



PREMIUM PODCASTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

THE ANDERSON FILES

INNOVATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA BRANDING AND MARKETING SOLUTIONS



This is The Anderson Files on PodClips. The Anderson Files is a look at commerce, investment, economics, and retirement issues that affect each and every one of you. Your host is Mike Anderson, Executive Vice President of the Warner Companies, a Foundation Risk Partners Company. The Warner Companies is a registered investment advisor, with securities offered through M. Holding Security Incorporated, member of FINRA and SIPC. And now your host, friend, and colleague, Mike Anderson.

My guest today is Robert Steele, CEO of Thumzup Media Corporation. Thumzup is a leading provider of innovative social media branding and marketing solutions, which allow businesses and brands to pay customers and fans cash through Venmo and PayPal for their posts on social media. Thumzup is democratizing the multi-billion-dollar social media branding and marketing industry. Mr. Steele has more than 25 years' experience as a technology entrepreneur. He has been CEO or president of three different technology companies in the mobile Software as a Services, Cybersecurity, and Fortune 500 IT Services software spaces. Robert, welcome to the program.

Hello, Mike. Glad to be here.

Great, thanks, good to see you. And to get started, to get rolling, as an entrepreneur, what first inspired you to build Thumzup, and how has your vision for the company evolved as it's grown into both AdTech and cryptocurrency?

Oh, great, thanks for asking. You know, I had a very unique life story, I feel, in a good way. I actually started programming computers when I was eight years old. I had a neighbor in Maryland who had two mainframe computers in his basement when I was a little kid, and he taught me how to program a long time ago. And then I had an entrepreneurial bent from an early age. I started building game controllers for the Apple II as a teenager, sold them in computer stores, and then I wrote my own video games for the Apple II. And then got into, built, a tax processing software company in college, sold that. Not a huge exit, but, you know, doing pretty good for, you know, being 20 years old. So I got the bug early, both on technology and on being an entrepreneur.

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So, you know, fast forward to the Thumzup era. So, I've lived in Los Angeles for 20 years, more than 20 years. I also am a musician, I play guitar, I play keyboards, I sing. So, I play with a lot of people who come to Los Angeles and they've got big hopes and dreams. But in the meantime, they are waiting tables and they're driving for Uber. Okay, so, as a technologist, you know, about seven or eight years ago, the question that I asked myself is, there must be some way to make it really easy for my friends to make a little extra money, to get paid to tell their friends about brands and products that they love on their personal social media. So, the first iteration of the concept was, we thought, Oh, we'll build an app that pays people to watch ads. But the reason why we didn't do that is because it's not cool. So it accomplished the goal to an extent, but it's not cool. So, we kept thinking it through, and that eventually arrived at the current Thumzup model. And then I feel like what we stumbled upon was this notion of being Uber for advertising. And there's trends that align here with that original concept, which is democratization, a gig economy, people wanting multiple streams of revenue. So all of that is how we ended up creating Thumzup.

What a great evolution from the concept to the reality of what Thumzup is today. And with that, you're making some bold moves into the Dogecoin ecosystem, including your pending acquisition of DogeHash Technologies. From an entrepreneurial standpoint, what factors do you weigh when deciding to pivot or expand into a new industry?

Sure, great question. One of the things that we look for, for instance, I have friends that have ideas and want to raise capital. So, whether it's a new business or whether it's a pivot, one of the basic high-level questions are, is there a market? Is the market big enough to be suitable to provide a return for investors? Are you going to risk their capital, and can you have a competitive advantage, okay? So those are the high-level questions, with us getting into the Doge mining business, first off, there, people may or may not know that Doge trades approximately \$4 billion a day in volume and has a market cap of about \$40 billion, so that makes Dogecoin bigger than 150 Fortune 500 companies, okay. So that's sort of the first evaluation. Is the space big enough to justify return on investment for investors to take the risk? And then, at this stage, the good news is that there's very few publicly traded companies that are mining Doge. So, we're, you know, it depends on how you count, so it's somewhere between two and maybe five if you count groups who have announced that they're going to do

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it, so it's still very early. So, most of the public companies that are mining Crypto, a lot of them are in the Bitcoin space. So, I would think, in my opinion, that the Bitcoin mining is a bit crowded for a new entrant, but the Doge mining is still very much open for new entrants. So those are some of the factors that we looked at in getting going in this direction.

