

Generations connect with Chatsie, the all-in-one smartphone and mobile network for seniors

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Romanie Thomas, CEO of Chatsie about smartphones for seniors, the core value of simplicity and learning from difficult experiences.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Leading smartphones are too complex for many older people, while basic phones lack modern features, leaving them disconnected and losing independence. *Chatsie* bridges the gap by providing smartphones designed specifically for seniors, keeping them connected to family and life.

What was the catalyst for launching the product?

For Chatsie's Founder, George, it was personal—his mum had dementia, and her iPhone was too complex. That's how Chatsie, designed for cognitive simplicity, was born.

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?

Chatsie is a premium smartphone and mobile network for seniors. For £19/month, users get a simplified phone with unlimited UK calls, texts, and 4GB of data. Key features include a simple menu, dictation, easy screen sharing, and a visual impairment mode. We reach customers through care homes, housing associations, and word of mouth. Our focus is on enriching life, not preparing for decline, with a design and experience that respects seniors' needs. An important aspect of this is the word-based interface, as icons become increasingly difficult to decipher — words entail simple, clear instructions that make sense. We've built everything around this core value of simplicity.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

We've soft-launched and are preparing for a full launch soon—stay tuned!

What is your favourite thing about being a Founder?

Though I'm more the CEO, I love supporting George's journey and building something meaningful while keeping balance with my young children.

Which Founders or businesses do you see as being the most inspirational?

I admire Canva's story and Brian Chesky for his stance on female founders during the whole "founder mode" discussion. In the UK, Rachel

Carrell's work on childcare is impressive.

Which other figures in your life inspire you?

My kids inspire me daily. Their sense of wonder and living in the moment teaches me so much.

What has been your biggest business fail?

Having founded Juggle Jobs, a digital recruitment platform that helps businesses to find and support experienced flexible professionals, I shut it down in 2022 after 5 years in operation. We raised venture capital and built a product, but following the pandemic, the business wasn't viable. It was a painful but invaluable learning experience.

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

I'm good at having tough conversations and holding my team accountable while showing I genuinely care about them.

Which areas do you need to improve on?

I can drift into micromanagement. I need to find a better balance between detail-oriented leadership and letting go.

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

We're preparing for Chatsie's full launch by Christmas and focusing on building partnerships with organisations who align with our mission.

What advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Find your tribe. Surround yourself with entrepreneurial peers who share your values and can support you emotionally and practically.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

My routine revolves around family and work, with three essentials: planning the day, a protein-rich breakfast, and a long walk to clear my mind. My mornings are spent with my toddler and baby before diving into work.

Romanie Thomas is the CEO of Chatsie.



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