

# New corporate incubator model key to fast tracking disruptive innovation



Rare Birds Labs combines startup thinking and business acumen to help companies launch new digital business entities

Entrepreneurs Cameron Upshall, Ozzie Kheir and Steve Hooker created Rare Birds Labs to enable corporations to speed up innovative initiatives, by injecting startup thinking to big business problem solving.

As Upshall explains, corporates are starting to recognise that out-of-the-box startup thinking is critical in achieving competitive advantage. For example, insurance giant IAG created Firemark Labs to bring external talent into the organisation to challenge the status quo, be bolder and move faster, as it no longer wants to be just an insurer, but a company that helps customers protect themselves from risk.

However, many well-intentioned in-house labs have been ineffective in advancing innovation due to the entrenched processes and silos they work in. This is where Rare Birds Labs steps in. Providing access to start-up thinking outside the constraints of a corporate entity, to give organisations freedom to ideate, experiment and execute.

"We offer a compelling value proposition; a unique partnership from an equity and human capital perspective that instantly aligns the interests of both parties to achieve project objectives," says Upshall.

From ideation and product development, right through to marketing strategy, financial modelling, corporate structure, human resources and go-to-market execution.

"After developing a pocket-sized personal finance coach for younger Australians with leading Australian financial planners, Partners Wealth Group (PWG), we recruited former Bendigo Bank retail banking executive, Alex Tullio, to spearhead their new business entity."

Adopting lean, agile and design thinking principles

Beginning with design thinking where multi-disciplinary teams focus on understanding business problems, Rare Birds Labs uses a lean mentality of cutting waste and an agile process of rapid incremental delivery, to create a minimally viable product, evaluate consumer feedback, then iterate to build on it – failing early and pivoting.

PWG Managing Director, Matthew Cassidy, says Rare Birds Labs' rigorous questioning, measuring, evaluating and brainstorming provided incredible insight into a new younger market segment and an engaging opportunity to reach out to them. "By keeping an open mind and working through the process, we got clarity around what we were going to do, why and how."

Beyond disruptive innovation

Beyond building a product, Rare Birds Labs offers corporations a unique business service of creating a successful company either as independent, self-sustaining entities that will attract new revenue streams or by spinning them in to a new or existing business unit within.

Matthew Cassidy puts it simply: "I like working with people who are really committed to outcomes and not just performing a role that they're paid to do. Rare Birds Labs has a great model that does just that. It is a strong passionate team that is always expanding their ideas around what's possible."

About Rare Birds Labs

We're an incubator for corporates looking to fast track disruptive innovation. Working outside the constraints of their existing business processes, we take the best of startup thinking to find out-of-the box-solutions to existing problems. We innovate, iterate and execute fast.

About Cam Upshall

An award-winning software entrepreneur who's pulled apart computer systems since age 3, Cam was a radar engineer with the Australian navy for six years before project managing with some of the world's top technology companies, then moving to startups to head digital teams.

Adept at scrutinising each problem through meticulous questioning and attentive listening, Cam says innovation is about questioning your solution over and over through testing and validation.

"The Rare Birds team is made up of unique beings who have worked with the best in both the startup and corporate worlds. We're bringing the best brains across technology, business and creative to build disruptive innovation."

About Ozzie Kheir

A multi-industry magnate with high-profile interests in real estate, hospitality, horses and outdoor media both overseas and in Australia, Ozzie enjoys embarking on exciting business opportunities.

As Director of Resimax Group, providing end-to-end property solutions with a portfolio of 5000 properties, he says the most successful entrepreneurs are problem solvers; constantly making changes as targets move, which is why technology is vital in helping them get smarter, more innovative, more efficient.

"You don't know what you don't know. And that's the value Rare Birds Labs provides. If you don't build the best product that people want, you have nothing. Even with the best product, you need good strategy and go-to-market execution. It's the entire package."

About Steve Hooker

The former captain of the Australian Olympic athletic team and 2008 Olympic pole vault gold medallist has a long career in business, starting out in property development as a University graduate, even working 30 hours a week at the height of his sporting career, and later leading digital production teams.

Now CEO at Resimax property group and founder of a diverse range of businesses, Steve says his entrepreneurial journey began in 2009 after reading an article on design thinking where "at that moment, there was a distinct shift in how I looked at things."

"I love problem solving, to break it right down to understand it, to think in different ways, to push forward a solution, to use new technology to help people by changing how we do things."

Media contact:

Ping Chew

[ping@rarebirds.io](mailto:ping@rarebirds.io)

[www.rarebirdslabs.com](http://www.rarebirdslabs.com)

## **Contacts**

Ping Chew

0439570789

[mailto: ping@rarebirds.io](mailto:ping@rarebirds.io)