Right. And building and scaling a company requires navigating both opportunity and risk. What have been some of the biggest challenges so far you've faced as a founder and CEO, and what lessons would you share with aspiring entrepreneurs?

Last fall, we had the pleasure of being able to ring the bell at NASDAQ. So we took Thumzup public on the NASDAQ last fall, and that was very exciting. I got to walk down the hall at NASDAQ, at their office near Times Square. There's a huge photo of Jeff Bezos, a huge photo of Steve Jobs in the same studio that I was in, so that's very exciting. And then, after we rang the bell, they did an interview with me where they asked me the same question that you just asked. So, the first thing that I would say to any entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs that would listen to my words is, don't give up. It's easier said than done. But, for instance, in my personal life, in the dot-com era. I built a very early mobile app platform that was being used to do training materials for Oracle, training materials for Cisco. It was used by AOL to put MapQuest on a smartphone for the first time. It was used by Microsoft to put PowerPoint on a smartphone for the first time. But I was very early, and it was hard to get people to pay for software on the original smartphones. So that industry became a zillion-dollar industry, but I gave up. The pressure of trying to get that to revenue was very, very difficult when I was younger. If Robert today could go back to Robert then and give him counsel, I would have said, Do not give up. Your assumptions were right; you saw where the market was going. You were early. Keep fighting, but it's hard, so that's the benefit of having some experience.

As far as the challenges along the way, something maybe specific that you really gleaned, something that you've carried with you?

One of the things that I've learned is that I think it's human nature that if you're the type of person who does these types of things, who wants to be innovative, who wants to work for themselves or not work for a company per se, and you have a temperament to take risks, then

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it's human nature that you want to do it with other people. In fact, you get a lot of, I would say, the angel investor and the venture capital community encourage entrepreneurs to have management teams. My experience is that you want to really think about that differently. My experience is that it's actually really hard to find like-minded people who want to take the risks and want to see it through. And I encourage people to be very open-minded to boldly stepping out and doing these things without anyone else to your left and to your right. And that's, again, something I would've told myself twenty or twenty-five years ago. I would've said that your instincts are good, your motivation is good, you don't need anybody else. Just summon your courage and get out there and start doing it, and, you know, the people that you need will come along. But don't wait to start trying to partner with someone. Because most of the people will fall by the wayside. If you're the real deal, then you know, ten years from the start, you're going to see very few of the people that were there when you started.

You are listening to The Anderson Files on PodClips.io, with guest Robert Steele. Robert, as we continue, there's a lot of conversation around how technology, from advertising platforms to digital assets, is transforming the way companies and consumers interact. How do you see these shifts creating opportunities for entrepreneurs and investors?

Great. So, one of the things that we think has shifted in the culture is, and we think this is a positive thing, is we think that the general public, particularly the younger general public, has a notion of "what's in it for me." So in the early days of Facebook, for example, people would voluntarily put their content on the platform; same thing with YouTube. YouTube didn't have ads and monetization in the beginning, and people would voluntarily put time and energy into putting content on these platforms. That has changed. Meta actually has challenges now, or they've had to adapt to the fact that people post, compared to ten years ago, they post less content than they did in the past. So that's really part of the Thumzup vision for the Thumzup technology is that we want to provide rewards that are meaningful for people to create content that's useful to the platforms and to all the stakeholders. And we think that this is part of why Crypto has also become so tremendously popular, so Crypto barely existed, in many ways, ten years ago. Now there's \$4 trillion in asset value in Crypto.

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And I believe that part of why that is is that the general public that has adopted it. There's something in it for them, that they actually can make money. There's risk, but many people have been able to profit and make money from the increase in value in their Crypto assets. So we think that that's part of the trend, that everyone needs to be aware of is what's in it for the user to participate on your platform, and you need to have a compelling value. For instance, TikTok has really taken a lot of market share away from other social platforms, because the “what's in it for the TikTok user” is achieving some level of TikTok fame relatively easily.

So, for whatever reason, the other social platforms, as I see it, didn't give that clear path to a reward as well as TikTok does. I'm not necessarily a social media superstar myself, but I made a TikTok video about a week ago that's had more than 100,000 views. So the TikTok algorithm, and it's fun, that's why people do it. I don't think anything I've ever posted on some of the other platforms has had that kind of reach. So what's in it for the user is more pronounced. The reward has to be more pronounced than it has in the past, and that's part of what Thumzup does.

