Don McGuire Transcript

Don: As the primary digital experience interaction of humans moved from that big, clunky, heavy device to something that fits in your pocket. And that's where our DNA sits. And that's where we've been for several years. And so we have this opportunity to kind of move into this next generation. And we're not a one-trick pony. It's just not about one product category. It's phones. It's tablets. It's wearables. It's hearables. It's cars. It's PCs. It's et cetera. So my birth is wide. And I get to kind of play in this bigger playground, which is fantastic.

Matt: To thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape, brands must move at an ever-increasing pace. I'm Matt Britton, founder and CEO of Suzy. Join me and key industry leaders as we dive deep into the shifting consumer trends within their industry, why it matters now, and how you can keep up. Welcome to The Speed of Culture. Today, we're thrilled to be joined by Don McGuire, the SVP and CMO for Qualcomm. Don was recently named one of Forbes' most 50 influential CMOs, and we're so happy to have you here today. Great to see you, Don.

Don: Great to be here. Thank you so much for having me.

Matt: Absolutely. So we're at CES. I'm sure this is a huge event for Qualcomm for a variety of reasons. Talk to us about what you're seeing here at CES and what you hope to get accomplished.

Don: Sure. I think for us, as well as for CES in general, the show has sort of evolved. You know, we had that little COVID thing happen in the middle. But I think over time, it has evolved and new things have taken center stage. And I think just prior to COVID, and I think carrying over even to today, CES seems to be a lot about cars. And there seems to be a lot of automotive news and a lot of automotive presence at CES. And then add on top of that, this sort of constant narrative and hype cycle around AI. I think those are two of the things. And then traditionally, you kind of see these, the big TVs and the new displays and the new screens. And that's always been a sort of a mainstay of CES. So we see a little bit of that here today as well with the transparent displays. Pretty cool. So for us, the last couple of years have really been about automotive as a centerpiece with a sprinkling of other things around. And so I would say 80% automotive, 20% Gen AI is kind of our recipe this year. And we've leaned in on Gen AI across different product categories based on kind of what's being talked about here at the show. So there's like AI PC, which has been a topic here at the show. Other things are going on. And so we've kind of leaned in across those different categories. So that's kind of CES 2024 for us.

Matt: Yeah. Let's unpack there. When you talk about the focus on auto, we can get at it in a second, but also kind of the focus on Gen AI. There was a time when CES was all about. This is a 4K TV. It's a bigger TV. This is a smaller recording device. And I feel like that hardware has kind of become somewhat commoditized because everybody has great screens. Everyone has fast devices. And now it is much more about the software. And you kind of see that happen with the iPhone development cycle and the demand kind of waning. What are your thoughts on that overall?

Don: Yeah, I think it's either been about other industries undergoing transformation.

Matt: Sure.

Don: And that's either being driven by software.

Matt: Right, like the case of auto.

Don: Like the case of auto, right? I don't think there's any other industry that's undergone in the last five years more transformation than automotive. Where cars are less about mechanics and MPG, right? And MPH and torque and thrust and all this. And it's more about digital capabilities, right?

Matt: Can it become a docking station for my life?

Don: Exactly. Or a new living space. And so that has been amazing to watch and participate in. And we're a huge participant in that as well as a huge enabler of it. So with our Snapdragon Digital Chassis solution. So that's been super cool to see. But you're right. I mean, the software-defined vehicle is now what's driving the automotive industry. So software seems to be driving a lot of the innovation and transformation versus form factor.

