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# EDITED TRANSCRIPT

BZFD.OQ - BuzzFeed Inc at Bank of America Media, Communications and Entertainment Conference

EVENT DATE/TIME: SEPTEMBER 07, 2022 / 11:30PM GMT

## CORPORATE PARTICIPANTS

**Jonah Peretti** *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

**Marcela Martin** *BuzzFeed, Inc. - President*

## CONFERENCE CALL PARTICIPANTS

**Brent Navon**

## PRESENTATION

**Brent Navon**

All right. Let's get started. So we're very delighted to have BuzzFeed here. We have Jonah Peretti, CEO; and newly joined Marcela Martin, President of BuzzFeed. I'm Brent Navon, I work on the media and entertainment team here at BofA Securities. So let's just get started. Jonah, let's start with you.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Brent Navon**

So BuzzFeed recently went public late last year. And in just a short period of time, you have macro and industry conditions that have just changed dramatically. And can you just give us a high-level overview of your company, your 3 lines of revenue and how you believe you're positioned in this kind of environment?

**Jonah Peretti** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

Yes, sure. Thank you. So good to see everyone. The founding of BuzzFeed was about 12 years ago or 15 years ago, I don't know. I kind of lost track. And so much has changed in the industry from that period. When we started, the iPhone hasn't come out yet. Now the majority of our consumption is happening on mobile. So the changes we're seeing in the market now, in some ways, feel unprecedented and new, but it also just feels like the tech industry has continued to dramatically transform the way the media industry works. And so we've had a history of a company of continually transforming and changing what we do based on all of these massive changes. That's been particularly true through COVID and the rise of TikTok and all these other big trends that we're seeing in economic shifts.

The quick -- for those of you who aren't familiar with BuzzFeed, we're a diversified digital media company. We have these iconic brands, BuzzFeed, Complex, HuffPost, Tasty is our food brand. And then we distribute our content across all the digital platforms, we're a really, the only pure-play digital media company that is public and diverse, with this diversified portfolio of brands.

And the way we make money is three ways; we have advertising business where we're monetizing attention, we have e-commerce business, where we're monetizing transactions, so people shop off of our content, and then we have a content business where we're making brand-new content and then also things like TV shows for streaming or feature films and things like that.

And so the approach is fairly simple in the sense of strong brands that consumers know, focused on millennials and Gen Z and distributing content across all of the platforms where people are consuming content and making revenues the best way for each platform.

**Brent Navon**

That's a great helpful overview. And one of the things we were just discussing before we got on stage is this industry in transition. And as we take a step back and think about your 12 years at BuzzFeed, you've been this visionary founder and you've seen multiple evolutions of distribution models, whether it be desktop to mobile. You now have rise of short-form video. And each time you've been able to navigate and come out bigger, better and stronger.

And so can you talk about the current evolution in the marketplace right now. How you believe BuzzFeed is positioned for this change? And what are you doing internally to adapt to what's going on in the market?

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**Jonah Peretti** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

Yes, for sure. So one thing is there's a lot of change in the market, but one thing that doesn't really change is people and human behavior. So that's a good North Star. People are looking at content because they want to be entertained, they want to be informed. They want something to share with their friends, to talk about with their friends. They want to be able to cook a nice meal for their family. There's all these things that persist over time. And so we focus on all of the signals that we get back from platforms about these human needs. Are people sharing the content we create, are they cooking the recipes that we are publishing on Tasty and that gives us a real clear sense of whether what we're doing is working or not.

So like on the Tasty app, we're getting thousands of people sending tips into the recipes they've cooked and giving feedback and then that informs how we make our recipes or our food or on BuzzFeed with entertainment content, we're seeing, what are they sharing, what are they commenting on, what are they reacting to and that goes back to our creative teams and allows us to improve our content.

