Sonos CEO behind disastrous app exits with $1.9 million severance

Conrad was the CTO of Pandora for 10 years, the VP of product at Snapchat for two years, and the chief product officer at the failed Quibi streaming service. He has been heading work to fix the app with Nick Millington, Sonos' chief product officer and the architect behind the original app, Sonos spokesperson Erin Pategas told The Verge.

Sonos let customers down

Leadership succeeding Spence has their work cut out for them after Sonos tanked customer relations last year and frustrated employees who were concerned about pushing out the app.

"When [the app's user experience] doesn't work, our customers are taken out of the moment and are right to feel that we've let them down," Conrad said in an email to employees. "I think we'll all agree that this year we've let far too many people down."

In the letter (which you can read in its entirety at The Verge), Conrad pointed to "remarkable" product releases being brought down by the bad app. Such products are insufficient "when our customers' alarms don't go off, their kids can't hear their playlist during breakfast, their surrounds don't fire, or they can't pause the music in time to answer the buzzing doorbell," Conrad wrote.

Conrad and the following CEO will have to work to not only improve Sonos' value but to convince users that Sonos is

equipped to handle their longstanding interests and demands as well as future endeavors. A big driver for Sonos' app problems was the need to evolve the software to support mobile devices, like the Ace. In August, Spence noted to investors that the maligned app was "a redesign of the entire system—not only the app but also the player side of our system, as well as our cloud infrastructure."

Interim CEO Conrad seems intent on appeasing disappointed customers and continuing to push Sonos toward a cloud-dependent future.

"Getting back to basics is necessary, but clearly not enough to unlock the future we all envision for Sonos," Conrad told employees, noting desires to push Sonos "well beyond" home audio.

At least for now, customers seem pleased that Spence will no longer lead those efforts.

"Well deserved," a Reddit user wrote today in a post that has hundreds of upvotes as of this writing. "Imagine doing so much reputation and functional damage to a previous well regarded go-to brand."

https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2025/01/sonos-ceo-behind-disastrous-app-exits-with-1-9-million-severance/