Matt: Right. Or even performance

Don: Or even performance. And in some ways, performance has become commoditized. Unless it's in the context of something new, right? So instead of talking about, for example, I'll give you a PC example. Or even another device where in the past what you looked for was CPU performance, for example. Like how fast is this processor? How fast is my PC? And the ecosystem built a whole new narrative for years around, hey, CPU, CPU, CPU. But then gamers came about. And the conversation shifted in the gaming context to, oh, no, no, no. It's all about GPU. Right. GPU, GPU. GPU. Well, now in the advent of the AI PC, which, you know, was kicked off last year. We announced our Snapdragon X Elite platform at our Snapdragon Summit in October. And the capabilities of that platform. We're going to see that show up in PCs in June of this year and going forward. And then here at the show, there's the PC ecosystem talking about the advent of AI PC. Microsoft's launching the copilot key on your keyboard, et cetera. But now when a consumer walks into a Best Buy to buy a new PC going forward. 2024. 2025 and beyond. Or an enterprise CIO is saying, how do I upgrade my hardware, my devices for my workforce? It's less about the CPU and probably even less about the GPU. And it's more about MPU. What is the AI performance going to be on this PC so I can take advantage of all these great copilot experiences that Microsoft has built on top of Windows? So this shift is happening where the innovation, yes, it's software-driven, but it's also what's happening within the device that's creating this new level of performance. And so that's interesting to watch.

Matt: Is the power of AI held in the actual local device or in the actual servers delivering the AI? Because like, there's a tool like Pika, which is text-to-video or runway, where it takes forever, but it won't forever. Just like you just take forever to get on dial-up, right? But probably two years from now, you'll just be able to type, show me a video of a cat running around the roller coaster, and it'll just get it instantly. But is the holdup there the local device that you have, or is it the servers that are delivering the AI functionality?

Don: This is a great question because in order for AI to scale, both from a technology perspective and a usability perspective, it's going to have to be hybrid. Meaning not everything can happen in the cloud. In some cases, it takes too long. The workloads are too much, right? The taxing on the data center is too much. The economic model doesn't work, right? You can't buy enough cards to put into your data center. You can't over-utilize water resources to cool your data centers. So you've got a sustainability problem. You've got an economic model problem. And you have a data privacy and personalization problem. So a certain amount of computational work that drives AI and the ability to deliver an AI solution based on algorithms or large language, small language, and medium language models is where is it going to happen contextually based on what is it that you want to do? So on-device AI, which has been on-device for 10 years, AI has been running in the background. Whether you know it or not, on devices like smartphones for a long time. It's been making your photos better. It's making your music sound better. It's been doing things that you didn't probably know or realize that AI was doing. And AI has been part of our Snapdragon platform for years. It was Gen AI that trusted AI into the spotlight. It was like the press release for AI, so to speak.

Matt: Packaged it for consumers.

Don: Packaged it for consumers, made it novel, and created the hype cycle. But unlike other hype cycles, it's not going to stop, right? It's not going to go up and then go down. It's here to stay, and it's moving very fast. But for it to scale, the technology that enables it is going to have to normalize across the spectrum of the device itself, the edge, which is on-prem, right? So whether that prem is your home network or your campus network or your office network.

Matt: Is 5G playing a role in that?

Don: 5G plays a role in that. Wi-Fi, 6, 7, 6E, 7, 8, whatever plays a role in that. And then the cloud. And the data center and the big cloud. So if you're talking about something like, hey, AI assistant, help me plan my day, most of that can be handled on a device. And that's instantaneous. It's information. It's an interaction that you want.

Matt: It's text.

Don: At low latency. It's text. It might be some image, things like that. But we're talking about trillions of parameters like help me solve world hunger, AI, right? That is data center, big computing. It's going to take some time. The latency is not an issue. It's really about getting to the right answer. So it's everything in between there. So it's going to be contextual to what is the task. And if you normalize the technology stack across devices, edges, and clouds, then it becomes more useful for everybody. You can load more tools and more experiences on top of that. And you can put them in the bucket that they need to go into to deliver the best experience to the user for whatever that might be. And then that's going to enable the second part, which is the usability and the relevance of AI has to move from prompted and reactive to anticipatory and suggestive. If it's going to actually be useful and not just novel.

