

## Agency for Change Podcast: Scott Lien, CEO and Co-Founder, GrandPad

- Connect with Scott Lien on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lienscott/>
- Learn more about GrandPad: <https://www.grandpad.net/>

Scott Lien:

There is no try, we are going to do it. We're going to make it happen.

Announcer:

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

Lyn Wineman:

During the pandemic, many people stayed home to protect themselves from COVID-19. Those whose immune systems are particularly vulnerable, such as older seniors, were isolated from their families for weeks and months on end. Simon Hill, a writer for Wired Magazine, wrote about the difficulty of contacting his mother-in-law who still relied on a landline phone. When he or his wife would call, she wouldn't pick up. They'd worried something had happened to her.

To make matters worse, Simon's mother-in-law had a cell phone, but kept it off most of the time due to her lack of confidence in that device. So from Skype, to WhatsApp, and everything in between, the writer described his family's difficulties with finding a technology solution that would allow them to keep in touch with her. And then finally, he discovered a tablet designed specifically for seniors that was easy to use, included a number of accessibility features, and get this, offered 24/7 support with seniors in mind.

His mother-in-law quickly took to it and began to make and receive phone calls from the device with ease. And I love a happy ending to a story. And like me, I think you're going to love today's show because we're talking with the very person who helped create this device. So stay tuned as we explore what problems its creators set out to solve, how it helps seniors with social isolation, and where you can find one for the older adult in your life.

Hey everyone, this is Lyn Wineman, president and chief strategist of KidGlov. Welcome to another episode of the Agency for Change podcast. Today's guest is Scott Lien, CEO and co-founder of GrandPad, which keeps elderly seniors connected to family, friends and caregivers, and helps address social isolation. Scott, welcome to the podcast.

Scott Lien:

Thank you for having me on Lyn.

Lyn Wineman:

I have really been looking forward to talking with you because you have done something very interesting here. So for our listeners who have not heard of GrandPad, can you please tell us a little bit about what the company does and who you help?

Scott Lien:

GrandPad is a simple tablet-based solution, focused and designed exclusively for what we lovingly call super seniors. Those over the age of 75.

Lyn Wineman:

I love that term, super seniors, by the way.

Scott Lien:

Yeah, but not only is it the hardware. But it's all the service and everything you need. So you need connectivity. 4G LTE from all the major carriers like Verizon is included. You want 24/7 customer service so that if Mom or Dad or Grandma or Grandpa have a question...boom, they press help button and we help them 24 hours a day. The music that you want is there, so you don't have to sign up for Spotify or separate music service. Everything you need, made with loving care and empathy for this awesome group of super seniors.

The average age of our customers is 85. The oldest so far is 116. My oldest employee right now is Ed from the Milwaukee area is 102. This is just such an awesome group of people. We believe they're the wisest, most loving, great people amongst us. So, we've designed a product for them, focused on reconnecting them in a safe, engaging way with their family, friends, and caregivers. Caregivers including doctors, nurses, so on. We'll talk more about scammers and all the bad things. And so, it's technology that's safe that connects that circle of trust. The family, friends and caregivers in a nice walled garden. So, the family can all talk with mom and dad, grandma and grandpa, but the bad guys are kept out.

Lyn Wineman:

Scott, that is all so good. Being a daughter, a daughter-in-law, a granddaughter, I think about communicating with all of the loved ones in my life, and how what you have created really helps in that progress. And when I think about tech companies, I don't always think about tech and seniors together. I'm really curious what inspired you to co-found this company based on using technology to improve the lives of seniors.

Scott Lien:

Well, like many entrepreneurs, it's very personal. My son and I and my wife, we started GrandPad for my mom and my mother-in-law. Both were in their eighties at the time, absolutely brilliant ladies. But we saw them struggling with standard technology. We society, were forcing them to use a product, a smartphone. It was designed by 30-year-olds for 30-year-olds. And we saw them struggling and getting frustrated, and to the point where their frustration was making them feel bad. It was isolating them. I remember my mom saying, "Gosh, I just feel so stupid."