So that's something that has been really the same for the entire history of the company. This approach of a 2-way connection with audiences that the Internet has enabled that allows us to serve the customer better, serve the audience better. We're never going back to an era where an editor puts a story on the front page of a print newspaper and doesn't know if anyone read it, doesn't know if anyone shared it doesn't know any of those metrics. We're in a world where content is -- the data behind the content can inform the content production, and that's really the sort of core of what we do.

That also allows us to move on to these new platforms. So when we look at what has happened in the last few years in the media industry, Netflix was out there by themselves, making streaming content. And then every major media company has adopted the Netflix streaming model. So now all the major media companies are doing the same streaming model. And then a similar thing has happened more recently with vertical video where TikTok came out of the scene, grew incredibly quickly, and now every major tech platform has a vertical video solution.

So with Facebook, it's Reels, YouTube it's Shorts. Snap has vertical video, Reddit even has vertical video. So everyone has sort of adopted a similar model because the vertical video algorithmically recommended filling your entire mobile screen is a pretty good model that consumers really like.

And so when we see major shifts like that, we always think how do we align with those shifts and how do we grow our studio business to make more content for streamers, for example, and how do we expand the production of vertical video across all different platforms.

And using that same approach where we have the signal of data coming back from the audience, we're able to grow on new platforms and turn things that may initially start as a headwind into a tailwind because we align with the major trends we're seeing on the platforms and build content for those audience needs.

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**Brent Navon**

All right. And when we think about where we are in the monetization curve of short-form video, right? Obviously, TikTok has seen this explosion and engagement. But obviously, the monetization piece is not -- hasn't quite caught up yet. And so do you believe this is a short-term transition period that can take several quarters? Is it a few years? Like how should we be thinking about that and the implications for your business?

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

Yes. I mean if you look at the history of media over even a longer time horizon, the monetization always catches up to the audience. And so what we've seen over the last few decades is for a long time, magazines and newspapers, had way too much revenue for the amount of audience they had with digital taking audience share. And slowly, you've seen over 20 years, the revenue for newspapers and magazines moving over to digital.

More recently, you've seen that happen with TV. And so I think now it's happening within digital, not analog to digital, but within digital, you're seeing things like vertical video take a lot of audience share and then over time, they'll start to take revenue share. And so we always find ways to accelerate that shift and benefit earlier. So with vertical video, we have a product called UpShots, where we sell branded content advertisers where a company can put -- we can partner with the company to put their product in a video and then run that video across TikTok, Instagram, Reels, YouTube Shorts and get into that flow and monetize that audience attention earlier before all of this whole ecosystem is built out to monetize through, for example, advertising.

So I think you're going to see the shift happen fairly quickly over the next couple of years where more and more advertising revenue will go where the audience is, just sort of what always happens. But even before that shift happens, there's ways to still generate revenue. And we've seen that before with Tasty when Facebook video was a new thing. We've licensed -- we made Tasty pots and pans and now you can buy Tasty pots and pans in every Walmart in North America. That was because the monetization wasn't there, so we figured out other ways to generate significant revenues.

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**Brent Navon**

Yes. I mean just to follow up on that. I mean that to create that vertical video that you're saying to monetize, like how big is that for you guys right now? And how fast is that growing? I mean, how big of an opportunity do you see that? Has the monetization curve is sort of on-the-come in the future, but how big do you see the opportunity that you're discussing right now?

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

So vertical video plus creators are two areas that kind of fit together. We've been partnering with creators. A lot of individual creators struggle when they're out there in the world on their own. It seems glamorous if you look at their Instagram, but the reality is they're maybe living with five roommates and they don't have health insurance and they don't have collaborators and studios and things like that.

If they can come in and do a residency at Tasty, they go from being a lonely creator who's trying to do stuff on their own to having culinary expertise and studios. And so we've been recruiting and bringing in creators into BuzzFeed to partner with them, whether it's BuzzFeed Complex or Tasty. And then a lot of what they're making for us and with us is vertical video. And then that allows us to bring advertisers and partners into that space. And that creator and vertical video is outpacing the rest of our business and growing quickly. And so we're excited about the future prospects of it because it really aligns with these bigger macro shifts.