Matt: But that means that the user has to be able to let the AI know more about them.

Don: Exactly. But it's up to the user, right? Especially in the case of AI at the edge, right? You're in control. The human element is always in control. So you allow it to learn as much as you want it to learn about you. Then you allow it to suggest or recommend in the context of your private network or data set. Whether it's on a device and it never leaves. Or whether it's in your home and never leaves. Or whether it's in the cloud. Protected. Or, hey, I don't care where this goes. Train your algorithms on it. I'm cool. Right? So it's everywhere in between. So I think that's the beauty, the excitement of it all. But it doesn't just stop with ChatGPT, going to the data center. Sometimes you get a response. Sometimes you don't. Sometimes it says to come back later. Because it's taxing a resource. Because everything else has to catch up. And that's where Qualcomm plays a big role. It's at that edge. So from the on-prem to on-device, they're a sweet spot, right? But we've been doing this on-device for years. We make kick-ass processors semiconductors and chips. And we have a long history in DNA in wireless connectivity and Wi-Fi. So that high-speed connectivity.

Matt: That's how most people know you, right?

Don: Historically, yeah. But, I mean, since I've been at Qualcomm, what, seven and a half years now, we were already underway of this transformation and diversification of less about connectivity. Still about connectivity, and first-class and world-leading connectivity, but more about, on top of that connectivity, computing, right? And this is why now what we stand for is really intelligent computing everywhere. So everywhere is the nod to the connectivity. Intelligent computing is the nod to the AI plus the processing power together in a energy-efficient package, right? Because that's another thing, right? You can't perform really large tasks, AI tasks, especially on a device that has a battery life of a day and a half, unless you want a battery life of two seconds. So that, again, that's why this thing has to be hybrid.

Matt: One big balancing act.

Don: Exactly. And so it's an ecosystem play. Everyone's involved. And it's exciting. We have our role. Everybody has their role. No one's right. No one's wrong. It's not a us versus them. It's not a Qualcomm versus NVIDIA. It's not a Microsoft versus somebody else. It's really about everybody has a role to play, who is involved in developing technology. And then where do all the puzzle pieces fit? So-

Matt: Even the content careers, as you see in the New York Times and their lawsuit with OpenAI. Yeah.

Don: Well, in technology, it's just technology until you put it to use.

Matt: Right. When it becomes commercialized it gets a little murky.

Don: Well, and you know, anything new, there's always trial and error. Sometimes bad things happen.

Matt: Happen with YouTube and with Spotify, Napster. I mean, it goes back.

Don: It goes back. And there are bad actors and good actors.

Matt: In every category.

Don: In every category. And in my speakership, I did earlier today. I talked about, look, if we could just, because I'm not a huge fan of regulatory oversight in general, because it's too slow. And by the time they get something regulated, it's already moved beyond the regulation.

Matt: Totally.

Don: Right? And so it's irrelevant.

Matt: If I can't keep up, how is the government going to keep up, right?

Don: Especially with AI, it's moving so fast. And so it's really about standards and governance and practices that, and best practices that can be adopted and principles. And if we can learn the lessons from social media, where there was none of that, it kind of went untethered, so to speak, for years. And you got a lot of good out of it. It opened the world up to so many people.

Matt: Connected so many people.

Don: Connected so many people. But it also created mental health issues or enabled the environment.

Matt: Geopolitical issues.

Don: Geopolitical issues. Bullying. All these types of things. So if we could learn some lessons from maybe a little earlier in the social media technology evolution, we could have anticipated some of those things and said, hey, you know what? We're going to have some principles.

Matt: Who's we though?

Don: I think everyone is involved, right? It's not just, like a consortium. Yeah. Like, yeah, it's not just meta. Because you can't just blame one party. Or can't point a finger. Because guess what? Everyone likes to think they're altruistic. But at the end of the day, if you are advertising on that platform that's then responsible for enabling bad behavior, you're culpable.

