How Stablecoins Are Serving as the Gateway for Institutional Crypto Adoption

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Key Takeaways

- Stablecoins are becoming the gateway for institutional crypto adoption, offering the stability and familiarity of fiat currencies while also providing speed, finality and 24/7 availability.
- Stablecoins are auditable and increasingly compliant with global regulatory frameworks. They also compress transaction times, unlock global reach and reduce the friction baked into legacy rails.
- Not all stablecoins are equal. Institutions should prioritize those with full reserve backing, transparent attestations, regulatory alignment and multi-chain operability.

For years, the conversation around institutional crypto adoption has been framed around risk: how to hedge it, regulate it, and in many cases, how to avoid it altogether. But that framing misses the mark. Because while the headlines focus on price swings and policy uncertainty, the reality is slightly different. Institutions aren’t necessarily avoiding blockchain; they’re just waiting for infrastructure that aligns with how they already operate.

Stablecoins are delivering exactly that. This asset class is the gateway for many institutions to finally embrace Web3 and

feel more confident about this market. This isn’t just hearsay. A recent survey found that while 13% of global financial institutions currently use stablecoins, over half of non-users (54%) are expected to adopt them within the next 12 months. The signs are looking positive, but more can be done to ensure institutions double down on this asset.

Related: What Every Small-Business Founder Needs to Know About Stablecoins and Digital Dollars

Keeping things stable

Pegged to fiat currencies but powered by blockchain, stablecoins offer what traditional systems often struggle to provide: speed, finality and 24/7 availability. In an industry where settlement times are measured in milliseconds for equities but days for cross-border transfers, the appeal of stablecoins is obvious. For institutions looking to modernize treasury flows, global payments or balance sheet liquidity, stablecoins are no longer experimental; they’re pragmatic.

You don’t need to look far for proof. Visa is now settling transactions with USDC. BlackRock has launched a tokenized fund using stablecoin rails. Even PayPal, once a skeptic, has entered the space with its own dollar-backed token. These aren’t fringe moves; they’re signals that stablecoins are becoming the connective tissue between traditional finance and Web3.

But while we’re seeing this positive rush towards stablecoins, broader institutional sentiment around Web3 remains cautious. The lack of regulatory clarity and high-profile breaches continue to mar the reputation of the sector. However, stablecoins are fundamentally built differently from other, more volatile elements of Web3.

Not reinventing the wheel

The problem isn’t whether blockchain has utility, but it’s that most of crypto isn’t designed with institutions in mind. Volatility, fragmentation and regulatory grey zones have made it difficult to engage. Stablecoins bypass those pain points. They’re familiar, auditable and increasingly compliant with global regulatory frameworks. For institutions that have sat on the sidelines, this is a turning point.

Critics have argued that stablecoins simply replicate fiat in digital form. While this may be a negative point for passionate Web3 companies or daring investors, it should be a sign of reassurance to the traditional financial markets. By simply being a digital format of fiat currencies, stablecoins can establish that credibility in a market faced with volatility.

Innovation doesn’t always mean reinvention; it often means optimization. Stablecoins make dollars programmable. They compress transaction times, unlock global reach and reduce the friction baked into legacy rails. This is overdue innovation, one that traditional banks can immediately see the benefit of and the opportunities it presents.

Backing the right horse

Of course, not all stablecoins are created equal. The collapse of TerraUSD or the controversies around USDT show that traditional finance can’t just bet on a stablecoin and reap the rewards. There is still a significant amount of risk — especially with stablecoins that don’t have enough backing or transparency.

Institutions eager to embrace stablecoins need to be selective. While it may feel that any stablecoin is a gamble, there are clear signs that indicate a more reliable asset

versus one that could be at risk of future trouble.

Prioritizing issuers with full reserve backing, transparent attestations and regulatory alignment will ensure that investors can trust their investments. Going further, institutions should also ensure that they are examining stablecoins designed for multi-chain operability. This will be especially valuable, ensuring that investors aren't locked into a single ecosystem or protocol.

Related: Revolutionary Private Stablecoin Launches, Set to Transform the Future of Cryptocurrency and Financial Privacy

Backing stability

The opportunity around stablecoins isn't theoretical anymore. Treasury teams can now use stablecoins to move funds instantly, eliminate FX drag and pilot blockchain-based products without rewriting core systems. While the idea of a stablecoin was once a blind leap of faith, it is becoming a logical next step in an institution's investment strategy.

Traditional financial institutions that hold off investing in crypto until it's "safer" are looking in the wrong place. Like any market, there are riskier options and more reliable bets – with stablecoins falling firmly into the latter category. But despite this increased level of trust, this doesn't mean that stablecoins are "the future" of blockchain. In fact, the reality is that stablecoins are simply the gateway into a bigger market that can be immensely profitable for investors. For institutions willing to act, they offer a rare advantage: early access to the next generation of financial infrastructure, without the chaos that came before.

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Meta’s Ray-Ban Maker Says Its AI Smart Glasses Could Be the New Smartphone as Sales Skyrocket

Key Takeaways

- EssilorLuxottica is the largest eyewear manufacturer in the world.
- The company partnered with Meta to release Ray-Ban Meta glasses and Oakley Meta glasses.
- EssilorLuxottica says sales of the glasses had tripled by mid-year and further contributed to the company’s 11% revenue growth in the third-quarter.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg thinks smart glasses could be the new smartphone, and Meta’s partnership with the world’s biggest eyewear maker, EssilorLuxottica, has the sales to prove it.