Lyn Wineman:

There's a little bit of shame in there I think, right? "I can't figure out how to use this device."

Scott Lien:

And I'm like, "Mom, you're not stupid." And at the time I was working at Silicon Valley. I said, "I'm ashamed of my industry for trying to force you to use a product that wasn't designed for you." I would say that's like automobiles. We all know cars were designed for adults. We never force our 10-year-old child to drive a car.

Lyn Wineman:

Heavens, no.

Scott Lien:

It would be dangerous and foolish, and everyone would be very frustrated with that. But think about that. The difference between a car when we get to be 18 or 20, we can safely drive a car. That's only a 10-year difference. But yet we're forcing people in their eighties to use a design for someone who's a 50-year difference. I mean I'm 57 and already the buttons and my font, I have bifocals. And I'm like yeah, this product was not designed for me age 57. Now I can get by a little bit, but when I get 80, I'll be frustrated to the point where I'll use a GrandPad. Right? Because it's like it's so natural. It's like wow, this is for me. That's what we did.

Lyn Wineman:

Scott, that is fantastic. You mentioned your mom. I understand you grew up in a dairy farm in Iowa. How does a kid from the Midwest get into computer science?

Scott Lien:

Yeah. Well, farmers are the ultimate problem solver. My dad always used to say, "I'm a veterinarian, I'm a geneticist. I'm an expert on agronomy, crops, weather. Efficiency." My dad was a welder. Like everything. You've got to be a jack of all trades and you got to have that kind of just roll up your sleeves, figure it out, problem solver. And that's what computer science is and how I've looked at technology is "how can we use technology to solve a problem and improve people's lives?"

And I fell in love with an uncle that was an engineer, and he kind of introduced me. I literally sold a pig to buy a computer in fifth grade and kind of taught myself back then, when everyone was learning the BASIC programming language. And so, I taught myself that. And then we had some software programs that I wrote, and I worked with my older brother who was in high school and my dad. And we used them on the farm and all of a sudden, we're like, "Wow, this can really create efficiency." We saw the power of technology and how it could help.

And so, I kind of fell in love with that. And as I grew up, went off and went to school for computer science and business double major. And really ever since then, every role I've been in is how can we use technology to improve people's lives, either efficiency. I was CIO at Bank of America when the iPhone came out 18 years ago, and we really embraced that. I mean, it seems so passe now. We all do mobile banking on our phone-

Lyn Wineman:

Right. Right. When it first came out, it was weird. I remember bankers even saying, "I'm not getting into that. People are coming into the bank." I can't imagine that there's a bank out there right now that doesn't have mobile banking.

Scott Lien:

And it's that shift from zero online banking to just the way most of us do it, happened in really less than 10 years. And I saw that, and I saw the power of mobile where you can have this connection device in your pocket and be connected with anyone. And that was really the groundwork of how can we bring the power of mobile and connectivity to the cloud and everything to this awesome group of super seniors? So that's how we got started.

Lyn Wineman:

I love it. You talk about using technology to solve a problem. And the problem you're solving with GrandPad I think is social isolation for those seniors. I mean, to help us wrap our heads around it. How big of a problem is that?

Scott Lien:

Well, it's social isolation and loneliness amongst super seniors, those over the age of 75 was a big problem before COVID. Catastrophic problem now. And I don't want to seem dramatic, but it is at the root of so many health issues, physical health and mental health issues.

What do I mean by that? Let's just step back a little bit. We as a society, whether it's your bank we were just talking about, or renewing your driver's license, or figuring out where to get a COVID shot, we society now expect everyone to be connected. "Just Google it. Just go here. Go to this website, install this app. That's the expectation." But think about if you're 80 and you're not connected, you don't have a smartphone, or that's for you for whatever reason. Think how disconnected you are, and you're disconnected from the world and the services. "I can't do DoorDash."

That then creates to this kind of withdrawing and isolating yourself. And it's the old thing, you put your hand on the stove once, burn your hand, you stop doing that. Well, every time you use technology, it's a struggle. It's frustrating. You withdraw from that. And that's what happens.