Matt: And Meta has shareholders. And those shareholders could be endowments of colleges. It's like, they need to deliver.

Don: Yeah. Like the Pension funds.

Matt: Right. Pension funds. Exactly.

Don: Right. And so it's like, it's this vast web. And so it's like, everybody has to kind of join together and just say, okay, how are we going to operate this thing? This beast. And I know that's not easy. It's easy to say, but not easy to do. But we've joined a bunch of companies in co-developing some basic principles for deploying AI along with Microsoft and others and ethical principles about how we're going to create the technology. I think those types of things, you know, you look at platforms like Reddit, which are kind of community-managed, self-governed, so to speak.

Matt: Wikipedia.

Don: Like Wikipedia. And it works in that context. I'm not saying it'll work everywhere, but if you take some concept of self-governance and then you add some other things into insurance policy, so to speak, I think we can get there. And I think we can prevent some of the badness that comes along with social media.

Matt: Right. And every technological innovation had badness. There's car accidents, right?

Don: Still today. Yeah. It's funny like technology is funny. There's a lot of fear. And I know a lot of people are fearful of AI and it's been used as a narrative, right? Was used in the writer's strike and the actor's strike. People fear job loss and all these other things. A lot of that's just posturing because it's like I use the analogy of the elevator, right? The elevator first was invented. Nobody would ride it.

Matt: They were scared.

Don: They were scared. They didn't want to plummet to their death. But then Otis came along. Who didn't invent the elevator first, by the way? They invented the latch that caught the elevator.

Matt: Right. Interesting.

Don: So once that was invented, people are like, oh, it's safe. This thing's going to catch it. And so they start riding the elevator, right? That is a natural type of process that we go through as human beings with any technology. So I think we're going to go through those same types of things with AI as well as other things. Autonomous driving. That's another thing, right? Whether we get to full autonomy and how and what context, it's going to be very interesting to watch.

Matt: And you're going to have people that point to, oh, see that accident. But it's like, okay, well, how many accidents did humans create?

Don: Exactly. 80% of accidents are human error. In some way, shape, or form. And so will Autonomy fix that? Will it, Cosmoor? I don't know. But it's going to be interesting, it's a wild ride. It's so fun to be in tech. I've been a tech marketer for most of my career. So it's always interesting.

Matt: We'll be right back with The Speed of Culture after a few words from our sponsors. One of the things that you said that stood out to me is, so going into COVID, I felt like no one felt like they ever needed to buy a laptop. Like they had their work laptop and then COVID happened. Like, oh, I probably need a personal laptop at home. And then coming out of COVID, AI happened. And now it sounds like you think there's going to be a renaissance of demand in the laptop space.

Don: Yeah, I mean, I think we're, the laptop is at an innovation inflection point. For the first time in like, I would say 15 years. And COVID gave the PC industry a nice bump.

Matt: Yeah, Dell had a great year.

Don: Right, drove an upgrade cycle, primarily because the use case shifted. No longer was the laptop something that sat on the desk collecting dust until I needed a bigger keyboard and a bigger screen. It became a communications device. It's how I connected with my world. Because I couldn't connect with them physically. So Zoom, Teams. The PC became a primary communications device. Less about surfing the web, less about creating PowerPoints on a bigger screen. It became a primary communications device like the phone had been for so many years. But the context shifted and we needed to have meetings and we needed to look at multiple screens of people. So that gave the PC a renaissance, a short-term renaissance. Drove an upgrade cycle, which was a good couple of years. And then everyone upgraded their PC. I got a brand new PC. I don't need a new PC. Because historically, the upgrade cycles of like four to six years, right? And very long, unlike the smartphone, which has historically been 11 to 24 months. And that's primarily because there hasn't been a lot of innovation. Why do I need a new PC? This is fine. Especially coming out of COVID. Oh, I have a new one. I bought it in 2021 or 2020 or whatever. It's fine. But now with all these new experiences you're going to be able to extract from the PC because of AI. And because of our work with Microsoft and the ecosystem. Things that you've never imagined you could do with your PC.

