URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/commitment-to-users

Waze's Di-Ann Eisnor discusses the humble and "imperfect" beginning of the real-time navigation app and how minor flaws that still remain, like typos, reflect the direct and genuine input of users. She discusses the duty to reciprocate the fierce loyalty felt by Waze's community of users by being available for them when problems arise, as the app's success ultimately rides on crowdsourcing.

Transcript

   - So one of the things we're saying all the time through our product is that we're imperfect.. We didn't start and say, "We have the best navigation application." Why? Because it was crowdsourced and that would have been a total lie, but we had this idea that we could get there if everybody worked together.. So we started with just a blank map.. Literally, you drove and you saw yourself make a road just by driving, and then you could go to our web site and give that road a name.. That's how the whole thing started.. It was very humble and very honest and highly imperfect.. You will still find typos in ways, because everything's written by people don't live in the US.. Over time, we could add roads and we could add traffic, and now I feel pretty confident saying we're probably the best traffic application you've ever used and we are definitely the largest community of drivers, but when you get to the point where you can say, "Okay, now I feel confident in that," that means that you're ready to achieve something else.. This is one of our map editor community meetups.. Everything about us has been about real people..

   We spent too much money in travel when we could have had video chats when we were all over the world because nothing could replace people.. We have phenomenal algorithms that are obviously taking all this real-time data and trying to turn it into something that can guide you around a city and get you where you need to go, but it's those humans, it's the map editors, it's that community that have remained at the heart of everything we've done, and still are.. I mean, most people in that room have my email address, they have my phone number, we're on WhatsApp, they can contact me and it's a relationship.. Over the years, people have asked, from big, big companies, "I want a community," and I think, "It has to be something that is completely core.. "Are you ready to be there when they call you "in the middle of the night because something's down "because they care so much about your product?" And if you can't return that, if you can't be the other side of that relationship, then I don't think that you can really consider having somebody want to invest heavily in helping your product become great...