We see people withdraw. They're less connected. There's less dialogue with their family and friends. And they get more and more isolated. And that loneliness can then lead to social isolation, it can lead to depression. Now I'm not eating right, I'm not exercising, I'm not taking my medication. That can lead to lots of downstream problems. Obesity problems, etc.

And sadly, there's so many physical health issues and cognitive health issues, like Alzheimer's that there's not a cure for yet. And sadly, any significant breakthrough with Alzheimer's is probably at least 20 years away.

But the one thing that we, society, and that we're really focused on, I mean there is a cure for loneliness. You connect people, you engage them, and then it uplifts them. And you just see people. We've heard people say, "Gosh, my mom was just seemed like she was really declining and kind of withdrawing. And we got GrandPad and we all started doing video calls with her. And the grandkids started sharing pictures with her and she's got her zip back, she's back in the game." And it can just be such a just boost.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah, that's fantastic. Scott, I first learned about GrandPad from our KidGlov client, Dreamweaver. And Dreamweaver during the pandemic was focused on serving seniors and they said, "How can we help?" And they really focused in on the social isolation aspect. Can you tell our listeners a bit more about your collaboration with Dreamweaver?

Scott Lien:

Yeah. Dreamweaver is a fantastic nonprofit organization based in Omaha and Nebraska, but serving people actually, I was going to say in the United States, but they're also serving people around the world now.

Their Connecting Hope program is focused on elderly people that are not connected. They through charitable contributions are able to fund and then get GrandPad and the appropriate sports service in place so that they can reconnect those people Connecting Hope. And it's just been an amazingly successful program. And I want to highlight again, they're doing that all across the US and all 50 states,

but they also, GrandPad and Dreamweaver, were able to donate GrandPads to some of the refugees, seniors coming out of the Ukraine. So as that war, terrible war that still continues today, all these seniors are fleeing the country. And they're all over Europe and in Ireland. We were able to get GrandPads in the hands of those seniors so that they could stay connected with their family. We have GrandPad and Ukrainian and other native languages, 30 other languages. Dreamweaver is just doing such amazing work and has just such a great heart. We're just thrilled to be able to be a partner with them.

Lyn Wineman:

That's what happens when two great organizations, a great non-profit and a great for-profit come together to really take care of people across the country. I love that. Scott, I'm curious, are there any other stories you could share about how GrandPad is connecting families and seniors together?

Scott Lien:

Yeah, there's so many. I mean first, we're really lucky to get to work with this age group and hear the stories from the seniors and their families. But it's daily where we'll get a call from a senior or a family member that will tell us, "My mom was 90 and she was really declining, and we were skeptical. We tried other standard technologies, and we weren't sure this is going to work." They got it in the hands, and literally, maybe mom lives in New York and daughter lives in Chicago. The GrandPad was sent to 90-year-old mom in New York. All of a sudden, her daughter in Chicago gets a video call from her mom. And her mom's never done a video call before. It's like, "Oh my gosh mom, there you are." Just think how that makes mom, 90-year-old mother feel like, "I'm empowered. I'm self-sufficient. I'm able to do this. Look at me doing a video call." Daughter who's like, "Oh man, I just gave my mom this gift that expanded her world. Maybe physically she's not able to get out and about, but now at a touch of a button, she can talk to her family around the world." We have users in 120 countries. We focus on shipping the GrandPads US, Ireland, UK. But their families are in 120 countries. The families use our free companion app.

I'll tell you one other story that just was so heartwarming, emotional to me where the 90-year-old gentleman was in New York. His 87-year-old brother was in Los Angeles. And their family got both of them GrandPads. Because of their age and health, they were no longer able to travel and see each other. And these two brothers were very, very close. They always used to travel and see each other, but then because of health, they couldn't anymore. But they do phone calls every day, and they had resigned to the fact that they were never going to see each other. They both got GrandPads, and that first video call. And they hadn't again seen each other for several years now. They were able to see each other and-

Lyn Wineman:

Scott, you're going to make me cry.