And that you were never able to do before with your PC are now going to become real. And that's, I think, really exciting. And we're going to see more of that later this spring.

Matt: I'm getting excited just hearing you talk about it. Yeah.

Don: I'm not going to give away the surprise.

Matt: We'll come back to you for that when you're ready.

Don: Yeah, you can come back to me later this year. But there are amazing experiences when you can take the power of our Snapdragon platform and Windows 11. Or just Windows in general and co-pilot. And our friends at HP and our friends at Lenovo and our friends at Dell and Samsung and Acer and Asus, etc. That when we all come together, we're going to deliver some cool stuff. And we're just in phase one. You've got to educate what is co-pilot. Microsoft, you know, they announced the key. Which is great. Step one. Hey, there's something physical. You're going to push and magic's going to happen. And it's going to take some time. So we've got about six months. And then I think you're going to see some real magic happen. And yes, I think that will create a desire for, even though this may not be old yet in the context of the traditional PC upgrade cycle. This is going to offer me so much more that's worth the trade-in. It's like when you had to have a new smartphone every 11 months because there was so much new in the next one.

Matt: It had face ID. It had real things. Much better camera.

Don: Yeah, I couldn't, I can't get by with this. Are you kidding me? This is old, right?

Matt: Yeah.

Don: And so I have to have new. But for the first time in a long time, we think that psychological phenomenon is going to happen in the PC space, which we're excited about.

Matt: So what does marketing look like for you? Is it mostly partnership marketing with those OEM partners that you just listed?

Don: If my marketing mix was a wheel or a pie chart, partner marketing is a big part of my mix.

Matt: Of course.

Don: Just because of who we are. I am so blessed and honored to have so many great partners that I get to work with and through across product categories. I mean, amazing brands from BMW to Cadillac to Louis Vuitton to Boss.

Matt: Louis Vuitton.

Don: Yeah. We can talk about that. To Samsung, obviously, to Microsoft. And these are big, iconic cultural brands.

Matt: Yeah.

Don: But we play a significant role in feeding their brand ethos as they move their products more and more into the space of delivering technology-driven experiences. And so by us working together with them and collaborating with them, for example, in the case of Louis Vuitton, as you said, what do you mean you're working with Louis Vuitton? We are not yet putting chips in bags.

Matt: Right. That's what I meant.

Don: But, you know, it could happen. But we power all of Louis Vuitton's smart devices. So their watch, their smart speaker, and their earbuds have our technology inside. And they're a great partner, an iconic luxury brand, but they're a luxury brand. They're not a tech brand. So what we bring them is tech credit, right? So people can feel good about, oh, my gosh, these Louis Vuitton earbuds look stunning. But I still want good audio quality.

Matt: Yeah, they're going to work.

Don: Are they going to work? Or this Louis Vuitton smartwatch looks stunning and it's definitely Louis Vuitton from a brand perspective, but it's still got to work like a smartwatch. Yeah. So is it going to deliver on my technology needs? Oh, it's powered by Snapdragon? Of course, it's going to, right? Snapdragon stands for premium. Snapdragon stands for the best. Snapdragon delivers. Absolutely. So that tech cred is what we bring to the party for some of these brands that are, you would ask yourself, what do you mean Louis Vuitton? Or what do you mean by Peloton, for example? So that's exciting. And I get to work with these CMOs and these partners all the time and come up with really fun, interesting, cool co-marketing types of experiences.

Matt: That fits their brand equity pillars and also drives the messaging that you want.

Don: Absolutely. It's not about disintermediating their brand ethos.

Matt: Of course not.

Don: It's about amplifying it. And this whole idea that, oh, if I talk about your brand in the context of my brand, that takes away from my brand. That's BS.

