

## Masters of Scale: Rapid Response Transcript – Ed Bastian

“Turbulence, recovery, and risk”

[Click here to listen to the full Masters of Scale: Rapid Response episode with Ed Bastian.](#)

**ED BASTIAN:** What are we going to do to build a better future for us all? The Georgia controversy that we are currently involved in. Voter rights need to be protected, they're sacrosanct. They need to be enhanced in terms of ensuring that there's equitable and fair access to the polls in a safe and secure manner. We said at the onset that we needed to restore confidence in our customer's ability to travel safely by air. Today when we survey our customers, 65% of them tell us they expect they will be vaccinated by May the 1st and 75% say by Memorial Day.

That's far, far better than any survey people have been putting out there in terms of vaccine rates. So it's encouraging.

Customers aren't going to want to fly in an airline that's not optimistic about what's to come. Employees aren't going to work for a company. And you're thrust in the CEO kind of in this odd way of being the face of that and the voice of that like never before. Some of us, myself included, felt like we've had to put the company on our shoulders and kind of walk it back through this last year to hold it together and we've done that. We're going to keep climbing and we see blue skies ahead.

**BOB SAFIAN:** That's Ed Bastian, CEO of Delta.

Ed appeared on this podcast soon after the pandemic hit, when the airline industry was reeling.

I'm Bob Safian, former editor of Fast Company, founder of the Flux Group, and host of Masters of Scale: Rapid Response.

I wanted to talk to Ed again because no business better reflects the desire for a post Covid recovery, and the challenge involved, than Delta.

And no leader has been more aggressive in positioning his organization for the long-term – while carrying extraordinary short-term costs.

Ed has bet from the start that building consumer confidence during the pandemic and reinforcing Delta's brand would ultimately pay big rewards.

Now, with vaccine deployment surging across the US, and hopes for air travel opening up. Delta will soon find out how that bet pays off.

Ed is on the edge of his own seat, juggling new political risks too, waiting for the outcome.

**[THEME MUSIC]**

**SAFIAN:** I'm Bob Safian, and I'm here with Ed Bastian, the CEO of Delta Airlines. Ed is coming to us today from Delta headquarters in Atlanta as I ask my questions from my home in New York. Ed, thanks for joining us.

**BASTIAN:** Bob, it's always good to talk to you.

**SAFIAN:** So you and I spoke on this podcast in June of last year, three months into the pandemic. Delta was burning through, I don't know, \$30 million a day, flights canceled or empty. It was pretty dramatic. Since then, we've seen a semblance of stability, vaccines being rolled out. Yesterday you announced that Delta would be unblocking middle seats as of May, a move that until then you'd resisted, even as other airlines opened up. But there's still plenty of uncertainty and challenge. When we talked in June, you said Delta had moved from an initial protect phase to a resilience phase. What phase are you in now?

**BASTIAN:** I think we're in the resilience/recovery phase of the pandemic. We officially passed the one-year mark. At this time last year, our volumes just completely disappeared, completely disappeared. It's been a combination of a lot of factors, Bob – the safety protocols that our people have put in place, the cleanliness initiatives, the quality of the air filtration systems, the masking compliance that we insist on, the middle seat that we'll talk about in a minute. That's been very effective in controlling the number of people on a plane, and giving people a little more space has really contributed to great customer confidence in returning to travel on Delta.

Today as we speak will be actually the busiest day we have seen in a post-pandemic era, though we still have a ways to go. When you couple the strength of the safety protocols with the fact that the vaccination rates are really starting to soar, it gives us the view that in May, this is the right time to start to provide more seats for sale to customers, because customer demand, we're pretty much selling out at this stage, the inventory that we have.

**SAFIAN:** So other airlines made that decision to open up that middle seat earlier, because you still lose money, even if you're full at 60% capacity.

**BASTIAN:** Oh, yeah.

**SAFIAN:** Why did you wait while other airlines said, "We've got to go forward?" was that because you had more financial flexibility than they did or ...

**BASTIAN:** Financial strength is a piece of that, I'm sure. But it was really being true to our values. We said at the onset that we needed to restore confidence in our customer's ability to travel safely by air. Until science was able to catch up to the vaccine and the

rates of infection really dropped, I felt we would be stopping short of the goal line. Today when we survey our customers, 65% of them tell us they expect they will be vaccinated by May the 1st and 75% say by Memorial Day. So that's a pretty good indication people are going to feel very comfortable getting back into public life. That was the signal to then unblock the seats and not until then.