“Clearly, there is a lift coming from Ray-Ban Meta wearables as a product category,” said EssilorLuxottica CFO Stefano Grassi on the company’s third-quarter earnings call on Thursday, per CNBC.

The European eyewear giant said that sales grew by 11.7% year-

over-year — 4% of which came from wearables, notably its Ray-Ban Meta product.

Related: She Sent a Cold Email to Meta, Judging Its Ray-Bans. Now She Runs the Wearables Division.

“We believe that glasses will be the future,” Grassi said. “Glasses will materially replace most of the functionality that today we have embedded into our phones.”

Meanwhile, last month in the keynote address at Meta Connect, Zuckerberg told the crowd that he wasn’t surprised that “AI glasses are taking off.”

“The sales trajectory that we’ve seen is similar to some of the most popular consumer electronics of all time,” he said.

EssilorLuxottica and Meta have been partners since 2019. EssilorLuxottica controls almost 80% of the eyewear industry and owns retail chains, Sunglass Hut and LensCrafters.

When Meta released the $299 Ray-Ban Meta in October 2023, the glasses, which take photos and videos, make calls, send text messages through voice commands, interact with Meta AI, and play music, were an unexpected hit, selling more than one million pairs in less than two years and more than two million units overall so far.

Alessia Pierdomenico/Bloomberg via Getty Images
Zuckerberg stated in July 2024 that “demand is outpacing our ability to build them.” A year later, Meta acquired a little under 3% of EssilorLuxottica, a minority stake worth around $3.5 billion.

Meta also released the $499 Oakley smartglasses in June, which are made for athletes and offer higher-resolution recording and a 40% longer battery life lasting up to eight hours.

Meanwhile, the success has led other tech giants to create their own. Apple, Google, and Amazon are reportedly working on their own smart glasses.

Related: Google Is Making AI 'Intelligent Eyewear' With Warby Parker After Eyeing Meta's Ray-Ban Success

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Stop Following This Popular Startup Advice — It's Quietly Destroying Businesses

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Key Takeaways

- Common startup advice pitfalls include quitting after minimal investor rejections, mistaking tentative support as guaranteed and making hasty decisions on pivots or spending.
- Successful startup leadership involves skepticism, tailored decision-making and prioritizing advice that aligns with a company's specific stage and resource availability.

Advice is one of the few things a startup CEO will never run out of. It comes from investors, board members, peers and even your own employees. And most of the time, it sounds convincing. The challenge is that not all advice is useful. In fact, some of it can quietly put your company at risk if you follow it too closely. Over time, many founders discover that ignoring bad advice is just as important as acting on good advice.

Below, I will be discussing some common examples that may sound fine in theory but can cause real damage in practice.

Related: 8 Practical Tips for Successfully Launching Your Startup

1. “Just talk to 10 investors. If none of them bite, quit.”

On paper, this seems logical. If 10 people don’t believe in your startup, maybe there is no market. But here is the reality: Investors are not a random sample of wisdom. They pass on most pitches for reasons that have nothing to do with you.

The math alone makes this bad advice. A typical venture capitalist might meet 100 companies to invest in one. Quitting after talking to 10 investors is like dropping out of a marathon after running 200 meters. The odds have not even had a chance to play out yet.

Many founders raise money only after dozens — or even hundreds — of rejections. It doesn’t mean their idea was bad; it just meant they hadn’t found the right match yet. So if you’re hearing “no” after “no,” don’t assume it’s a verdict.

2. “Don’t worry, we’ll support you.”

This one usually comes from investors, and it always sounds comforting. Until you remember there is an invisible second half of that sentence: *until we decide not to support you anymore.*

It’s not that investors are lying. In the moment, they probably believe what they’re telling you. The problem is that circumstances change — markets shift, funds dry up and priorities get rearranged. By the time you’re counting on that “support,” it may no longer exist.

The smarter move? If someone says, “We’ll back you,” the follow-up question should be, *Great, how much and on what terms?* It’s not confrontational. It’s just removing the gray area that could leave your startup exposed later.

Related: I Wish I Received This Advice as a Young Entrepreneur

3. “Hire engineers overseas. They’re cheap.”

This advice looks brilliant on a spreadsheet. Labor costs drop, output theoretically rises and your investors think you’ve discovered gold. But the real world doesn’t match the spreadsheet.

Hiring a remote team across the world adds complexity at a time when your startup can’t afford distraction. You’ll spend endless hours trying to manage time zones, quality and turnover. Cheap labor is not cheap once you factor in the headaches.

Yes, plenty of big companies have offshore teams. But they also have the infrastructure, budget and middle managers to make it work. A young startup rarely does. Most of the time, what you save in money you lose three times over in time.

4. “Pivot into another business. That’s what saved Company X.”

You’ll hear this when things aren’t going great. Investors love to throw out examples of companies that “pivoted” and then became successful. But the truth is, for every success story, there are hundreds of pivots that ended in flames.

The real danger here is distraction. If you start chasing whatever shiny new market someone suggests, you’re no longer building your company — you’re just trying on random outfits

until one fits. Most of the time, you end up broke before you ever find the right one.