Matt: Yeah, I agree.

Don: I'm sorry. And that's old thinking, by the way. And by the way, there's still a lot of people out there, especially in the automotive industry, that think that way. But it's total crap, right? And I was so excited. I was in the New York subway. Maybe six months ago or so, maybe more. And I saw an ad. A bunch of brands came together with a single message. They were individual brands, but they were all marketing kind of the same thing. And so this whole collaboration idea, and you see collaborations happening all the time, right? Adidas and Moncler. So it's happening organically anyway. I'm just so lucky that I get the opportunity to work with some of these amazing brands form relationships with these other CMOs and share best practices, which has been a good opportunity. So that's a significant portion of the mix, but traditional advertising, there's events, there's comms, PR. And then two of the areas that I've been focused on for the past two years with my team are building community, number one.

Matt: Community of who?

Don: Community of consumers for Snapdragon, building affinity for Snapdragon through building community. And number two is brand partnerships, not like customer brand partnerships, like with Louis Vuitton or with Cadillac, but brand partnerships with brands and companies/products/franchises that align with our brand values and that we together, can tell a joint story as well as our individual stories. And it's a win-win for them and it's a win-win for us. So a perfect example is our relationship with Manchester United. And you, why are you doing something with Manchester United? Well, in the context of building a community for Snapdragon, which is now 14 million strong.

Matt: And Snapdragon is your, is that your new go-to consumer brand? Like as Qualcomm?

Don: Well, it's been around for a long time, but it is our B2C brand.

Matt: I've heard a lot more about it as of late, obviously with the AI.

Don: And the irony is that the markets where Snapdragon has the least amount of awareness are in the US, where we're headquartered, and in Europe. But if you walk down the street in Shanghai, you ask a consumer, do you know what Snapdragon is? 90% of them are going to say yes. So I've got typical high levels of consumer brand awareness in Asia, in Latin America, et cetera, et cetera. And it's been sort of the Western markets that we haven't invested in and haven't focused on, but that's going to change with the advent of PC. We didn't feel like we needed to do it for smartphones because some of those, most markets are duopolies. There's one company. And then there's the other company. And then that's it. And we're partnered with the other company and we do lots of co-marketing with them. And so we were good. But now we do need to build affinity for Snapdragon because the PC space is a different space. We're starting to see an automotive, openness and a willingness to give us attribution for what we're bringing to the table. Because again, automotive companies historically are not tech companies.

Matt: Sometimes they try to mask them and they create poor software experiences for the user. Some of them just wave, they have the flag and they do carplay and consumers love it and that's it.

Don: Yeah. Which is great for consumers and great for the company that makes car play. But not so great for the car company. Because then they lose that relationship. The connection. Our platforms enable them to build something meaningful.

Matt: Which is why they'd rather do that.

Don: Which is why they'd rather do that. And then give us attribution for that, which is fantastic. So building community and brand partnerships is important. We have 14 million Snapdragon Insiders around the world, and every day I'm astounded by the fact that 14 million people are interested in a product that they can't buy. But they are tech influencers and tech enthusiasts. They love talking about technology.

Matt: They believe in the promise of what it unlocks, right?

Don: Exactly. And they want to peel the onion back, right? They don't buy into it. It's just the plastics, the display, and the wrapper. It's what's inside that's making this happen. And it's kind of back to the Intel Inside playbook a little bit but in a brand new context. I mean, Intel did that brilliantly. And I was part of that ride for the five and a half years I was at Intel of building Intel Inside as a meaningful, full-funnel sort of thing where consumers were like walking into a store and saying, I don't care if it's HP or Dell, but it better be Intel Inside.

Matt: Yeah, they did. It was a fantastic job at doing that. Yeah.