Right. And looking ahead, where do you see the greatest potential for innovation and growth at the intersection of technology, commerce, and Crypto? And how is Thumzup positioning itself to lead in that space?

Certainly. Well, I think we're in very early innings on both artificial intelligence and on cryptocurrency. So, if we equate it to the early days of the internet, I don't think we've reached the year 2000 on either of those new phenomena. I don't think we're into 2001, 2002, 2003 if we compare it to the web on either AI or Crypto yet, meaning that there's still a tremendous amount of opportunity for everybody. We haven't reached the consolidation phase on either one.

So, for those who are familiar with the dot-com ride, we're still at that point where there's a lot of players, there's a lot of new entrants, there's capital available to fund new entrants. More than likely, there will be a consolidation in both AI and Crypto at some point in the future, but we're not there yet, so that creates lots of opportunity. For Thumzup, we definitely have not wanted to have an also-ran strategy with AI, which I think can be dangerous for investors.

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Technology companies have to be very careful, in my opinion, to make sure they have real value. I think consumers are getting a bit of AI burnout with every platform. You know, for instance, I don't want to name names, but there's a platform that I use a lot, where I had a board call the other day. And the AI, there's no way for us to turn off its note-taking. We had to drop off of that platform and then do an old-style conference bridge because nobody could figure out how to turn off the note-taking, and the note-taking wasn't appropriate for that particular call. And then on my email right now, Mike, oh my gosh, my email is just full of all these AI-generated marketing emails where they think they know something about me. And it's written so they get through the spam filter because they use the AI to make it sound like it's someone I know writing me an email.

You know, this is turning me off; this is making me less interested in doing business because it seems very manipulative to me. I'm invested in a bunch of AI companies; I'm an AI bull. But for Thumzup, we have to be very careful about making sure that we pick the right strategy that actually provides value to the end user. So that's one of the reasons why you're hearing us say more about Crypto right now. We have dabbled with AI, and there probably will be more of a story later on. But it'll be when we really know we have value. Where we think we're really adding value in new areas is in the Crypto area. That's where a lot of our recent announcements are.

I'm Mike Anderson, and I'm talking with Robert Steele of Thumzup Media Corporation. Robert, as we continue, you've led Thumzup Media through a strategic transformation into the Crypto and digital asset space. What drew you to this sector, and how do you see it shaping the broader economy over the next few years?

Sure, well, so as a technologist, I try to stay on top of everything that's new. So I first heard about Bitcoin around 2013. I attended a lunch in Marina del Rey, and there was a gentleman named Brock Pierce there, and he was the first person that put Bitcoin on my radar. That's around 2013. I think I made my first purchase around 2016. So, I have held some assets and done some trading now for almost ten years. When we came up with the Thumzup concept, originally, Thumzup, in my head, started as a Crypto play. So we had originally thought about

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creating our own coin and paying and having our advertisers pay rewards to our users in coin. The reason why we didn't pursue that was because I prefer a public market strategy versus staying private for a long period of time. And the regulators were not friendly to Crypto plays in the 2018-2019 timeframe.

So that's actually why we launched Thumzup with a cash payout rather than a Crypto payout, was to get listed, get on NASDAQ without creating any regulatory challenges there. So that's why you hear us talking about our Crypto story after we're on NASDAQ. And also now that the regulatory environments just changed; night and day, very, very, very friendly.

So what drew you to the sector where you see this affecting the broader economy over the next few years? To the degree that you've got that crystal ball?

Yes, yes, and I want to be a little self-deprecating. So, on one hand, I was following Crypto, had some entrepreneurial concepts, and intellectual property of my own. But really, what happened here is that our current Crypto strategy was not necessarily a result of some brilliance from Robert Steele. What happened was that once we went public on the NASDAQ, we had an upsized raise, so we raised a bit more money than we had anticipated, which was a good thing. There was a lot of interest, so we had 8 million d in the bank, and we were on NASDAQ.

So we made a decision to buy some Bitcoin. This is around January, so just buying 1 million dollars of Bitcoin, we got a lot of press that was remarkable, and we got featured by a group Twitter handle, HODL, and they put us on the Top 70 of Crypto Treasury Asset Companies chart. And when I went to the Bitcoin Conference, the stage that Michael Saylor was speaking on at the Bitcoin Conference, they had my company, Thumzup, with our logo on that chart of the 70 companies that had Bitcoin Treasury strategies. So just buying a little bit of Bitcoin gave us way more visibility than we'd ever got on the core Thumzup technology.