That doesn't mean you should ignore reality if your business truly isn't working. But pivoting should be your decision, based on evidence from your customers and your market, not because a frustrated board member thinks it's a quick fix.

5. "Let's take on the biggest competitor head-on."

Sometimes bad advice comes from inside your own team. A well-meaning colleague might suggest you go after the giant in your industry directly, arguing that you'll prove your strength by taking them down.

That's a quick way to get crushed. Big companies have deep pockets, brand recognition and teams whose full-time job is protecting their turf.

A smarter path is finding where they're weak or distracted. Aim for the parts of the market they ignore. Build strength in the shadows. Once you've carved out your own base, you can decide later if you want to stand toe-to-toe. Until then, avoid this move.

Related: Founders Keep Getting This One Piece of Advice — But It's Setting Them Up for Failure. Here's What They Really Need to Hear.

6. "Spend big now, it'll prepare you for later."

Few things are more dangerous for a startup than having money to burn. The temptation to buy big systems, hire faster than needed or invest in tools you won't use for years is strong. Someone on your team will always say, "We might as well get it

now so we’re ready.”

The problem is you’re never actually “ready.” Startups are constantly shifting. That shiny ERP system you thought would solve your problems might be irrelevant by the time you’re big enough to need it. In the meantime, you have just drained cash that could have extended your runway.

The trick is to listen without obeying. Ask yourself: Does this advice fit my business, right now, with the resources I actually have? Or is it just someone projecting what worked — or didn’t work — for them? So stay skeptical, trust your judgment and remember that no one knows your company better than you. Good luck!

Key Takeaways

- Common startup advice pitfalls include quitting after minimal investor rejections, mistaking tentative support as guaranteed and making hasty decisions on pivots or spending.
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Instantly Transform Your Vehicle into an Outdoor Workspace for Only $90.

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Approximately 16 million Americans work remotely or in mobile professions, says the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. If you regularly manage construction sites, conduct outdoor meetings, or work during long road trips, your work environment has a direct impact on your productivity and general well-being. Fortunately, the Carsule Lite with 4 Magic Magnets can instantly transform your vehicle into a functional outdoor workspace, and it's on sale for just $89.99.

Unlike traditional pop-up tents that can be complicated or awkward to assemble, Carsule Lite's magnetic attachments snap

securely to any vehicle with an iron tailgate. Better yet, when you're done with the canopy, it collapses into a compact 30-inch disc. That's easily small enough to store in most car trunks without sacrificing precious cargo space for shelter when you need it.

Mobile contractors can use it to protect equipment and clients from the sun during consultations. Sales professionals can create a mobile meeting space at outdoor events, even if traditional tents might be prohibited. Field managers gain convenient weather protection for outdoor operations and crew breaks.

What makes Carsule Lite particularly valuable is its modular design. Although a single panel creates four square feet of shade, you can also use bidirectional zippers to connect multiple panels. Not only does this expand coverage, but it also allows you to create a variety of configurations that range from simple sun shields to enclosed shelters. This flexibility means you're investing in a system that grows with your business needs, rather than a one-use product.

The Carsule's weather protection features are of utmost importance for any type of outdoor work. The 2500PA water resistance keeps equipment and people dry during unexpected rain, while the UPF 50+ protection blocks plenty of harmful UV radiation. This level of protection can crucially reduce downtime and health-related issues.

Get the Carsule Lite with 4 Magic Magnets while it's on sale for only $89.99, an 8% discount off the regular $98 price.

StackSocial prices subject to change.

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Apple Is Reportedly Launching Touchscreen MacBooks After Resisting the Trend for Over

a Decade

Key Takeaways

- Apple is reportedly introducing touchscreen MacBook Pros that will have thinner, lighter frames and run the fastest line of chips.
- The touchscreen laptops will cost several hundred dollars more than the current lineup of MacBook Pros.
- Apple also updated its 14-inch MacBook Pro with an M5 chip this week.

After over a decade of refusing to make a touchscreen laptop, a decision supported by co-founder Steve Jobs, Apple is finally preparing to launch a version of its MacBook laptop with a touch display.

According to *Bloomberg* Managing Editor Mark Gurman, who has an 86.5% accuracy rate when reporting on Apple rumors, the tech giant is set to debut touchscreen MacBook Pros in late 2026 or early 2027. The upcoming line will feature a slimmer, lighter design powered by the next-generation M6 processor.

Gurman writes that the new touchscreen models will come in 14- and 16-inch sizes and are expected to cost several hundred dollars more than current versions. At present, the non-touch 14-inch MacBook Pro starts at $1,599, while the 16-inch model’s base price is $2,499.

Apple MacBook Pro laptops. Photographer: Samyukta Lakshmi/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Apple has long avoided adding touchscreens to its MacBooks. In 2010, Jobs, who was Apple’s CEO at the time, said at a launch event that touchscreen laptops would be “ergonomically

terrible.”

“We’ve done tons of user testing on this, and it turns out it doesn’t work,” Jobs said at the time. “Touch surfaces don’t want to be vertical. It gives great demo, but after a short period of time, you start to fatigue, and after an extended period of time, your arm wants to fall off.”

Jobs’ successor and current CEO, Tim Cook, agreed, saying in a 2012 earnings call that merging a tablet and a laptop was like putting a “toaster” together with a “refrigerator.”