Don: And then over time that device category lost relevance with consumers. Therefore, the Intel brand was so attached to that product category that the Intel brand started losing relevance. And then now anyone under the age of 35 may not even know what Intel is or care as the primary digital experience interaction of humans moved from that big, clunky, heavy device to something that fits in your pocket. And that's where our DNA sits. Right. And that's where we've been for several years. And so we have this opportunity to kind of move into this next generation. And we're not one. We're not a one-trick pony. It's just not about one product category. It's phones. It's tablets. It's wearables. It's hearables. Cars. It's cars. Yeah. It's PCs. It's et cetera. So my birth is wide. And I get to kind of play in this bigger playground. Which is fantastic. And so with all these goals to build Snapdragon as a consumer culture brand, which is a big ask from my CEO. By the way, I have an amazing CEO who believes in marketing. For an engineering-driven company.

Matt: You can tell.

Don: That is my team and I have struggled for years just to make marketing important. Cristiano is a huge believer in it. And so that's so. As a CMO, it's so helpful. And I also have a great relationship with our CFO. Who also understands. And I have a great relationship with our CIO. Because he's my great partner in crime and reimagining our digital experience. So we have a great executive team. And makes it fun. But it also helps me do my job, right? I wouldn't be able to do my job without that enablement, without that permission that he provides me. And one of his tasks that he's given me recently is, I want Snapdragon to be a big culture brand. That's a big ask.

Matt: It is.

Don: So we're working on that.

Matt: Especially for a brand that people can't touch and feel.

Don: Right. I'm like, dude? I'm like, I'm good. But am I that good? So it's interesting. We're going to take that on. We're going to see how far we can get. And it's a team sport. So it's going to take help from everybody. But we're taking on that ask. So brand partnerships are going to be important to that. Specifically, attaching ourselves to brands like Manchester United. Largest sports brand in the world. 1.1 billion fans. We want to build more community. We want to attach to their community. We want to cross-pollinate. There's a lot of overlap. It's an amazing partnership. They're an amazing brand. They're premium. They're the best of the best. Snapdragon Premium is the best of the best. Brand values are aligned. They provide me scale and reach that I would have to spend four times as much on traditional advertising methods to get that exposure for my brand than what I'm spending to become the new front-of-shirt partner for Manchester United starting in July of 2024, which I'm super excited about. Only the seventh front-of-shirt partner at Manchester United.

Matt: I'm sure. Yeah.

Don: Big investment. And for us, especially a big step. But when I showed the ROI and when I showed the efficiency of it.

Matt: And the popularity of the sport globally.

Don: And the popularity of the sport globally. Football is exploding globally. But just the ROI and the efficiency versus, hey, you want to triple my marketing budget every year for the next five years? Or do you want to do this? It was like, that makes sense. So I'm super excited about that. Our F1 partnership, especially as it relates to our automotive business, is important with Mercedes. The Mercedes team is amazing. Toto is amazing. All of the people at Mercedes, AMG, and Petronas are amazing. And innovation for automotive often comes from F1. So being in the heart of that innovation with our brand makes sense. So our F1 partnership, our Manchester United partnerships, all those types of things are really important to building out the Snapdragon brand ethos. So they're a big part of my mix as well.

Matt: Awesome. So shifting gears to wrap up. One thing I just, observed is that you have a lot of passion towards the space that you're in. You know, some people are in technology marketing who before that were selling soda or toothpaste. It's like, oh, just plug in brand here. But I can tell that you love what you're marketing, what you're selling, and you believe in it, which I would imagine makes you that much more effective at what you do.

Don: I think anybody, right? I mean, if you love what you do and if you believe in whatever you're selling or whatever you're making or creating, you have to believe in it or else why do it?

Matt: Right. Well, some people just do it because it's a job and for the money.

Don: Sure. Peace. You know, I'm not built that way. I probably like heavily medical. But I love the fact that I've worked in this technology space for so long and what we do does change the world. We put the internet.

Matt: Especially now, 2024.

