

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/working-with-regulators>

Explaining why he became interested in the concept of “responsible innovation,” Responsible Innovation Labs executive director Jon Zieger points to his experience as general counsel at Stripe. Because Stripe engaged with and respected regulators, rather than creating an antagonistic relationship, Zieger believes, the company was able to scale in a long-term, sustainable way.



Transcript

- One of the things I always loved about working at Stripe, 00:00:05,490 and I think one of the things that has set it apart, and it's reflected by both its scale, and sort of significance as a company, and, you know, in some ways it's kind of value, and the maturity that's sort of reflective of that.. Has been the founders, you know, John and Patrick, are really extraordinary founders in a lot of ways, but one of the ways, is this sense that they were building, from day one, a long-term sustainable business, right.. This was not a business we were trying to just grow, right.. It was a business that we expected to be working on, it certainly they expected to be working on for decades, and that kind of longterm and sustainable mindset, really informed everything we did.. And one example of that, that I, you know, I was sort of responsible for driving was, on the regulatory side, right.. Stripe is in a heavily regulated business, it moves massive amounts, of other people's money around the world.. It, you know, more or less, the most heavily regulated business category that we have.. And even before we were regulated, very early in the life of that business, one of the things that I did, we were a two year old company in the United States, which was our principle market at the time.. We, you know, knew we would eventually need, a certain kind of license, what's called the money transmission license.. And so we went to regulators, which they have a conference, the money transmission regulators association, they have a conference every year, and we went to their conference..

We booked a little hospitality suite, and we said, we're from this little company, Stripe, we invited them all to come, in (indistinct) of this company, and here's what we do.. Here's how we do it.. Here's who we are.. And as we grow, you may hear more about us, you know, here's how to get in touch with us, right.. And that, that sense of, engagement with, and respect for, regulators and their role, which, you know, you'll remember, sort of, this is back in 2014, when the, you know, the biggest show in town was Uber.. Which was a very different view of regulators, right.. It was sort of move fast, established presence on the ground, and they're different businesses, so I don't want to, I don't want to overdraw the parallels.. But I think that kind of engaged, and sustainable, and longterm model, was one that we saw work, well from a business perspective, but also I think just fundamentally worked better, from a kind of societal perspective.. We were able to do things that were reflective, of the intention of regulators, in ways that it would have been very hard, if we had sort of, you know, kind of hit, and made them kind of run to catch up with us...