthropic, they're working in a new bunch new models that, who knows what the capabilities are. I think those companies are pretty secret, yeah, what they can do, what they release. But, yeah, I think the space is moving very quickly. It's like, the way I think of it is like, you know, you have your hammer, right? You have your saw, you have your drill, right? These are all different tools that mankind has discovered, fire right? Now, this AI, is just a new tool that's coming out. And, you know, yeah, sort of the possibilities are endless, right? Like humans are very creative and imaginative. So who knows what this kind of stuff can do in the future?

R Rob Mineault 40:41

Well, and I'm sure that that can sometimes pose a challenge for you guys, being in that AI sphere, because the technology is just improving month to month, almost.

P Patrick Long 40:55

Yeah, exactly. And it's challenging, but I think also exciting, because it keeps us on our toes, and it makes it so that there is no incumbent, right? I think for technologies that move slowly, you'll have your big incumbents, like your Googles of the world and whatever, right? That's their space. And it's really hard to think of anything new, since they're moving it's moving slowly, and then they have a lot of manpower to like over all the bases, right? But with this kind of stuff, the tool is so new, the applications are sort of endless. So it's, it creates opportunity for smaller companies to move quickly and address the pain points for different niches. So that's, that's what's been really exciting for me personally.

R Rob Mineault 41:42

So for anybody out there that is interested in trying it out, where can people find Innosearch?

P Patrick Long 41:48

Yeah, you can check us out at www.innosearch.ai and, yeah, that's that's where we're at. If you

mean, you can check us out at www.innosearch.ai and, yeah, that's that's where we're at. If you have any questions, you can always email us at support@innosearch.ai, and friendly person will happily chat with you. And if you have any issues questions, of course, we're here to help cool

R

Rob Mineault 42:15

Well, listen. Thanks for coming on and chatting with about it. Highly recommend everybody go check it out and play with it, especially if you're a big fan of online shopping. So we will also include the link in the show notes. So check the show notes, or however you want to get there, but yeah, go check it out. Guys. Best of luck with this. I think that you guys have done a really amazing job on this and I'm excited to really see what other other startups are going to leverage artificial intelligence to really drive accessibility forward. So great job, and best of luck.

P

Patrick Long 42:53

Thanks a lot. Thanks for the opportunity, and thanks for giving us the forum to share Innosearch with your community. We really appreciate that. Cool.

R

Ryan Fleury 43:01

Thanks. Have a great evening.

R

Rob Mineault 43:03

Take care. Well, that's very cool. What do you guys think?

R

Ryan Fleury 43:09

It's gonna become my new search engine for shopping online. It's doing everything. It's all it's all right there.

R

Rob Mineault 43:17

I think it's a gold standard for universal design. It really is. And like you said, Amazon and others can get so cluttered with images, untagged, images, sponsored ads, you know, all this other stuff, right? And that's why I think that you know, as a sighted person, it's, it's a delight to use, to look at, because there isn't 1000 different things going on, you know, a left and a right side bar and, you know, and not 1000 recommended items and other items that you might be interested in. So, I mean, it even goes past blind and low vision folks. There's a lot of use cases for this. It. I think it's I think it's extremely exciting, because I really feel like we are not very far away of finally getting the internet completely accessible. Unlike Ontario, which was supposed to be accessible as of January 1, and from what I was hearing on the news, they failed. They had 20 years to do it, and still sucks, still infuriating.

R Ryan Fleury 44:33
Yeah, from what I understand, not even an A for effort.

R Rob Mineault 44:36
No, it's terrible. I was watching, I was just watching a news piece on it earlier.

N News Reporter 44:50
Brian Ellison is one of several disability advocates at Queen's Park today who criticized the province for missing its deadline to make Ontario accessible, which was supposed to happen. But, 2025 after the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was voted through in 2005. David Lepofsky was part of that original fight, and was back today.