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**Brent Navon**

That's great. And maybe more broadly, can you just touch on your relationship with all the different social and tech platforms, how you collaborate with them, how you work with them? And these changes and these audience shifts- How does this impact you?

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

Yes. We are in constant dialogue with the big platforms, and they're all hungry for brand-safe content. I'm sure you've all followed news stories about the challenges on some of these platforms with abusive content or content that's not brand safe, content that's super political, very polarizing, big political fights. And if you're P&G or Unilever, you don't want your advertisements to be in that kind of an environment. And so a lot of what

the platforms look forward to a partner like us is they say, "Hey, can you produce at scale, quality content that is brand safe, that we can put in our decks when we're pitching our advertisers and say, look, BuzzFeed Tasty is doing all this great stuff."

And so there's a natural reason to collaborate. And so that's why we have such a close relationship with all the major platforms. And also, none of them make content. So they need content creators.

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**Brent Navon**

Right. No, that makes sense. So shifting gears to a topic everybody likes to talk about these days, which is the macro. So advertising has been fairly choppy given the current macro environment. Can you comment on what you're currently seeing in the marketplace. General commentary from clients, are there particular categories that are stronger versus others. And how are trends progressing through the summer as now as we head into the fall?

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**Jonah Peretti** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

Yes, there's a lot of mixed signals in the market. I think we were talking before, okay, and all about how in March of 2020, there was a very decisive, "Oh, we're heading into a pandemic and boom, it was like before and after and everything was fairly clear that things are going to change," and now it doesn't feel like -- it feels like we're in an inflection point, but it's a muddled inflection point with lots of mixed signals.

And we're seeing strength in certain categories and verticals like entertainment or travel where people are getting out in the world, more going to the theaters again. But we're also seeing partners who are interested in working with us on a big campaign, but then they can't get their chips from the supply chain, and they can't get the product on the shelf, like, why am I going to spend on advertising, if I can't even get my product on the shelves, right? So there's a lot of mixed signals.

And then there's times where it's like, "Oh, consumers must be slowing their spending because of inflation or whatever" and then consumer spending comes in kind of strong and you're like, "Oh, maybe things -- maybe people aren't really feeling as much as it seems like they would." And so a lot of mixed signals. And so I think our focus is really just how do you be resilient and adaptive and make sure that you have good ways to respond to whatever comes our way.

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**Brent Navon**

I mean like just a follow up. I mean, would you characterize it as more of there's this wait and see from a lot of advertisers where it might not be cancellations, but people are just like, hey, look, we're interested, but let's just wait and see how the next couple of weeks are playing out? Or is that your I don't want to put any words in your mouth, but...

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**Jonah Peretti** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

That's exactly right. Yes. I mean, like in 2020, there was a lot of cancel of campaigns and pauses and people like not sure what was going on. Now it's the opposite. People are leaned in. They're talking about let's do a bigger strategic partner, so let's do this, let's do that. And it's more a question of the timing of when does it happen? And what's the budget size and there's a little more tentativeness about transacting, but there's a lot of eagerness to do stuff.

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**Brent Navon**

And in terms of visibility, just heading into any particular quarter, like how much of your advertising revenue is booked. So when you sort of have that line of sight just because the big thing has been that especially digital advertising can be cut very quickly. And so just curious from your perspective, how much line of sight do you really have into advertising as you head into any quarter?

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

I think there's a little less visibility because of the uncertainty in the market than there would ordinarily be. Our partners are less likely to lock in big upfront things. That being said, we have a lot of great offerings that really require them to lock in. So ComplexCon is this massive event that our Complex brand does in Long Beach, 40,000 people come to shop for sneakers and clothes and hear music and eat food, and it's this huge thing. A lot of brands want to be part of that, and they need to reserve their spot to be part of it. And so it makes sense that they would transact upfront to pay in order to be included in it.