Scott Lien:

Emotion and tears. And now they're able to do video calls all easily, safely. Those video calls with proper consent, they can be recorded so they can save those and have those memories when someone does pass. So it's about connecting people in a safe and engaging way. And that's what we're focused on. When you do that, amazing things happen.

Lyn Wineman:

Scott, I have a story that you didn't know I was going to tell. But last January, I walked into a restaurant in Fort Collins, Colorado. And I was waiting to be seated and a lovely group of women about my age, I overheard them talking about GrandPads. And one of the women said, "You won't believe it. I got my father who's in his nineties the best Christmas gift. It was a GrandPad." And the other ladies were like, "What's a GrandPad?" And of course, because I was aware, I was a listening and then just jumped on in and talked about GrandPad with them. But it was fun to have that conversation. And it was an interesting testimonial I think because they didn't know who I was or that I had any awareness. But it was fun to hear them say how that device really helped a 90-year-old gentleman connect with his kids and his grandkids. So, it was fantastic to hear that.

Scott Lien:

Love that. That's why we're doing this and why we work seven days a week is to get this in the hands of everyone who needs it.

Lyn Wineman:

Absolutely. It is easy to go to work when you know you're making a difference in the day. And I'm curious, when you created that first GrandPad, how did you ensure that it was a device that seniors would be comfortable with and could easily use?

Scott Lien:

Yeah, it's such a great question. And in our business where we're building something for people in their eighties, nineties, hundreds. Again, our oldest customer, 116. I got to personally spend time with Anna who was 114. We quickly realized that us young people, and most of my product development team is in their thirties. How could we ever know what it's like to be 90? We don't know. None of us have been 90. We don't know what it's like to have the physical and cognitive impairments of a 90-year-old. The eyesight issues, the hearing issues, the dexterity issues from arthritis, and cognitive memory issues.

This was probably my Iowa farm upbringing. Be real pragmatic and don't guess. Just go and ask them. Go ask a 90-year-old, and observe them with an open heart, and deep empathy, and see. So we quickly built this group. We call them our Grand Advisors.

Lyn Wineman:

The Grand Advisors, I love that

Scott Lien:

You can see some of them on our website About Us, the Team tab. And these folks are all in their eighties, nineties, and hundreds. Ed is 102. My oldest Grand Advisor so far, Elmer was 106. And we work with them all the time. We're the hands that are just building the product that they want. And we quickly saw that, and we sometimes easy think, "Well I think I know what they're going to want." And we're wrong almost all the time. So we've stopped guessing. We just ask them, and observe, and work with them. And we'll take their feedback and then create a prototype and then show them." They'll say, "No, no, no, like this."

I mean it's everything from the user interface to the box. We've designed a special senior friendly, easy to open box to our customer service. Our customer service is 24/7/365. If you ship a GrandPad to grandma living in New York and she's 90 and she opens on Christmas day and needs help, you don't want her to be frustrated. She wants to do a video call with the kids on Christmas. But even further,

taking that, so what's one of the most frustrating things when we call our insurance company, the cable company, or-

Lyn Wineman:

Being on hold.

Scott Lien:

Being on hold and getting the, "Thank you for calling. Please enter your 16-digit customer number." I don't know what that is. "Please press three for this, please press four for this." A human being answers the phone 24 hours a day in less than 15 seconds always.

Lyn Wineman:

Unheard of. That's amazing.

Scott Lien:

We just say, "Thanks for calling GrandPad. How can I help?" Most companies measure call handling time, and their goal is to get you off the-

Lyn Wineman:

To get you off the phone. Oh yes.

Scott Lien:

We don't even measure that. Our number one goal as a company is delight every customer every day. And if the customer's in a hurry, just wants quick question answered, we handle it quickly. If they want to chit chat and tell us about their weather and where they're living, we're happy to engage. Because that's part of the service. Why wouldn't we want to serve our customers?