D David Leposky 45:12
20 years later, on New Year's Day 2025, people with disabilities woke up to a province that is still replete with soul crushing barriers to progress that is glacial on accessibility, the government has the obligation to lead Ontario to become an accessible province as soon after that legislative deadline as possible.

N News Reporter 45:42
The legislation was supposed to create accessibility standards for nearly every aspect of society, but critics say the province won't enforce them.

M Minister 45:50
We don't believe in punishment, but we believe in education. We educate and 99% of all the accessibility audit is a result. So it's working.

N News Reporter 46:07
Lepofsky isn't buying that.

D David Leposky 46:09
This idea that, Oh, all we need to do is educate people on accessibility. Governments have been doing that. Disability organizations have been doing that, not for years, for decades, and not only is that ship sailed, that ship sunk,



News Reporter 46:27

People like Ellison will continue to do what they can to navigate Ontario.



Brain Ellison 46:31

I have developed my own sense of survival, but I think the skills that we have all acquired on our own only come from when you when you become disabled, you either, you know it's fight or flight.



News Reporter 46:49

The province says it's using a modern regulatory process to make sure standards are implemented, while the city says it goes beyond what's required in provincial legislation when making sidewalks accessible lane. CBC News, Toronto



Rob Mineault 47:02

Crazy, right? I love that. I love that line though, that ship is not only sailed, it sunk.



Ryan Fleury 47:09

Well, it's just like any of these things, right? There's no enforcement. So why even get excited about it?



Rob Mineault 47:15

Well, that's why that so that that one guy that you heard talking, incidentally, he was, like a Minister of whatever in Ontario, and that's so infuriating to hear him say that well, you know, we don't want to punish, we want to educate.



Ryan Fleury 47:29

Yeah, we're done educating.



Rob Mineault 47:34

Yeah, it's crazy. So, you know? And then, you know, Ontario was, was the great experiment, right? Like they were the first province to try something like that. 20 years. Got nowhere, yeah? So very frustrating. All right, hey, Ryan? Yeah, Rob? Where can people find us?

R Ryan Fleury 47:54
I don't know. Steve, where can people find us?

S Steve Barclay 47:57
Well, they can find us www.atbanter.com, they could email us at cowbell@atbanter.com not only that, but they can find us on social media. We are all over the place. We're on Facebook, we're on Instagram, we're on Mastodon. Well, we're not really on Instagram. We're sort of taking a pass on that one, I guess. But Facebook and Mastodon, yeah, is anybody else on Mastodon? Anybody? Anybody write us an email? We want to know. Anybody use this damn thing? But Facebook, everybody seems to be on Facebook. That seems to be the one. Yeah.

R Ryan Fleury 48:32
We're still on Facebook, but Facebook and TikTok are just kind of the place to be.

S Steve Barclay 48:36
You know what I've been I've been advertising on Facebook over the last little while, and it's crazy. It's it's getting me more than I'm getting through Google Ads.

R Rob Mineault 48:45
Is that right?

S Steve Barclay 48:46
Yeah, more than, more than anywhere else is Facebook. It seems like the blind community is really ensconced in in Facebook for social media.

R Rob Mineault 48:55
That makes a lot of sense, you know, because there are a lot of really good groups going on there, so I do feel like that is where a lot of people hang out. So yeah, there you go. Okay, man, listen, Steve took all our jobs, did everything. Nothing else to do and sign off.

S Steve Barclay 49:14
That's gonna be about all for today.

R**Rob Mineault 49:17**

Nice, Steve. That IS going to about do it for us this week. Big thanks, of course, to Patrick for joining us, and we will see everybody next week.

S**Steve Barclay 49:32**

This podcast has been brought to you by Canadian Assistive Technology providing Low Vision and Blindness solutions as well as Physical Access solutions and Augmentative Communication Aids across Canada. Find us online www.canasstech.com or if you're in the Vancouver Lower Mainland, visit our storefront at #106-828 West Eighth Avenue in Vancouver. That's one block off Broadway at Willow you can reach us by phone toll free at 1-844-795-8324, or by email at sales@canasstech.com