And so there are certain types of opportunities where there's scarcity or something very desirable that will cause advertisers to transact in advance. But if you're just selling kind of straight up media brand awareness thing, they're not going to lock in way in advance or do upfronts. Even in TV, the upfronts have gotten eroded and there's a lot more advertisers looking for more flexibility to manage all these macro issues.

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**Brent Navon**

And I mean you discussed -- you touched on this a little bit earlier, but your content being brand safe in this environment, where things might be choppy, that's an opportunity for you to separate yourself relative to other areas when everything is good, it's just -- it's good for everybody. So any way you can talk about how that's helping your business, especially right now when environment is very uncertain.

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

Well, I think it helps in the sense that if you have lifestyle brands like Complex or you have food brands like Tasty, it's a little removed from all the online battles and fights and politics and things like that. I think Trump not being in an office has also helped. I'm not making any political claims, but just the constant -- or maybe not being on Twitter, the constant thrash of news and culture being driven by that was good for ratings, but not really what advertisers want to be around. It's like advertisers are like, ah!...

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**Marcela Martin** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - President

Yes, I also think that it helps because it's one of the things that attracted me the most from BuzzFeed. I believe that throughout time the teams have had to build high-quality content based on data insights and expand their audience in a massive way while at the same time protecting and promoting creativity. I think that BuzzFeed in this intersection between advertisers, creators and platforms, and it's a very unique position and very powerful.

And in times like this, where there is so much noise and about recession and so on, I think that advertisers tend to look for options that are safer, not to test many new things. And I think they found in BuzzFeed a really great partner because we have a proven record of consistently and continuously delivering value creations through the power of the brands that we have.

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**Brent Navon**

So this is a great segue to you, Marcela. So you recently joined BuzzFeed after several stints at publicly traded companies. Can you talk a little bit about what inspired you to join the company. And what opportunities you see at BuzzFeed?

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**Marcela Martin** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - President

Yes, absolutely. By the way, thank you for having us here today and thank you, everyone, for being here. It's really nice to have people that you can see in 3D, as I said, after so many years of being through Zoom. I'm very excited about joining BuzzFeed.

Just a quick overview on my past. I have worked for over 20 years at Fox International and National Geographic as a CFO, and I worked as a CFO of Booking.com and Squarespace. So I have a mix of experience between media and tech. And I'm very bullish about BuzzFeed. I see a great deal of opportunities. First and foremost, I mean, it's about the people and the culture of the company. And if you just look at what they have been able to achieve in the last year, just that alone with a transition of going public, plus the combination of integrating pretty much flawlessly HuffPost and also acquiring Complex and doing a great deal of integration so far.

I am telling you like I'm an oldy in the industry. And what I have seen so far, I have been pretty impressed on how the team has been able to execute. This is a culture that is really focused on execution and collaboration. And that was incredibly attractive to me because with great teams, you can do great things.

In terms of opportunities, I think that there are many. I think that first, I would like to mention again this unique mix that BuzzFeed is able to create in combining creativity with data insights to produce high-quality content for big audiences. I think that -- well, Comscore pretty much is the one saying that Gen Zs and millennials spend vastly their time consuming our content compared to any other -- the content of any other pure-play digital media company. And we can continue to use this formula, the secret sauce of BuzzFeed to create new platforms and create new products for customers, such as we talked about the short-form videos or video-led creators, and so on.

And the other asset that, of course, we have is a massive number of hours in our library that we can use to test and create new things. So we have a lot of flexibility there. I think we also have a great deal of opportunity on continuing to create these emerging businesses that comes from this unique mix that we talked about and the three models, advertising, commerce and content. Commerce and content are younger, I would say. So there's a lot of potential to continue to grow there.

International is also another opportunity. I think that basket has had a great deal of success here in the U.S. and with the right mix of global and local, you can replicate the success in some other cultures.

And recently, we have announced the launch of Lighthouse, which is our first data party service for advertisers so that they can do target segmentation in Latin America, Canada, Australia, U.K., where we do have millions, double-digit millions and millions of single-digit millions and double-digit millions of audiences that can continue to grow.