And the other thing is when you talk to your customers, you learn things. You learn about what they want and what they're interested in. We have a feedback loop. Our customer care team, we call member experience, M.E. They are constantly feeding us the ideas of, "Hey, Scott called in and he's 90, and he's got some eyesight issues. And he really wishes we had X, Y, Z." That goes straight into our product development team. So you have deep empathy, and you're always learning from your customers. And to learn, got to talk to them.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah. Scott, there's a phrase that I like that someone taught to me. And it was listen with the intent to serve. And that sounds to me like what you do at GrandPad.

Scott Lien:

Another corollary that my mom always told me, she said, "You have two ears and one mouth. You should listen twice as much as you talk."

Lyn Wineman:

That's a great mom adage. I like that one. I like that one. So, tell us a bit about how GrandPad helps seniors age in place.

Scott Lien:

Every stat and survey out there say 90% of seniors want to live and age happily in their own home. And a lot of times, Grandma and Grandpa are living very independently in their own home at age 80. And then maybe sadly, Grandpa passes away. And then the family is worried about Mom, about Grandma. "Oh Mom, are you going to be okay?" And Mom says, "Yes, I want to live here alone." But the family worries. And sometimes, GrandPad is a guilt reduction tool for the adults on her daughter. It's like, "Well Mom, let's just get a GrandPad and then we can stay more connected. We live clear across the country, but we can do video calls." And we've had numerous where maybe there's some question about the furnace that maybe Grandpa used to always take care of every fall. Grandma can do a video call and her son can help remotely, and they can use a video call. It's just a great tool that can be used by the family to stay connected, and share information, and do video calls.

I'll share another story with you. A customer shared this with us, that daughter lived in San Francisco. Mom, age 85, was living independently in Florida. And her daughter would check in and call her every day, and they'd have a good chat on video call. And her daughter used that as a way to make sure her mom was okay. And she'd help her take her medications and so on. And her grandma would hold up her-

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah, smart.

Scott Lien:

Could help with that. Well one day, they're talking on a video. And her daughter all of a sudden saw a person she didn't recognize walk across the room and she said, "Mom, who is that man in the house?" And her mom said, "Don't worry, that's John. He's a homeless guy. He came to the door, and he was looking for something to eat, and he was hungry. And so, I took him in just to help him a little bit." And so here again, this is such a wonderful, caring, empathetic group. Mom was trying to do the right thing and help this poor guy, but her daughter was scared sick and worried. And they took care of it, and everything was okay, but it's a way to really just stay connected. And her mom probably wouldn't have told her about that because she's trying to keep that on the down low. It's all about connecting with family. Now it's important to know more than half of our business, really what we've been talking about is what I call B2C, direct to consumer. You can buy our product on Amazon and ship it to mom or dad. But half of our business is B2B enterprise healthcare. So large healthcare companies, payers and providers. Their care delivery system.

As an example, we work with an awesome organization in California called WellBe Health. And they give each of their participants a GrandPad. And they're able to then deliver remote care and telehealth, and take care of seniors who are living in their homes. It's really integrated into their care delivery system

Lyn Wineman:

That makes so much sense, to really take advantage of the world of telehealth. Because as a senior, I can only imagine transportation to and from, the amount of time in the office, waiting, being exposed to different kinds of things that when your immune system is maybe a little bit weakened, you don't want to be exposed to.

Scott, the story you just told me struck fear in my heart a bit about the mom who was taking people in. Because you can take people in physically. You can take people in virtually that shouldn't be there as well. I'm curious, you mentioned earlier that you really focus on safety and security. As the head of a



company who helps seniors, what can you tell us about fraud and scammers who are preying on seniors, and what is GrandPad doing to help seniors stay safe?

Scott Lien:

Yeah, the scams against seniors, again, is bad and getting worse by the day. We all like to think things are getting better. This problem is getting worse. And COVID of course just accelerated the problem. And so why is that?

First, the bulk of the wealth of money and wealth assets is concentrated with elderly people. Those over 60. And the bad guys know this. They know they're going to try to go where the money is. Second is this age group is very wonderful, empathetic. They were taught when the phone rings, you answer it, right?

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah. When people need help, you help them.

