Stanford eCorner

Borrow Ideas from Everyone

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CEO Aaron Levie is happy to borrow ideas from any source to improve Box.net's product, marketing, and support. Levie shares how Box learned from the best in different businesses to improve in these areas, including taking insights from the consumer web space to improve products, learning how to make a marketing splash from Hollywood studios, and figuring out how to deliver high-quality support like Zappos.

Transcript

We borrow from everyone.. So, a lot of product innovation that happens in the consumer Web in terms of how we're much more social, how we're much more connected, how our applications actually talk to each other.. So, if you're using Facebook and how you might interact with Farmville, which is really fun, and see those updates on.... has anybody played Cityville? OK, wrong demo.. OK, got it.. All these applications can now talk to each other and we want to bring that idea and that philosophy into the enterprise, where you're going to be able to interact among multiple applications and have these data talk to each other seamlessly.. That's an idea for the product in enterprise Web but we're bringing it to the cloud.. We take marketing ideas from Hollywood.. How do you do a big launch? How do you make a lot of noise? How do you get people to pay attention to your product as opposed to everybody else? And support from Zappos, a company that is totally known for how great their customer support is when you're buying shoes.. But why is it that when you want to talk to somebody in an enterprise software company, it's so much harder to get their attention, right? It feels like they're only selling to you..

It doesn't feel like they're supporting you.. And so, we've been able to redesign the sales organization to be much more customer-centric than any enterprise software has ever become.. And these are the things where you can take lessons from the different organizations out there that have competed on your behalf for solving some other problem and we're bringing it to market in our own way.. And so, we have been able to borrow a lot of lessons from other places...