



FUTURES H A P E

Paris
October 17th, 2017

Dear Founder,

I hear you're working on some incredible stuff. You've found a way to put Lidar on a solid-state chip. You're able to identify 10^8 proteins in a drop of blood. You know how to manufacture incredible new products with unpackaged LEDs on paper-thin substrate.

You have the inspiration, the idea, the passion to make it happen, but anything truly groundbreaking is hard to make real. So now what?

“How do I fund this without giving away what I'm building?”

“How do I protect my idea?”

“Once it's done, how do I get people to find out about it, buy it?”

“How do I make this thing? And once I have it, can I make that thing thousands of times at scale?”

I've been through these same questions — and 1000s more — over and over again. I started my first companies during high school and college selling hardware and software, even creating semiconductors. It taught me a lot of hard lessons about how to make my technical dreams become real and impactful.

With my Computer Engineering degree in hand, I applied to General Magic. And didn't let up until they hired me. My heroes were there — Bill Atkinson, Andy Hertzfeld, Joanna Hoffman, Susan Kare. We worked on the first smartphone, 15+ years before its time.

In '99 I started another company again, Fuse Systems. I took that technology & team to Apple where I put together the team to develop the iPod — and, this time 'round, had Steve Jobs as my mentor. The iPhone was the culmination of all that learning — the technology, the usability, the marketing, the org.

Most recently I was the founder of my own company again: Nest. Armed with the experience of the past 25+ years, with many hard lessons learned, and another incredible set of mentors, Bill Campbell and Randy Komisar, we got a lot of things right.

In all of these situations, I was getting better at taking deep technology, wrapping a product & services around it, building a team, defining the user experience, marketing it, etc.

At General Magic pretty much everything we created was new technology: the operating system, the programming language, the apps, the UI, the touch screen, business partnerships... everything.

At Apple we built the iPod around a new, miniature hard drive. And the iPhone was possible only because we were able to leverage the miniaturization of all computer components and create a whole new UI from disruptive HW and SW.

At Nest we created the Learning Thermostat, the first connected home product leveraging AI. That was 7 years ago, long before AI became the buzzword it is today.

For the past 10 years, I've been sharing what I've learned with founders. Investing both money and my time. A lot of the founders of these companies have done quite well. But I've always wanted to do more, support them more, just like my mentors who helped me. That's why I created Future Shape.

Now I'm pulling the best and brightest from my past to help founders realize the full potential of their ideas. When you can't get past an obstacle, ask us. We've seen a lot before, and we can help you anticipate the things around that blind corner.

We're a sounding board for your ideas on product and technology and business and building a company. We provide tools. We can be hands on — even spending days or a week-long stint with you when it makes sense. And we get out of your way when you don't need us.

We work with unorthodox teams, rule breakers, and big ideas on multiple continents, in any time zone, helping you when and where it's best. If we can help get your team's great ideas and products out of the lab and into people's lives, get in touch. We're excited to hear about it.

Onward!