Scott Lien:

Right. And again, as part of our earlier conversation, we society have forced them to use a technology that isn't designed for them. They do struggle with it, just like a 10 year old trying to drive a car. It's not designed for them. It's a problem. Our data shows that 90% of seniors either have been scammed already or they will be.

Lyn Wineman:

What was that percentage again?

Scott Lien:

90% of seniors either have been scammed, attempted scammed, or will be. I mean, think about it. If you get 10 people, seniors together or their kids, they're like, "Yep, happened to my mom, happened to my dad." The stories, we're not talking about nickel and dime stuff. I was just talking to someone the other day that they said their mom who was completely cognitively brilliant, she got scammed out of \$29,000.

Lyn Wineman:

Holy cow.

Scott Lien:

We had someone we met a few years ago before he had GrandPad, he got scammed out of \$600,000.

Lyn Wineman:

Oh geez.

Scott Lien:

It's massive. Right? And the number one scam that happens is it's called the grandparents' scam. The grandparents get a phone call. It's usually on a bad connection. And we've got to remember about half this age group has significant hearing loss. So, the phone call goes like this, "Hey grandma, this is your granddaughter. And as you know, I'm in New York right now with a bunch of friends."

Lyn Wineman:

Because that was on social media.

Scott Lien:

Yeah. Because that was on social media, and everybody saw it. We've been posting, we're on a college trip. "One of my friends got drunk, is in jail, got a DUI. Please, I need you to send me \$2,000 right now grandma. Don't tell my mom and dad, don't say anything. You know, grandma, I love you and you love me. Let's just keep this between me and I. I'll pay you back when I get home. Can you go to Walmart right now and just get that gift card and call me back with that number? And that way I can get the money right now. We don't have to wait. Please go right now." And there's crying and tears. And these scammers are masters at prey on people and getting them hooked on them. This grandparent scam happens all the time. And it's caused, as you noted, by grandkids sharing openly on social media, grandparents engaging in that. And now the bad guys can very easily see, "Grandpa Scott Lien, he lives in Des Moines, Iowa. A little bit of Googling, I got his phone number." In cities, they'll even show up at the door and perpetrate the scam.

Anyway, the way that we've solved that is this is a walled garden. Only people who are invited in by the senior or by the family administrator, the adult on her daughter, those are the only people who can call this, email, video, call, or share photos. So when this rings, it is someone in your family. And it's a full phone inbound, outbound, just like your cell phone. But that's why we really encourage, do video calls, get used to doing video calls. It's just as easy. Just press a button and you're on. Now you can see them.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah.

Scott Lien:

So seniors that use GrandPad, if one of their grandkids calls them on the-

Lyn Wineman:

They can see. They can see.

Scott Lien:

If a scammer calls them on the phone, they just hang up say, "Call me back on the GrandPad." And they hang up. And if the GrandPad doesn't ring, they know it's a scam. If their granddaughter needs to talk to them, they'll call them on the GrandPad. These scams are getting worse by the day, and GrandPad is one way that you can really fight this problem.

Lyn Wineman:

Wow, that's great. That is great that you're doing that. And that is a terrible statistic. So I always just like to say man, if people would just focus all that effort, all that innovation on doing good. Right? Wow. So all right, let's turn this to the positive, Scott. What does GrandPad look like 10 years from now? And how do you balance keeping up with changing technology and making the device accessible to older seniors?

Scott Lien:

Yeah, we're often asked, "Hey, why don't you create a tablet for young children? Why don't you do this other thing?" And the answer to where do we want to be 10 years from now is really simple. We

just want to reach every senior, every family that needs GrandPad. Not just in the US, but every country around the world.

We're really just getting started. We're a nine-year-old company, and we've had huge growth and success. But the number of super seniors who are disconnected every day is growing, not shrinking. Everybody thinks like standard technology, smartphones, somehow, we're going to magically wake up one day and voila, we can all use them. That's not happening. Standard technology like with the metaverse and virtual reality is actually getting more complicated, not simpler. Our market's getting bigger. We just want to reach all these people, continue to focus on our priorities, which is delight every customer every day. Make sure it's simple, safe and engaging. And then, gradually expand around the world. Because we've been all over Europe. My son is actually in Asia right now. This need is around the world.