Related: Apple’s Foldable iPhone Release Date Has Been Revealed, According to a JPMorgan Investor Letter

“You can converge a toaster and a refrigerator, but those aren’t going to be pleasing to the user,” Cook said at the time.

Still, the touchscreen laptop market has become a sizable one, with global revenue for touchscreen laptops reaching around $50 billion so far this year and projected to hit $120 billion by 2033, according to Data Insights Market. By comparison, the overall global laptop market was valued at $194.25 billion in 2022 and is forecast to grow to $334.51 billion by 2030, according to Grand View Research.

The new touchscreen laptop displays will reportedly use OLED technology, the same advanced screens found in iPhones and iPad Pros. Rather than use the traditional “notch” design with a top cutout for the camera, Apple plans to adopt a “hole-punch” approach, integrating a small circular or pill-shaped cutout directly into the screen to house the front camera.

Related: Apple Revealed the iPhone 17, iPhone Air, and AirPods With Live Translation. Here’s What to Know.

The touchscreen MacBook Pros will still feature a full-sized

keyboard and trackpad, allowing users to operate the device conventionally without relying on the touch display. Apple has also strengthened the laptop's build with an upgraded hinge and redesigned display, so the screen stays stable and doesn't move or bounce when touched, per *Bloomberg*.

Apple also updated the 14-inch MacBook Pro with an M5 chip on Wednesday. The new chip boasts faster computing speeds, enhanced graphics and improved capabilities for AI-driven tasks.

The tech giant is also working on updating its MacBook Air lineup with the M5 chip, with plans to release the devices in the spring of 2026, according to Gurman. The $999 MacBook Air remains Apple's top-selling laptop, per the report.

Related: Apple Is Making a Major Change to Its Operating Systems Across All Products. Here's What We Know.

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5 Things Formula One Rookies Already Know That Could Fast-Track Your Growth as a Founder

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Key Takeaways

- Discover how rookie drivers’ fearless approach to risk can reshape your startup mindset.
- Learn the unexpected habits that help Formula One newcomers outpace seasoned pros — and how you can apply

them.

Every year, Formula One reshuffles its grid — new drivers, new talent, new stories. But 2025 is different: six rookies are stepping into the world's fastest, most unforgiving sport. That's a lot of high-stakes learning.

Entrepreneurs may not hit corners at 180 mph, but the challenges are strikingly familiar: prove yourself, learn fast, adapt under pressure. Whether you're building your first venture or your fifth, the truth remains — entrepreneurship is a constant act of starting over.

I learned this long before I ever stepped into a boardroom. My eighth-grade teacher, Sister Marie, reminded us that even as the oldest students in school, we'd soon be back at the bottom — in high school, in college and again in our careers. At the time, it felt like a demotion. But over the years, I've realized: starting over isn't a setback — it's a skill.

And in both business and racing, the rookies often teach us the most.

Related: 5 Mindset Tips for a Successful 2025

Rookie lesson #1: Progress over perfection

In F1, a rookie's job isn't to win out of the gate — it's to improve with every lap. Their biggest competition? Their own teammate. Each circuit is a test of consistency, not perfection.

The same goes for founders. Your greatest rival usually isn't the market — it's the version of you from yesterday. Progress is what keeps you in the race.

Founder takeaway: Forget perfection. If you're better than you

were last week, you’re moving in the right direction.

Rookie lesson #2: Check your ego

Even the most decorated drivers still learn. Lewis Hamilton — the most successful F1 driver in history — regularly speaks about where he needs to grow. That mindset is why he remains not just relevant, but revered.

Entrepreneurs can forget this. Past wins don’t prepare you for today’s challenges — learning does. Ego clings to what worked before. Humility gets you to what works next.

Founder takeaway: Ego is dead weight. The best founders are always students first.

Rookie lesson #3: Know when to switch gears

F1 drivers push hard, but they also pause. Time in the gym, in recovery and with engineers is just as vital as time on track. Endurance matters more than all-out speed.

Entrepreneurs, by contrast, are notorious for going full throttle — until they crash. Constant hustle isn’t a strategy. It’s burnout on a countdown.

Founder takeaway: Rest isn’t retreat. It’s refueling — and it’s what lets you go farther, faster.

Related: Want to Succeed as an Entrepreneur? Foster These Mindsets And You Will

Rookie lesson #4: Find your focus

Imagine Charles Leclerc checking his phone mid-turn at Monza — it would be over in seconds. Racing demands total focus, because distraction is dangerous.

Business is no different. Founders juggle dozens of roles, but multitasking doesn’t mean progress. It means split focus, slower execution, and more mistakes.

Founder takeaway: Focus is your unfair advantage. Master it, and you’ll outperform faster, flashier competitors.

Rookie lesson #5: Take pride in where you are

In F1, P1 gets the glory. But some of the best stories start from the back. At this year’s rain-soaked British Grand Prix, it wasn’t the winner, Lando Norris, who stole the spotlight. It was Nico Hülkenberg, who fought from 17th to third – his first podium since 2010.

Founders don’t need a trophy to be building something meaningful. What matters is grit – and forward motion.

Founder takeaway: You don’t need a podium finish to prove you’re making progress. Pride comes from pushing through.

Entrepreneurship, like Formula One, isn’t just about one big win. It’s a career of reinvention.