Don: Yeah. We put the internet in your pocket. We've done all these amazing shifts, societally speaking, not just with consumers or businesses or enterprises, but just societally we've driven this change. And yes, there's been good and bad, obviously, as a byproduct, as we talked about with social media. And you could blame us for the social media backlash because we enabled it by putting it on your phone and allowing you to connect. So I get it, but it's been gratifying and rewarding. I can't imagine like your earlier point about hey, some people just going to work and clock it in and go home and it's fine, and again no judgments, but I can't imagine working that way because you spent a lot of your time at work. Yeah, so you might as well love what you do.

Matt: Absolutely. So, the final question for some of our younger listeners is if you had a chance to speak with 20-year-old Don and give him advice entering his career to someday hope to end up in a seat in the world like yourself, what would you say?

Don: I would say when a window of opportunity opens, jump first, and ask questions later. I think I've always been a believer that you have to take your destiny into your own hands. No one is going to hand it to you on a silver platter, right? And when you lose control of your destiny, that's when you lose control of your path. And you can't own your path anymore. And it happens to a lot of people because the corporate kind of entity, the corporate life tends to suck you in. And then it-

Matt: Has a gravitational pull and you kind of end up wherever.

Don: And then all of a sudden you feel out of control, but you don't know what to do about it. So if you can just keep your mindset in a place where it's like, okay, this doesn't seem right. I know I have a centered perspective on where I want to go who I want to be and what I want to do over the next two, five, ten, whatever years. I'm going to make decisions based on that. And I'm going to block out the noise. And I'm going to reject it. The inertia or the gravitational pull when it's pulling me in a direction where I don't believe I should go. I'm always celebrating people who come into our organization and who leave our organization, especially if they're going on to something better for themselves because I think that's amazing for them. And then one of my mentors, Sue Swenson, taught me once in a performance review because I'm very results-oriented, and as my team will tell you. And early on in my career, that manifested itself a little bit in a bull-in-a-China shop type of behavior. It's like, I don't care what's in my way. The result's over there. I'm going to clear the decks and get the result. Dead bodies be damned, right? And I had a review with my boss at the time, Sue Swenson and she said, your results were fantastic, amazing, but I'm rating you at a whatever. I'm like, well, wait a minute, I overachieved. And she said, absolutely, but how you went about it has some things to be desired. And she just took me through it. She said you can't leave dead bodies in your path. You can't have broken glass. And those are all metaphors for, you can't do it in a way that neglects the human element, neglects empathy, right? Neglects collaboration, and relationships to get to that goal. I mean, yes, some people can and may get the result, but then the aftermath.

Matt: Just like athletes with poor sportsmanship, same thing.

Don: Exactly. And it can get you so far, right? For so long. So how you do things is as important as what you do. And that's a piece of advice that was given to me. And it helped me correct my behavior over time. And if I could save the young Don from the bull in the china shop syndrome or anybody else out there, I would gladly go back and do that.

Matt: I love that. Well, I want to thank you for joining us today. It's been awesome. Your passion comes out. And I know that you're in a very exciting time at the company. I can't wait to see what's next. And hopefully, we can have you back at some point later this year and next year to see some of these innovations that are coming out.

Don: Love to be back.

Matt: Absolutely. Thanks so much, Don. On behalf of Suzy and the Adweek Team, thanks again to Don McGuire, SVP and CMO of Qualcomm for joining us today. Be sure to subscribe, rate, and review The Speed of Culture podcast on your favorite podcast platform. Until next time, see you soon. Bye-bye. The Speed of Culture is brought to you by Suzy as part of the Adweek Podcast Network and Acast Creator Network. You can listen and subscribe to all of Adweek's podcasts by visiting adweek.com/podcasts. To find out more about Suzy, head to suzy.com. And make sure to search for The Speed of Culture on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts, or anywhere else podcasts are found. Click follow so you don't miss out on any future episodes. On behalf of the team here at Suzy, thanks for listening.