And we think by bringing families together, that helps the family unit, which we think is so important. And here's the little secret is not only is it beneficial to the senior, Grandma or Grandpa. But it can be so beneficial to that grandchild. We all know there's a lot of stress and struggles with young people in high school, college. Sadly, teen suicide is at a record peak. I found my grandma and grandpa were just such great mentors to me, like a safe place. Sometimes maybe a child isn't comfortable talking to Mom or Dad about a difficult-

Lyn Wineman:

There's a little bit of tension there about whatever it is. But you can go talk to Grandma or Grandpa and they'll-

Scott Lien:

"I got a C- on that math test, Mom." And maybe that conversation doesn't go so well. But Grandma and Grandpa have a way about helping encouraging grandkids. So, it helps both sides. We just think our work is not done until we've connected, in the U.S., It's 32 million seniors today that need our-

Lyn Wineman:

That's a lot of seniors

Scott Lien:

Worldwide in the countries that we're looking at, it's more than 300 million.

Lyn Wineman:

And that group is only growing.

Scott Lien:

It's only growing. And we do keep adding new capabilities, but we don't add just like, "Here's the crazy cool new technology." We focus on things that truly have a benefit to the senior. As an example, in the last year as kind of a learning from COVID, we've added a new app on grandpa's called the Moods App. And it's like a meditation, relaxation, anxiety reduction. And there are these beautiful, curated videos with really calming sound that people can just play, and it's just like one click.

And so I live in Minnesota near the Mississippi River. Beautiful pictures of bald eagles soaring with beautiful music. Pictures of waterfalls and sunsets, and puppy dogs and kitty cats. And seniors will watch these and they're like, "This just calms me." Might be someone that has anxiety. Sadly, a lot of cognitive

diseases like Alzheimer's in the early stages can create a lot of anxiety. These are tools that can just add calm. We're always adding things like that based on the learnings of our seniors.

Lyn Wineman:

Probably not going to see GrandPad in the metaverse though anytime in the near future.

Scott Lien:

No, we think connecting people in the real world is a good thing. That's what we're focused on, bringing families together. And it is important to say, because sometimes people say, "Well we want our family face to face." We do too. We know that-

Lyn Wineman:

That's not always possible, right? Often-

Scott Lien:

And what we found, if the seniors are more connected to their kids and grandkids every day, and they see the pictures of the ball and the music concert, now when they do get together at Thanksgiving, they have more to talk about. They have more in common if they talk more than once a year, you just don't have that much. But this, they're communicating every day and little pictures and videos and-

Lyn Wineman:

The relationship is building and growing. Yeah. Yeah. Scott, you've said so many inspiring things today and you're doing such inspiring work. I'm going to ask you my favorite question next. And everybody who listens to the podcast knows this is my favorite question. I would love a Scott Lien original quote to inspire our listeners.

Scott Lien:

I've got some that other people have said. Let me start with those and then I'll get to my original quote. Which makes my first point that I say to my team all the time is nobody is as smart as everybody.

Lyn Wineman:

True.

Scott Lien:

And so the point is teamwork and collaboration. And we've built our whole company from the ground up. First, hiring people that love to collaborate. They're not lone rangers or a lone wolf. They love being with a team. They love sharing, low ego, high teamwork. Nobody. Scott's not that smart. But as a collaborative of all of us, 170 employees and working with all of our partners and mentors and people like sharing Dreamweaver, we can really learn, and we can bring a best solution. So that's one.

And related to that is to quote Yoda, "Do or do not. There is no try." And so, starting any company, but especially what we tackled here is unbelievably hard. But you've got to just be committed and pulled by our mission. And our mission is to improve the lives of millions of super seniors by reconnecting them in a rich, safe, engaging way with their family, friends, and caregivers. Nine years ago, when me and my son were sitting at the kitchen table with a blank sheet of paper, that felt like an insurmountable and

kind of a crazy mission. But now we've made great progress. And it's just through, we're going to do it. We're going to do it. There's no try. We are going to do it. We're going to make it happen.