One of my jobs is to listen to the market, and the market was speaking there. So we bought another million dollars worth of Bitcoin. That led to a series of events. So it led to Donald Trump Jr. making a personal purchase of some of my shares. And that led to us being connected with an investment bank that he is an advisor to, called Dominari. And that led to us being

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THE ANDERSON FILES

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introduced to DogeHash Technologies as a potential acquisition, and that also led to Dominari raising \$50 million for this company. So that all did not happen because I had a deliberate vision to pivot us into Crypto. It happened through a decision to start a Bitcoin Digital Treasury strategy, which was so well received that it triggered all of those other events. So another part of that story element is that once we were on NASDAQ, we had to deliver. Like any public company, we've got to deliver revenue and revenue growth.

So the Thumzup technology is all working, like for instance, here in Los Angeles with me. So there's hundreds of businesses that will pay you to post in the Thumzup app right now, which is progress, in a way, but it still hasn't been progressing as quickly as we needed to, because once we're on NASDAQ, we needed to be generating millions in revenue and growing.

So, because it became evident it was going to take longer to get the adoption that we wanted, we started looking at acquiring digital agencies that already had the customers. So, in January and February, I was signing NDAS, and our team were evaluating different acquisition strategies. And that's when we got introduced to DogeHash technologies, which was really a superior use of our investors' investment than a digital ad agency, because of the excitement around Crypto, and the multiples we could get with Crypto, and the growth that could be accomplished versus the other acquisition strategies. So that's the, and then, for the future, the bull case for Crypto, from my standpoint, is that, unfortunately, it appears to me, as a citizen, that the United States, our leaders, are not making fiscally wise decisions about our money supply.

And I'm not an economist, I'm not a super expert, but I'm certainly not the only person who is saying this. And so, if the United States is going to keep printing money and getting the country into deeper and deeper debt, then there has to be an asset that we can all rely on to hedge against them. So, you know, I personally own more than 20% of my net liquid assets in various Cryptos, and my bull case is that the dollar has greatly depreciated in value. I don't see any evidence that there is any political will on either side of the aisle to rein in the spending and stop the money printing.

So I think that is the reason why people like Michael Saylor say that Bitcoin could go from \$117,000 to \$1,000,000 because it does have a fixed supply. I do think it is unique in the Crypto

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world. I think different Cryptos have different functions and different roles, but I'm a Bitcoin bull. I think it's going to a million. I think that's good for the general public.

Otherwise, what are your other choices? They're limited; there's no other asset that's performing with that kind of upside that I know of right now. And it gets harder and harder to get into a house, particularly for young people. They can buy \$5,000 worth of Bitcoin that could be \$50,000 in ten years, but you can't buy \$5,000 of a house.

Right, exactly, exactly. And as we move towards wrapping the program, looking ahead, what excites you the most about the future of Crypto technology and investment?

What excites me the most is that there's always something new going on out there. It's really amazing. You know, I love history, and for hundreds of years, life on Earth was pretty similar. Life in 1100 AD and 1200 AD was pretty similar to life in 1700 AD. But, since the dawn of the computer age, we've had this never-ending fountain of innovation, and I'm a capitalist, I love the fact that it constantly creates opportunity for people to change their lives and to have wealth and prosperity. As a public company CEO, my goal is that we would all join in this together. The stock symbol is T-Z-U-P, Tom, Zebra, Umbrella, Paul.

I'm very bullish on this company. I think that we have many multiples up from where we're at right now, and would welcome all your listeners picking up stock.

Excellent, and with that, what is the easiest, best way for listeners to learn more about Thumzup?

The website is t-h-u-m-z-u-p-m-e-d-i-a dot com. But a Google search of just the word on the screen behind me, Thumzup, will do the trick.

T-h-u-m-z-u-p. We've got a lot of content, lots of videos, all kinds of things for people to read about what we're doing.

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Robert, excellent. We wish you the absolute best with thumbs up media. And you know, as you continue to grow and innovate, we'd love to have you back at some point in the future.

Please. Thanks, Mike, I appreciate it.

Thanks, Robert. Thank you, Darrell Wayne, engineer; Mark Alyn, producer. I'm Mike Anderson, and you are listening to The Anderson Files on PodClips.io. Keep calm and keep listening.

You've been listening to The Anderson Files with Mike Anderson. Visit us at PodClips.io and check on the Financial Channel for more episodes and information on The Anderson Files.

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