Rookies remind us that:

- Progress beats perfection
- Humility unlocks growth
- Rest is strategic
- Focus is power
- Success comes in many forms

The art of starting over isn’t something to fear – it’s your ultimate edge.

Key Takeaways

- Discover how rookie drivers' fearless approach to risk can reshape your startup mindset.
- Learn the unexpected habits that help Formula One newcomers outpace seasoned pros — and how you can apply them.

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With No Money, I Built a Business Selling to 165,000 Suppliers. Here's What You Need to Know Now to Succeed.

Key Takeaways

- Rose is the CEO and founder of United National Consumers Suppliers (UNCS), which supplies 165,000 retailers and counting.
- He predicted the fall of the mall and other significant industry shifts. Here's what he thinks will happen next — and how to prepare.

This as-told-to story is based on a conversation with Brett Rose, the CEO and founder of multimillion-dollar wholesale business United National Consumer Suppliers (UNCS), which supplies 165,000 retailers and counting, including Macy's, TJX, Sam's Club, Dollar Tree, Amazon resellers and more. Rose moves hundreds of millions of dollars in goods each quarter. He's also predicted major trends in the retail sector, such as the fall of the mall, rise of off-brands and omnichannel influence. The piece has been edited for length and clarity.

Image Credit: Courtesy of UNCS. Brett Rose.

About 23 years ago, I had a really good friend of mine whose dad worked for a retailer that is now out of business called Building 19, and he had four trucks of women's purses sitting in his warehouse. And I use the term women's purses lightly — they were worth dollars; it wasn't Chanel. So I picked up the

Yellow Pages and found someone who wanted to buy them.

That first sale was a great lesson in business because it was four trucks of merchandise, and I had to borrow money from my parents for it; three trucks were delivered, but the driver of the fourth truck, which in theory held all of our revenue, rolled that truck. Fortunately, no one was hurt, but all of a sudden, during my first week in business, I had to learn how to file an insurance claim – the things they don't teach you in school.

But, against my parents' better judgment, I set out to try it one more time. I bought a truck of rubber bands, then a truck of sewing needles and thread. I bought what was in front of me; the world was a little bit smaller back then. Email was in its early stages, and the internet isn't what it is now. I didn't know what I didn't know, and as a 25-year-old with no money and no network, I needed to figure it out – and they say necessity is the root of all invention.

Related: I Scaled My Regional Business Into a National One With Smart Acquisitions – Here's How

Our first major retailer was the second deal we ever did. There was a company based out of Massachusetts, which unfortunately is no longer in business, called Christmas Tree Shops. They were pretty big and ultimately became a division of Bed Bath & Beyond. I literally went on AOL, typed in Christmas Tree Shop's corporate office, picked up the phone and introduced myself and my company. I probably gave off that I was bigger than I was. I'll never forget that the gentleman's name was Terry O'Neill, and he agreed to give me a shot.

Our third deal was sold to Dollar General, which at the time was one of the biggest retailers in the world. That taught me another interesting lesson because the buyer asked if I had $5 million worth of liability insurance. I said absolutely, then

hung up the phone, called my buddy and asked what liability insurance was and how to get it right. I was sort of faking it until I made it.

Soon after that, we hit the ground running. After every deal we did, we added another retailer. I'd go on MySpace and ask my friends who lived in the Northeast which retailers they liked, then make it my goal of the day and just figure out how to make it happen.

At this point, we sell to 165,000 in 34 countries. Some of those include Amazon, Macy's, TJ Maxx, Marshalls, Dollar Tree and Sam's Club. Our number of retailers grows daily, but we're not heavy on any one customer. I have friends who have built great businesses selling to just Walmart or Costco, but I always wanted to be careful, and because of that, we diversified. We're constantly adding new retailers and, more importantly, new suppliers. Now we sell to a lot of convenience stores. We sell to a lot of department stores. We do a huge hardware and farm and feed store. As a kid from Boston and Florida, I never knew what a farm and feed store was in my life. I don't think I ever walked into one before 15 years ago, and now it's a huge division of ours.

Related: 'We Got So Many DMs': This 27-Year-Old Revamped Her Parents' Decades-Old Business and Grew Direct-to-Consumer Sales From $60,000 to Over $500,000

Nowadays, we're introducing more and more technology into the company, and it's been one of the biggest inflection points in our history. All of a sudden, we're a tech company that happens to do merchandise distribution; we're no longer a general merchandise distribution company that happens to use tech. Every day is a new educational opportunity — and it's also the difference between 10x growth in 12 months and 10x growth over 10 years. Because of the data we've collected over nearly 20 years, we're just starting to scratch the surface of what's possible. We're seeing double-digit growth daily and

adding more people and tech daily to keep up with it.

Our biggest strategy has always been agility. The president of our company, Jeremiah Gutierrez, has been preaching that for over a decade. Tariffs change every day. It's slightly normalizing, but even now, the market cost is so high because of that. Our ability to be flexible separates us from the competition. For example, if there's a huge tariff on bicycles this week, we'll switch our focus to home furnishing. We have tremendous flexibility, which allows us to give our customers normalized pricing without huge increases to offset the tariffs, which in turn translates to a better strategy for them and a better strategy for the American consumer.