And the last but not least is M&A. I think that the team has a proved track record of being able to integrate companies in a very smooth manner. And we all know that when acquisitions fail it mostly fails because it's really hard to integrate cultures. And this speaks again highly about the culture of BuzzFeed, how open and collaborative the teams are. And we are always looking at opportunities on what are the gaps that we have from a product perspective, from a tech perspective or what are the new platforms or things that we see. And we will continue to do M&A as opportunistically as we possibly can. So lots to do.

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### **Brent Navon**

Yes. No, it's a great overview, and I'm going to circle back on a lot of the things that you touched on there. But maybe can you share a little bit about your role as President and what are some of the things that you're hoping the company can do as a public company? What are the specific areas that you're focusing on near term and how your prior experience is informing your current role?

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### **Marcela Martin** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - President

Well, in my current role, I oversee several departments like legal, people, finance, corporate development, M&A, investors relations, risk management. And I hope I don't forget anybody because I am not going to be happy if I forget somebody. And look, I mean, what I -- in the short term, what I'm focusing on is on learning the business, even though I have experience in media and tech, every company is different, every culture is different. And so I'm taking time to look at that.

By the way, this is a month, I think, month and 5 days in the role. So I'm pretty new. And I'm focusing on looking at the cross-functional processes to try to run the company as smoothly as we possibly can because we know that there is no such thing as running a company smoothly. You always have things that you have to deal with. But the idea is to try to standardize as much as we can and become as nimble as we possibly can so that we can pivot and change when these macro changes and shift happens.

And the other item where I'm very excited about is I'm working with the entire organization and my teams and collaborating on the overall company strategy. And we have recently kicked off a long-range planning process where -- that encompasses the whole, the entire aspects of the business. And the reason why this is exciting is because we are planning to have in early 2023, an Investor Day-Analyst Day where we are planning to share with all of you the long-term goals that we have for the organization.

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### **Brent Navon**

That's great. We're very much looking forward to that. So shifting gears back to another thing you touched on, which is your emerging businesses, which is beyond the advertising. So you have this diversified revenue streams, whether it be commerce, licensing, events, you even have a film studio like you mentioned. Can you just discuss how they all fit together in your view? And how should we think about their scale and potential relative to your core digital advertising business?

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### **Jonah Peretti** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

Yes. I mean as an entrepreneur, whenever we create some new thing, I always have hopes that it will become giant, right, and ambition for it to become giant. But you don't want to put too much pressure on new businesses right away, especially now that we have significant revenues in other areas. We don't want to be like you need to generate something that is material to the overall business in your first couple of years because I think to really build a strong business, you need -- new businesses you really need to get the model right and have it grow at the rate that makes sense.

So you mentioned our studio business. For a long time, I wasn't that excited about TV and film. And the main reason was it didn't really fit our model of having that two-way connection with audiences. So for 100-plus years, film studios would make movies, show them in theaters, then for several decades they would also sell them to television and sell them to cable and things like that. And they wouldn't really get much data back about how people were consuming the content. I mean, newspapers even more so. 200-plus years and the editors and writers don't really know which articles people actually read inside of the print newspaper.

And so we like digital businesses they can be more data driven, you can combine creativity and data. And so TV and film were frustrated -- were not things we were that excited about, but now that the whole industry has shifted towards streaming, and even Netflix and some of the other streamers are starting to open up a little more and share a little more data, it becomes exciting because it's now a digital business, not an analog business.

And we also, with being a leading culture publication, we are seeing what actors people are interested in, what stories they're interested in. We have so much IP across our whole network that we can extend into movies and making \$5 million budget feature films that can run on streamers is a pretty interesting new area, and we have a lot of advantages with that digital production models that are lower-cost production models plus more data-informed development.

