

Rivr, for simple, personalised, high-value home and contents insurance

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Will Clarkson Webb, founder and CEO of Rivr about digital insurance for emerging wealth, the importance of steady growth and knowing when to delegate.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Rivr is the UK's first digital home and contents insurance provider dedicated to those who simply have more to protect. Built for the UK's emerging wealth. We offer a simple, fast, hassle-free solution that provides better cover than standard insurance giving confidence in their cover.

What was the catalyst for launching the product? Why are you doing what you're doing?

I saw a lot of opportunity in the insurance space from my previous work experience. I recognised the potential to leverage technology to really deliver value to the customer and build a customer-centric proposition. My personal experience trying to get my wife's engagement ring insured was challenging and eye-opening. I realised that existing products in the market weren't delivering on the buying preferences of today's modern consumer. Traditional insurance brokers were selling everything manually, and I saw an opportunity to change that.

Tell me about the product - what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers, USP and so on?

Rivr is very much one of the first, if not the first, provider selling high-value home and contents insurance in a truly digital fashion. What we aim to achieve is to make sure people have the right level of cover to properly protect themselves and therefore have confidence in what they're insured for, rather than crossing their fingers and hoping for the best.

We've consolidated the insurance journey into a 5-minute online process, leveraging data enrichment to speed things up. This takes the process from an average of two days to 5-10 minutes. Our USP is delivering that digital experience customers want, as well as offering a really top-tier level of cover that isn't typically available online.

A key problem we're trying to solve is that many consumers are unaware this level of cover exists because it's not widely available or easily accessible. We offer a solution to cover their home and contents along with their valuables, bicycles, sports equipment, gadgets and electronics etc under one umbrella, potentially saving them money and ensuring they're properly protected rather than being underinsured.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

We've been live for three months now, and we've had some great initial traction. A lot of it has come through exposure within the insurance community, largely due to my LinkedIn profile. We've had high net worth brokers reach out, saying they've been thinking this should have been done for years.

The biggest evolution has been learning from customer feedback. We quickly realised that some aspects of our business weren't coming across clearly to customers. Given the lack of awareness about this level of cover, we had people engaging with us when Rivr was actually the wrong product for them. We've had to be much clearer in our messaging to ensure we're not wasting anyone's time.

What's your favourite thing about being a founder?

I really enjoy the variety. I'm an accountant by training, so my happy place is in excel, but what I spend 99% of my time doing is completely new things like PR, trying to understand marketing, or reading code. It's amazing - I'm learning loads every single day.

Which founders or businesses do you see as being the most inspirational? Which other figures in your life inspire you?

I don't necessarily have specific high-profile founders that immediately come to mind. What I find interesting are those businesses that are slightly under the radar and just do something really well. It could be the most boring, mundane thing in the world, but they really care about their customers and approach business pragmatically. I resonate with the idea of growing consistently but at a steady rate, especially in the world of insurance where going too fast can lead to trouble.

What has been your biggest business fail?

I'd say my biggest fail has been thinking I knew best about too many things and realising that I don't. For example, thinking I could handle marketing on my own, or understanding how Google Tag Manager works.

I wasted about a week - over 40-50 hours - trying to figure out Google Tag Manager. Eventually, I gave up and brought someone on to handle it. It was literally the most complicated thing in the world, and it caused so much stress.

What are the things you're really good at as a leader?

I don't have a team at the moment, so it's hard to say. But I think I'm quite good at problem-solving and understanding people's different perspectives. I'm always happy to listen, which I think is important.

Which areas do you need to improve on?

For me personally, it's the marketing side of things. As a business, we need to be better at communicating with our customers. But that's all happening - it's in progress. We're just early and haven't done much of that yet.

What's in store for the future of the business?

Simply put, we're going to keep doing what we're doing. We'll continue getting out there, getting in front of customers, talking to them, and hopefully providing them with the insurance cover they need. We are seeing some string early growth, and we want to continue to build on this momentum.

What advice would you give to other

founders or future founders?

It takes twice as long as you ever would think it would take. So be prepared for that. If you think it's going to take a year, it'll take two. I thought Rivr would be live within a year, but it took just over 18 months, pushing two years.

And finally, a more personal question! We like to ask everyone we interview about their daily routine and the rules they live by. Is it up at 4am for yoga, or something a little more traditional?

I wouldn't say I have the best routine in the world, but what I have really seen value in is trying to do some exercise in the morning. I used to hate running first-thing, but I now try to run at least a couple of times a week, and that clears my head.

On the other end of the spectrum, I think it's important to take time off and decompress. After a really stressful day on a Thursday, there's nothing wrong with having a beer or something that helps you unwind. I think that's the hardest thing - you're always so in it, and particularly as a sole founder, it's hard to celebrate the wins. It's important to sit back and take stock, which I am bad at. When you do it by yourself, there's no one to high five and say, "Hey, that's great." So you just carry on to the next challenge.

Will Clarkson Webb is the founder and CEO of [Rivr](#).