One of the biggest shifts in retail that we're starting to see right now is the return of the mall. I have a 12-year-old and a 14-year-old, and although they still purchase certain things online, they love going to the mall and buying in person. When I took them to the mall last week, it was like a meetup — they must have seen 30 of their friends, which I loved because it reminded me of the 1980s and 1990s. So I think we're going to see a real return to traditional retail, but it has to look different.

Related: How This Small Local Bakery Turned Itself Into a Wholesale Powerhouse

There's a mall in South Florida called the Aventura Mall that has absolutely nailed it: You walk in, and it has an amazing feel. Every storefront is different. It's merchandised right. It's lit right. It smells right. It caters to everybody. And when I was there, it was slammed even though it was a Friday afternoon with beautiful weather — people were there because they wanted to be. The parking lot was full. And it was an experiential shopping experience. I got my car washed while I was there. I also went to buy coffee for my espresso machine, and they handed me a shot of espresso when I walked in. It also had an arcade, which was packed. That mall should be a

case study on what retail is going to become.

Image Credit: JC MILHET | Getty Images. Aventura Mall.

Also, as a parent, a constant battle of mine is how to get my kids off their phones. I watched them and their friends while we were at the mall, and sure, they were posting pictures on Snapchat, but they were also laughing, talking and shopping. There's no denying the dopamine high when you buy something, and as a guy in my 40s, what I want is different from what my kids want — but they have something for everyone. For instance, in this mall, there's an art gallery selling $20,000 paintings; you could go in there, and meanwhile, my daughter's buying a $19 hoodie at Hollister. That gallery was packed, and so was Hollister. It said to me that the mall is alive and well, but not the mall that we knew in the 1980s.

There's always going to be consumerism. If I had a crystal ball for the stock market, I'd suggest looking at retailers that are category agnostic. Don't look at a single category because that doesn't work. Look at Walmart, Costco, Sam's Club, Dollar Tree: These are stocks that constantly outperform the index because there's nothing you can't buy. Being category agnostic allows them to be agile and flexible, and I think you'll continue to see those stores outperform others while traditional department stores continue to struggle.

Related: 3 Reasons Why the Digitization of B2B Wholesale Is Changing the Future of Retail

A professor once gave me the best advice. I said, "I'm really trying to figure out what I want to do for the rest of my life." And he said, "Why don't you just figure out what you want to do next?" Whether it's the wholesale business or any business, just start. Tech has given people a shorter runway. When I started, it wasn't that it was more challenging; it was

that the challenges were different. But to find the product, the customers and the partners is shorter now because of the tech that’s at our fingertips. Now, anybody who wants to get into any business, not just a wholesale business, can be international right away.

I would also tell young entrepreneurs to remember that they’re not an island. Use the people and network around you, even if they’re not necessarily in your industry. Let them know what you’re doing because you never know who can connect you. There’s a huge value in being a human LinkedIn. I live with the mentality that we have two hands, one to help ourselves and one to help others, and if helping somebody doesn’t lead to more business for myself, that’s okay. That doesn’t matter to me. Go build a successful business and life because it comes full circle.

Key Takeaways

- Rose is the CEO and founder of United National Consumers Suppliers (UNCS), which supplies 165,000 retailers and counting.
- He predicted the fall of the mall and other significant industry shifts. Here’s what he thinks will happen next — and how to prepare.

This as-told-to story is based on a conversation with Brett Rose, the CEO and founder of multimillion-dollar wholesale business United National Consumer Suppliers (UNCS), which supplies 165,000 retailers and counting, including Macy’s, TJX, Sam’s Club, Dollar Tree, Amazon resellers and more. Rose moves hundreds of millions of dollars in goods each quarter. He’s also predicted major trends in the retail sector, such as the fall of the mall, rise of off-brands and omnichannel influence. The piece has been edited for length and clarity.

Image Credit: Courtesy of UNCS. Brett Rose.

About 23 years ago, I had a really good friend of mine whose dad worked for a retailer that is now out of business called Building 19, and he had four trucks of women's purses sitting in his warehouse. And I use the term women's purses lightly — they were worth dollars; it wasn't Chanel. So I picked up the Yellow Pages and found someone who wanted to buy them.

The rest of this article is locked.

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How to Turn Personal Adversity Into a PR Strategy That Accelerates Your Growth

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Key Takeaways

- Why your personal story might be the missing key to unlocking media coverage and business growth.

- The unexpected way storytelling can transform your PR strategy and boost your industry authority.

We like to believe we make decisions based on facts and logic — but human nature tells a different story. More often than not, emotions drive our choices first and we seek facts afterward to justify them.

This is why storytelling is such a powerful tool. When you tell a story instead of just presenting data, you help people visualize the message, making it more relatable. Our brains are wired this way; stories trigger the release of oxytocin — the hormone that fosters trust. Since the dawn of humanity, storytelling has been how we pass knowledge and build connections.

So how do you leverage storytelling to improve your chances of getting featured in the media?

Related: The 5 Foolproof Steps to Pitching Your Story to the Media

Identify your origin story

Let me share a real example. A few years ago, I started working with a client—one of the smartest financial experts I've ever met. He regularly shared insightful, actionable advice online and on stage. By all accounts, he was top-tier. Yet he couldn't break through to mainstream media.

During our onboarding, we dug deeper than credentials and expertise. We explored his personal "why." That's when we struck gold.

