Introduction: Amplified Thinking

"I want my voice to sound like the Dalai Lama chanting from a mountaintop."

With this seemingly impossible request to engineer Geoff Emerick during the recording of 'Tomorrow Never Knows,' John Lennon sparked one of the most innovative songs in rock history. The request wasn't just unusual, it was revolutionary, forcing his team to imagine what didn't yet exist. This is the entrepreneur's challenge, too: envisioning what others haven't yet conceived, then finding creative ways to make the impossible possible.

Business, like a great rock song, isn't about following a perfect script, it's about passion, improvisation, and the courage to play your own unique sound. I've spent a lifetime collecting stories that prove this: from Wednesday night basement jam sessions with my father to introducing legendary bands on stage, from pumping gas as a kid to founding technology companies. The day I received The Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's cassette for Christmas in 1967 was about more than just music, it was my first lesson in how creativity transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary, how a single moment of inspiration can reshape an entire way of thinking.

The first time I heard The Beatles in 1965, I was hooked, it was the spark that would shape not just my love of music, but my entire approach to business and life. From that moment forward, every penny I earned from mowing lawns, washing cars, or shoveling driveways in my neighborhood wasn't just money, it was a pathway to the next Beatles album.

These weren't simply chores, they were my earliest business ventures, funding what would become a lifelong passion.

Growing up, our house was always full of music. My parents came of age in the 1950s and my mother loved rock n' roll. One of my earliest memories is my sister and I dancing in the living room with Mom to "The Stroll", and Diana Ross and the Supremes. To this day Mom is the first one on the dance floor if there's a twist contest. Dad, on the other hand (to quote The Blues Brothers), loved both kinds of music, country AND western, so my musical influences were all over the board. For Christmas in 1967, my prized gift was a portable cassette player and The Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's cassette tape. My sister Debbie often reminds me how I walked around for weeks with the cassette player, earphones on, endlessly listening to the groundbreaking music on Sgt. Pepper's.

Dad had two guitars, a beautiful ruby red Gretsch Country Gentleman electric, and a Harmony Master acoustic that Mom bought from Sears Roebuck as a Christmas gift for him in 1965. On Wednesday nights a few of Dad's friends would bring their guitars over and play country music in the basement late

into the night. To this day, just hearing the first few bars of “Ghost Riders in the Sky” immediately transports me back to those jam sessions. Other times they would hang out at Dad's gas station after hours and play as well. I still have Dad's Harmony Master acoustic from those days, a prized possession for sure.

These musical influences, experiences, and memories have had a huge influence on how I've framed pretty much everything in my life, even 60+ years later. My entrepreneurial instincts, however, were planted even earlier. Between the ages of 5 and 15, I watched my father build and run the local Sunoco gas station in my hometown of Wallingford, CT. By age 8, I was already pumping gas, washing windshields, and checking oil for customers. These weren't just tasks, they were lessons in responsibility, customer service, and the delicate balance of business operations. I witnessed firsthand as my father navigated the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship, from the initial startup, to running the day to day, and ultimately selling his business.

Those formative years gave me a heartfelt respect and affection for small family businesses and instilled in me the desire to create something of my own,a business that could support a family while holding a place of respect in the community. I felt the pride my father took in building something meaningful,
something that served others while providing for us. This became the foundation for why I always had small business ventures as a kid, and why

I've started several businesses over the years (11 at last count). Some were "side gigs" and some were full blown, all-in adventures, some were successful, some not so much. But they were all learning experiences. It's also why I continue to own and support small businesses to this day.

My devotion to British Invasion artists began with those childhood albums and grew into a defining feature of my life. It culminated in September 2015, when I had the incredible honor of introducing The Zombies onstage in Dallas for the first night of their 2015 U.S. tour, a pinnacle moment for someone whose earliest business aspirations were driven by a desire to buy more music.

That passion for music also prompted me to form a classic rock band with like-minded friends several years ago. We play mainly for fun, but also do the occasional public appearance. While I'd never claim to be a virtuoso musician, what I lack in technical skill, I make up for with passion and enthusiasm,two traits that have served me equally well throughout my years in business.

From those early days of childhood entrepreneurship to founding Netwurx Technology Group as a Nextel phone dealer in 2004 (which evolved through multiple transformations to become a comprehensive managed service provider) and later Acurata Hospice Software Solutions in 2018 (born from a

personal tragedy when my family couldn't get timely hospice care for a loved one in their final hours), I've learned that entrepreneurship is less about a straight path to success and more about a complex, improvisational performance, much like a rock band creating music.

In 2014, my love of music and history prompted me to begin teaching adult education classes part time. My first class was a history of The Beatles, exploring their childhoods and the unlikely events that eventually brought them all together. Driven by an insatiable curiosity about people, places, and ideas, I've since developed nearly twenty different classes on wildly different topics,from Rock n' Roll to literature, classic films, and American history.

As Albert Einstein once said, "I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious." This curiosity, coupled with genuine enthusiasm for my subjects, has not only made me a more effective teacher but has opened opportunities to speak with civic and business groups about the surprising correlations between history, music, and the business world. In entrepreneurship, as in education, I've found that this same curious mindset drives innovation and connection, it’s the catalyst for seeing opportunities that others miss and building the relationships that
sustain success.

The parallels between rock legends and entrepreneurs are striking. Both start with a dream that seems improbable. Both face moments of doubt, rejection, and seemingly insurmountable challenges. And both possess an essential quality that separates dreamers from doers: the resilience to keep playing, even when the crowd seems silent.

Think about the Rolling Stones, who transformed from a small blues band to global icons. Or the Beatles, who revolutionized music despite being told guitar groups were "on the way out."

Their stories are not just musical histories, they’re blueprints of entrepreneurial

survival. Each chord, each business pivot, each moment of creative breakthrough

tells a story of persistence, innovation, and the courage to challenge the status

quo.

This book is more than a collection of business advice. It's a backstage pass into

the mindset of entrepreneurs who, like rock legends, turn obstacles into

opportunities. We'll explore how the same spirit that drove John Lennon to

experiment with sound, that kept the Rolling Stones relevant for decades, and that

helped the Contours seize an unexpected moment, can change how you build

your business.

Whether you're washing cars in your neighborhood

or developing groundbreaking software, the core

principles remain the same: Stay true to your vision,

be ready to adapt, never stop learning, and most importantly, keep playing your unique music, even when nobody seems to be listening.

Get ready to rock your entrepreneurial world.