URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/first-to-market

Greg draws on his experiences at 3Dfx and GluMobile and states that being first to market is not necessarily an advantage. He suggests that it is often better to be second and thus learn from the mistakes of the previous entrants.

Transcript

The question is in a high growth situation like we had at 3Dfx, was it better maybe to be the second player instead of the first player? So there's a phrase that somebody used once that is still my favorite business phrase other than the ones that I talked about earlier.. It is that the early bird gets the worm but the second mouse gets the cheese.. I think there's a lot of truth to that.. In NVIDIA's case, they didn't have to break all the marketing ground.. We were out teaching people what 3D was.. We were the ones who had the exclusive with Quake that taught people how Quake could be played on 3D on their PC.. We were spending literally millions of dollars building the market and they in turn were sort of just executing away and they didn't care about the ups and downs in the market.. They didn't care and they never got rattled apparently about what we were doing.. By the time disaster befell 3Dfx, that was mostly after I left although the inklings were around when I left, by the time that happened, they had put in place a path of execution that basically opened up a market that was already built for them by us.. So I think sometimes being second is best..

You see all sorts of examples of that in the internet world and I think you'll see it in the mobile world.. We were not the first mobile company.. Gemdale was the first mobile company and they've been very successful but by being later than them, I think we've learned a lot from the mistakes that they made and hopefully we'll be able to not make those same mistakes going forward...