He began his career running a successful dental practice. But everything changed when his daughter faced three life-threatening health crises. He couldn't juggle his practice and support her, so he sold the business to focus on her recovery.

He invested the proceeds in real estate – a steadier but less lucrative path. Over time, his income grew. At Christmas, he sent cards sharing this journey. Friends in dentistry reached out, curious about his new path. What started as informal advice grew into a coaching business, then a thriving real estate education community focused on helping others achieve financial freedom.

This story set him apart emotionally and authentically – earning him hundreds of organic media features over the years.

Take time to reflect on what personally drives you. Look beyond your professional achievements and identify the defining moments or challenges that shaped your journey.

Distill your story into a core positioning statement

Here’s what every entrepreneur should take away:

First, you have an origin story. Maybe not as dramatic, but there’s always a defining moment that pushes you to start your business. For me, it was a health crisis that nearly ended my life and my company. I used PR to rebuild my brand, which inspired my agency’s pivot to focus on storytelling-driven public relations.

Second, distill your story into a core positioning statement – a concise narrative that captures your origin, what you do, why it matters, and who you serve. This isn’t an autobiography; it’s a powerful snapshot designed to emotionally connect with your audience.

Write a draft of your core positioning statement. Keep it brief but compelling. Share it with trusted peers for feedback and refine until it feels authentic and clear.

Use your story to support your pitch

Finally, use your core positioning statement to support your pitch — not as the opener but as proof of your unique qualifications. Start pitches with a compelling hook — breaking news, a surprising stat, or an emotional trigger —then show how your expertise addresses the audience's needs, wrapping up with your core positioning statement to seal the deal.

Structure your pitch with a strong hook first, followed by relevant data or insights, and then weave in your core positioning statement as your unique selling point.

Related: How to Harness the Power of Authentic Storytelling to Become a More Effective and Inspiring Leader

Share your story consistently across channels

You already have a powerful story waiting to be told. Find it, refine it and use it to craft pitches that make you stand out — because that emotional connection is what gets media attention and builds your authority.

Promote your story across your website, social media, press releases, and speaking engagements to build a cohesive and authentic brand narrative. Audit your current marketing materials and online profiles. Ensure your origin story or core positioning statement is clearly reflected across all channels.

Practice and update your narrative

regularly

Rehearse incorporating your story naturally into pitches so it feels authentic and persuasive, rather than forced. Remember to revisit and refine your core positioning statement as your business grows and evolves.
Set a reminder to revisit your narrative quarterly. Update it to reflect new milestones, lessons, or shifts in your business focus.

You already have a powerful story – use it strategically to build media interest and grow your brand authority. The emotional connection your story creates is the key to standing out in today's crowded marketplace.

Key Takeaways

- Why your personal story might be the missing key to unlocking media coverage and business growth.
- The unexpected way storytelling can transform your PR strategy and boost your industry authority.

We like to believe we make decisions based on facts and logic – but human nature tells a different story. More often than not, emotions drive our choices first and we seek facts afterward to justify them.

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Most Leaders Sacrifice This One Thing — I Did Too, Until I Realized It Was Destroying My Focus, Energy and Ability To Lead

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Key Takeaways

- Prioritizing consistent sleep and recovery is essential for sustained leadership performance and team culture.
- Hustle culture glamorizes sleep deprivation, but true productivity and clarity come from rest, not exhaustion.

If you'd met me in the early days of building my company and asked how much sleep I got the night before — because for some reason, that's what strangers ask entrepreneurs — I'd say, "Not enough, but I'll catch up."

I was still five years (and one hard crash into chronic fatigue) away from understanding a basic truth: effective leaders sleep well. And no, a Saturday morning lie-in and an oversized coffee won't fix a week of sleep debt.

Since then, BetterMe has grown into a global wellness company with 500 team members. That kind of scale demands clarity, stamina and emotional consistency. None of that is possible when you're constantly running on empty.

What actually sustains high-performing teams isn't adrenaline or hustle — it's the boring, unsexy stuff: consistent sleep, daily recovery and grounding routines.

Related: I Risked Everything to Build My Company. Four Years Later, Here's What I've Learned About Building Real, Lasting Success

Why sleep deprivation made me a worse leader

In hustle culture, sleep is often sacrificed for success. It's glamorized. Former PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi famously claimed to thrive on four hours of sleep. People like her are called "the sleepless elite." Elite — of course, I wanted in. But here's the thing: I'm not one of them. And odds are, neither are you.

Only about 1% of people have the rare genetic mutation that allows them to function well on little sleep. The rest of us? We end up in a very different club: the one-third of adults who are chronically sleep-deprived.

And the price is steep. In the U.S. alone, sleep loss costs the economy $207 billion a year due to mistakes, poor productivity and absenteeism.

But I didn't change my habits because of the global economy. I changed because I started failing at the one thing I cared

most about — leading effectively.

Lack of sleep impacts the brain like alcohol. I don't drink, but for years, I was essentially operating under the same fog — trying to run a company while mentally compromised.

I'd lose focus halfway through tasks. I'd zone out in meetings. My critical thinking slowed. Worse, my energy impacted the team. I was short-tempered and unpredictable. People didn't know which version of me would show up — and eventually, they stopped speaking up.

As a leader, you set the tone. And I was setting the wrong one.