So we like to look for opportunities to find things that could be complementary businesses that would play to our strengths. The commerce business is similar. People are reading BuzzFeed for lists and quizzes, adding in cool products or things that they might want to discover and shop and buy was natural to that experience that people already had on BuzzFeed site now. You'd go to the BuzzFeed to be entertained and be informed and discover new things. And if all of a sudden, you see a story about 23 genius inventions you never knew existed and you click through and you buy an aura ring, so you can track your sleep or whatever, and we get a commission on it, that's a great new business that's very complementary to what we're already doing. It plays to our strength in this data-informed creativity.



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**Brent Navon**

Yes. And I guess on the commerce side, specifically, I think something we all underappreciated was tougher comps, supply chain issues that impacted that business specifically. I know that's an area you felt really bullish on as you were coming public. I mean do you still feel really encouraged about the long-term growth prospects there?

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**Jonah Peretti** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO*

Yes, absolutely. I mean there definitely was some acceleration of growth with COVID because -- I mean we saw a lot of these trends through our commerce business. Like when stimulus checks went out, we'd see our commerce revenue go up because people were right out, people went and bought Tasty cookware at Walmart because they just got a \$1,000 check from the government or when there'd be lockdowns and people couldn't go into physical retail stores, they're like "Oh, people are sitting at home and they're not shopping out in the world, so they're buying more stuff off of our site."

So you'd see those kinds of trends. That was great, but it also kind of sucked that we didn't get any movie advertising during that period because no one did go to the movie theaters. So it hurt our advertising business for theatrical films, but it helped our commerce business. And now people can go shop in physical places that has some impact on our commerce business, but it's not an impact. In the longer arch of things, having the commerce business is something we feel really strongly about and I think is very complementary to our advertising and content businesses.

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**Brent Navon**

That's great. And shifting off to another area you touched on, which is the deal pipeline and M&A and a big part of the thesis again with this -- with BuzzFeed when you went public was potential M&A to augment the growth story, expand your brands. And what's interesting about the current environment we're in right now is on one hand, it could be this great opportunity for you to be a consolidator of subscale brands in a challenging environment. So how do you view balancing those opportunities versus wanting to bunker down in a choppy macro environment and in this current industry backdrop, should we still expect M&A to be part of the story near term? Do you want to lean in? How do you view that?

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**Marcela Martin** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - President*

Yes, sure. Yes, we will lean in if we see the right opportunities. And the way that we look at that is obviously the balance between building and buying. And I think that BuzzFeed is a great home for creators and founder-led companies. But we also -- I want to remind everyone, we just acquired Complex in December. So it feels a long time, but it's not really a long time. And we are always looking. And again, I mean, if we see the right opportunities, we will definitely lean into it.

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**Brent Navon**

And so, I guess, on Complex, how is the integration going now that you raised it? And what are some of the synergies you've been able to recognize? And how much more is there left to go?

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**Marcela Martin** - *BuzzFeed, Inc. - President*

Yes. The integration, I mean, it has been great so far. Again, I came from the outside world. I've just been in the company a month and 5 days. And I'm pretty impressed about how they gelled -- the companies have gelled really well together. And we have done some integration, particularly on the stack where now you can go and teams can sell all of the brands together and advertisers can buy from all of the brands. We have looked at the ad sales and marketing teams and combined those teams for a while already. So that is all marching well. We have also integrated the back end.

So overall, it is going to take probably another, I would say, 6 months to a year for the final pieces and final details as we adjust the business as we also have macro changes as well, but really, really good. We are very happy with the Complex acquisition and with the HuffPost acquisition that we also -- the company did in 2021.

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**Brent Navon**

That's great. And going back to the opportunities that you see out there, are there any -- as you sort of think about your brands, the demos you serve, are there any gaps in your mind that you'd be looking to fill and the conversation of building versus buying. Like how do we -- like what's the framework that you go through to sort of weigh those two options?

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**Marcela Martin** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - President

Yes. Look, I mean, we have content, we have tech and we have anything, new products, new platforms, and we look at what are the things that we may be missing and how much time it would take us to build on those things that we would be missing versus the time that -- the money that it would cost us to acquire a company. So the framework is pretty simple.