Lyn Wineman:

I love the quote from Yoda. That's fantastic.

Scott Lien:

Yeah. The last one I would say, this one's very well known, but I think it's just so important and timely given all the things going on in the world and it's Gandhi. "Be the change you want to see in the world."

Lyn Wineman:

Oh yeah.

Scott Lien:

It's really easy to sit around, and watch the news, and get down, and whine and complain. But be the change you want to see in the world. And we saw a real problem with seniors getting more isolated and left out of everything going on in the world and getting disconnected from their families. And we just set out to solve that problem.

Lyn Wineman:

That's fantastic, Scott. Thank you. I'm feeling inspired at the moment. And by the way, for people who have been listening who want to learn more about GrandPad, maybe if they catch this before Christmas, want to get this as a Christmas gift, how can they find out more about GrandPad?

Scott Lien:

Yeah, just go to GrandPad's website. You can Google us. GrandPad, just like it sounds. Or go to our URL is grandpad.net. And unlike a lot of companies that don't put their 800 number, our 800 number is on every page of our website. It's (800) 704-9412. And a lot of people like to shop on Amazon. We're on Amazon. You can go there, click Amazon Prime, GrandPad will show up at your house a few days later, easy peasy. And you can ship it to Mom or Dad, wherever they are. So come to our website. We answer the phone 24 hours a day. A human being, our employees.

Lyn Wineman:

That's amazing. I love that.

Scott Lien:

We have a little live chat there. If you're shy and don't want to talk, you can live chat. We do webinars every week. So if you want to just learn more, you can come to our website and you'll see a sign up for webinars there.

Lyn Wineman:

What a great idea.

Scott Lien:

And it's kind of a 20-minute show and tell, and you can ask questions live.

Lyn Wineman:

That's fantastic. Scott, I've really enjoyed talking with you. I've loved the stories. I love how you have used technology to solve a problem for people we love. Almost all of us have seniors in our lives. As we wrap up this conversation today, what is the most important thing you would like our listeners to remember about the work that you're doing?

Scott Lien:

Yeah. I would ask everyone to think about that super senior in their life. Someone in their seventies, eighties, nineties, hundreds. Could be a mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunt, uncle, neighbor.

And you think, "I call my mom every Saturday or I call my dad every Sunday." But maybe talk to them for a half hour. But think about the whole rest of the week, 24 hours a day that you're not with them. And we all go visit Grandma and Grandpa and we see oftentimes sitting in their comfy chair watching lots of TV. Sadly, this group is generally very lonely, very isolated. Maybe they can't drive anymore. Maybe it's hard for them to get out. Just think about what their day is like. And maybe they can't use technology anyway, how isolating that is. With that problem in mind, what can you do about it?

Well, we all, all those young people, we have these smartphones in our pocket. And oftentimes we're in the car, we're walking through the airport, we're out for a hike or run or walk. Just call that super senior in your life. Just say hi to them. Doesn't have to be an hour conversation. Just say hello. Just let them know you're thinking about them and tell them to call you anytime. Usually, seniors don't call their kids or grandkids because they don't want to bother. They think, "I'll text you." Tell them, "Mom, you call me anytime 24 hours a day. I love to hear from you. I like getting calls. If I'm busy, if I'm in the middle of a work meeting and I can't take your call, I'll call you back. Just leave me a little voicemail." That's the thing we can all do every day. And if everybody does that, that will help this. And we all have the technology today to do that. A phone call, but a GrandPad will make it even easier.

Lyn Wineman:

That's fantastic, Scott. I think we all talk about making the world a better place, and adding kindness, and happiness, and joy to the world. And that would be one easy way to do it. Scott, I've really enjoyed this conversation. I fully believe the world needs more problem solvers like you, more great companies like GrandPad. Thank you so much for talking with me today.

Scott Lien:

Thank you. It's been my joy to be with you.

Announcer:

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