Sleep is not just a health habit — it's a business strategy

I used to think building a company meant giving it everything — including my sleep. But most of that effort was wasted on low-impact decisions and redoing work that could've been done right the first time.

When I started prioritizing sleep and building wellness into my daily routine, my performance changed dramatically.

Athletes have known this for decades. A Stanford study found that basketball players who increased their sleep improved sprint speed, shot accuracy and mood. The same logic applies in business.

I now follow a simple 8-1-1 rule:

- 8 hours of sleep
- 1 hour of movement
- 1 hour of mental recovery

The results speak for themselves:

- More sustained focus and deep work
- Sharper, faster decision-making
- More creativity and clearer communication
- Better mood and fewer sick days

Most importantly, I'm more present — for the business and for my team.

Related: Regaining Control of Your Sleep Life…From a (Recovering) Insomniac Entrepreneur

What actually helps me sleep — even when life gets chaotic

Healthy habits don't come from hacks. They're built slowly with deliberate effort. Here's what works for me:

- **Early bedtime**: I'm in bed before 10 pm and aim for seven to eight hours of sleep. Real energy starts the night before.
- **Daily exercise**: Movement helps burn off excess energy and improve sleep depth — as long as it's not too close to bedtime.
- **Wind-down routine**: I combine a workout, meditation, chanting mantras and 10–15 minutes of breathing to transition out of "go mode."
- **Mental decluttering**: A quick brain dump before bed clears my head and stops midnight overthinking.
- **Travel consistency**: I stay on schedule, bring a massage ball to reduce tension and avoid late-night events unless absolutely necessary.
- **Sleep on demand**: On flights, I skip movies, books and meals. Instead, I meditate and fall asleep before the meal service even starts — so I land clear-headed and ready.

Culture starts at the top — so does sleep

You can invest in top talent, cutting-edge tools and smart strategy. But you can't buy clarity, energy or resilience — you have to build those through culture. And culture always starts with leadership.

If you glorify late nights, your team will mirror it. If you normalize rest and recovery, they'll follow that example too.

Ask me today how I slept last night, and I'll proudly say: "Eight hours — and it's the reason we'll still be here ten years from now."

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Uber Is Piloting a New Way for Drivers to Make Extra Cash — Without Being in a Vehicle

Key Takeaways

- Uber is piloting a new program in the U.S. called “Digital Tasks,” which allows users to earn money by helping train AI models.
- Users complete small jobs online, such as uploading photos or audio recordings.
- The payout for each task varies depending on the time commitment.

Uber is piloting a new feature for U.S. drivers and couriers to earn extra income — even when they’re not driving passengers or delivering food.

Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi announced the “Digital Tasks” pilot program at the Only on Uber 2025 conference in Washington, D.C., on Thursday. The initiative offers U.S. drivers the chance to earn money by completing online tasks, such as uploading photos or recording audio clips to train AI models.

“Drivers have asked for more ways to earn, even when they’re not on the road,” Khosrowshahi said at the event, per *Business Insider*.

Related: Uber’s CEO Says Drivers Will Be Replaced By Robotaxis in About 10 Years: ‘This Is Going to Be a Real Issue’

Access is currently limited during the pilot, but Uber plans to roll out the “Digital Tasks” feature to all drivers and couriers on both its main ride-hailing service and Uber Eats, though it is unclear when. Eligible U.S. drivers and couriers will see the option to participate in their Work Hub on Uber.

Uber did not provide specifics on how much it would pay for the AI training, but the company’s Chief Product Officer, Sachin Kansal, told *Bloomberg* that the payout for each task varies depending on the time commitment of each assignment.

Uber may consider opening up the tasks to non-drivers over time, according to Kansal.

Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi. Photo by Riccardo Savi/Getty Images for Concordia Annual Summit

Some tasks are simple enough to be completed directly on a phone, while more advanced assignments, such as annotating, translating, or editing content, are offered through Uber’s web platform, Kansal said. It’s unclear why Uber is training AI and if it has partnerships with any AI companies.

Related: Fewer Gen Zers Are Getting Their Driver’s Licenses. Here’s What’s Behind the Decline, According to Uber’s CEO.

Uber competitor Lyft does not have a public-facing AI training program like Uber’s “Digital Tasks.” However, Amazon offers a comparable option through Amazon Mechanical Turk, a crowdsourcing platform launched publicly in 2005, where businesses can post small tasks, such as data entry, image

labeling to train AI, or content moderation, that anyone can complete online for payment.

This isn't Uber's first attempt to branch out beyond delivering food and offering rides. Two years ago, Uber launched a mini-pilot program that let app users hire people to complete various household tasks, like furniture assembly. Uber tested the service in select regions, including Fort Myers, Florida, and Edmonton, Alberta, but did not expand the program beyond an initial trial.

Uber's push now to diversify the tasks drivers can complete arrives as robotaxis and autonomous vehicles gain ground. Last month, at an "All-In" podcast event, Khosrowshahi said that "10 to 15 years from now," work on Uber could dry up for human drivers as robotaxis take on more rides. In January, Khosrowshahi told the Wall Street Journal's Joanna Stern that driving for Uber is only a safe gig for the next decade.

"You fast forward 15, 20 years, I think that the autonomous driver is going to be a better driver than the human driver," Khosrowshahi said at the time.

Related: Uber CEO Defends New Return-to-Office Policies at 'Heated' All-Hands Meeting

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