I would say that perhaps the most complicated part so far has been working out on the strategy because this is a company that moves really fast and when things change, there is always more opportunities and more things to look into. And it's very interesting. The world, I would say, is in a very interesting inflection point because you see that, in a way, there is a lot of opportunities for further consolidation. But you want to do that in a very disciplined way, right? Like it's not a matter -- we are not going to be out there buying revenue. That's not what we do. We are very focused and disciplined on investing on what it is going to drive long-term growth.

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**Brent Navon**

And in terms of whether it be demographics, brands or anything like that, that you would be looking for, what you think would be a nice complement to what you already have?

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

I mean I think we really try to keep an open mind. A really good asset with a really strong brand, maybe a really great founder or management team could be at a really attractive price that's very accretive, like could be interesting even if it overlaps with something we're already doing and isn't filling a hole for example, Tasty and First We Feast, which is Complex's food brand, our partnering at ComplexCon and doing a food fair together and talking about food more as culture, food as utility. And that strengthens our -- it strengthens our offerings in the food space by having 2 brands that serve different demographics, have different styles and connect. It wasn't like we were -- we had Tasty. We weren't looking for a food brand, but Complex as a whole was very interesting to us. And so part of what we saw once we acquired Complex is that First We Feast and some of you may know the Hot Ones show where it's a celebrity interview show where they eat increasingly spicy hot wings. That was part of the First We Feast portfolio.

Having that as a part of a larger food offering has been really great. And so we want to keep an open mind where if the brand is really strong, if the audience connection is really strong, if the team is really strong, if the terms are right for the deal, that we can execute that we will have an open mind and move forward on those.

And in other cases, maybe it's spending a fair amount of time looking for something that we feel like we really need to because there's a gap. But even then, you want to buy a company that is not the right price or not the right team or not the right business just because it fills the gap and just because it checks the box. So we want to have a great combination of discipline around it as well as inspiration and finding things that really add to the culture and add to the experience of our audience.

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**Marcela Martin** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - President

And we're a little bit spoiled because these two acquisitions have worked out so well for us yes.

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**Brent Navon**

It all makes sense and you're almost out of time.

So one last one for me. And I guess, putting this all together, Jonah, if we were to look through your crystal ball, there's a lot of things that are happening in the world, whether it be macro, you have an industry in transition, you have a lot of these new emerging businesses. What are you most excited about? What do you think is most underappreciated? And what does BuzzFeed look like in five or 10 years from now?

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

Yes. So I mean, five or 10 years is pretty far. And so when you start looking five or 10, there some of the very early experiments we're doing right now with AI-powered creativity and things like that. I feel like we'll five years, 10 years from now, you're going to see a lot more of creative people and much more sophisticated AI systems collaborating and making media and experiences together and having new forms of personalization on media. And we've done some interesting early stuff in that space. There's a BuzzFeed Quiz where you can find your soulmate and it creates an AI-generated partner for you and the person it creates doesn't -- [the person it creates](added by the company after the call) isn't a real person. It looks like a photo because the AI has gotten so good, sort of to be able to generate photorealistic people. And that got over 1 million views most from people sharing it.

And so we're already doing some experiments in that area, but I think five or 10 years out, you're going to start to see some of that become part of how media is made and the personalization of the feed that you see today will be -- the content itself will be personalized, not just the ranking and recommendation of the content. I think we'll have a big role to play in that.

And then more near-term, creators, vertical video, new ways of building brands and media experiences where a trusted brand like a BuzzFeed or Complex or a Tasty partnered with networks of creators is something that we're already seeing a lot of traction on, but it feels like it's still in the beginning stages, and there's a lot more growth there that we expect to see year, two years, three years out.

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**Brent Navon**

That's great. And it looks like we're out of time, but thank you so much both for coming. This was great.

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**Marcela Martin** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - President

Thank you. Thank you for having us. Thank you.

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**Jonah Peretti** - BuzzFeed, Inc. - Founder, Chairman & CEO

Thank you.

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