

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/choose-your-peers-wisely>

Ozy Media Co-Founder and CEO Carlos Watson explains that he built his company in the Silicon Valley town of Mountain View – home to Google, LinkedIn and other leading tech firms – to be among the biggest innovators and disruptors of this generation. He says he would rather be in this entrepreneurial ecosystem than be among all the traditional news organizations on the East Coast.



Transcript

- So, we're based here in Mountain View.. We're based locally, and a lot of people have seen that as a bad idea.. A lot of folks have said as a media company, you'd want to be where the New York Times, and where Vice and Vox, and BuzzFeed, and NPR, and others are.. So, likely, New York or DC, or where she might want to be in San Francisco or Oakland and we originally were here, honestly, because my mom lived here and I needed to be close, but I don't know, I love Mountain View.. You know, they always joke that I should be president of the Chamber of Commerce because I'm such a big fan, and I actually, I always wanted, you know, even after things changed and if I wanted to I could have left the area, I kind of wanted our team to be here because I felt like if we were in New York they would always compare themselves with Vice and Vox and BuzzFeed and the New York Times, and I actually wanted their competitive set to include Apple and Tesla and Snap and Uber and others and so, I wanted them to really think big and to be open and I wanted people who they were bumping into at dinner and at parties and at other places to include that set and not just the other set.. So, I often admire what happened at ESPN, which started in a little, middle of nowhere, no disrespect to Connecticut, but Bristol, Connecticut, which is not exactly a bustling metropolis, but that's where they built for what was, has been for a time, the most successful TV network, and I don't necessarily think that's an accident, and so, yes, I think a lot of times we would have an easier time recruiting, we'd have fewer issues with commuting and those sorts of things, but I like being in Silicon Valley, I like being somewhere different, and I think in many ways it keeps us different and it makes us holdier, and it makes us consider crazy ideas, that turn into television shows or festivals or other sorts of things that I think we otherwise wouldn't have done because that's not what the most natural competitive set was doing.. I think we've been less followers and more leaders because we're, I don't want to call Mountain View the wilderness, but we're not on the same path..