**SAFIAN:** Being the only airline that's kept them blocked, was that a hard decision? I mean, when you think of the hard decisions over the last year, is that the hardest one?

**BASTIAN:** I don't think it was the hardest one. It was a challenging one. But we have been fortunate that our customers have not only appreciated that we've kept the seats blocked, but they've rewarded us. When you look at Delta straight up against our main competitors, you wouldn't see in our financials that we're somehow missing 30% of our revenues by not selling them. Our revenue base is just as strong as theirs with considerably fewer seats available for sale. So customers are thanking us by rewarding us not only with their business but paying a premium to be on Delta.

**SAFIAN:** The pandemic infection numbers are still high, unfortunately. The vaccine numbers are getting much better. You've been helping the state of Georgia with mass vaccination sites. I saw you did an event with Governor Kemp earlier this month. Have you had your vaccine yet?

**BASTIAN:** Yes, I have. It's a great feeling to have done. In Georgia, it's fully open now.

**SAFIAN:** So 30% of your employees have been vaccinated, something like that. How important is it to get everybody vaccinated, even those who may be more suspicious of vaccines?

**BASTIAN:** We're actually over 30%. So we're probably 35% at this phase, really growing fast. I don't think it's something we're going to mandate, that every employee receive the vaccine. I see the hesitancy continuing to drop as people see the rollout and see three million people a day in our country that are getting shots. The side effects are minimal, and the confidence people are having restoring their life and getting back to some semblance of normal is growing because of the vaccine. So I think there will be continued demand for the vaccines amongst our people, certainly, and I think the general public as well.

It's actually a striking number that 75% of our customers tell us they expect to be vaccinated by Memorial Day. That's far, far better than any survey people have been putting out there in terms of vaccine rates and demand rates and penetration rates. So it's encouraging.

**SAFIAN:** You're still having people mask on planes now. Will that continue in May also?

**BASTIAN:** Yes, it will. I think masking is going to stay important until we really determine for a pretty extended period of time that we've got this virus under control.

**SAFIAN:** New York State recently announced their Excelsior pass for those vaccinated. Israel has a green passport. There was antibody testing that recently enabled a 5,000-person concert in Barcelona. Do you think we're going to see some sort of health-based digital travel pass that's going to be used everywhere?

**BASTIAN:** Not domestically, but I do think so internationally. We're still not to the point yet where our governments have figured out how they want to reopen the borders. I think most nations in the world are meaningfully behind where we are in the U.S. in terms of vaccination rates. I think the one to watch for is the U.S.-UK corridor. That's the one that we're putting a lot of attention around as to how to open up a U.S.-UK border that is safe, that the medical experts agree doesn't introduce unnecessary risk into either country, that has the technology that's going to sit alongside that, whether it's a digital health passport or some type of test.

But I do expect this summer, you're going to find the U.S.-UK border opened. I think Europe, continental Europe may take a bit longer. But by the end of the summer, I would expect that we will have figured out Europe in terms of travel, and people will start to travel at scale hopefully into the fall between our two continents.

**SAFIAN:** How much do you worry about or think about as a leader the potential for sort of a haves and have-nots situation to be set up between those who are vaccinated and can show and those who aren't? You said you don't want to necessarily mandate that your employees are vaccinated, but of course your customers may want to know that all the folks working on the planes are vaccinated.

**BASTIAN:** Right. Well, again, I think that's got to be a personal decision that every individual employee needs to make. But I'm going to strongly encourage it. There's pictures of me out there of when I got vaccinated so people know that I've taken the vaccine. I think there's a responsibility that we have to each other to keep each other safe.

**SAFIAN:** Alongside the pandemic, the last year has generated a lot of leadership pressures on businesses and CEOs, from the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, to January's insurrection at the Capitol. Georgia, your home state, has been a hotbed of political debate. Just yesterday you issued some critical statements about Georgia's new voting laws that only came after a little bit of a firestorm for not taking that stand. How do you approach this rising imperative to take positions on social and even political issues?

**BASTIAN:** It's a difficult balance that you try to maintain. It's one that you feel that you need to look to the values of your company, your brand, who you stand for. It's not personal. It's what our employees tell us is important to them. And clearly in the aftermath of the George Floyd murder and the social outrage that was widespread in our

country, it got everyone's attention. It was also a moment for us to gather in the face of crisis and ask ourselves, what are we going to do to build a better future for us all?

I've spent an enormous amount of my personal time in the last year, particularly with our Black employees at all levels, understanding and getting a better appreciation for the daily challenge and struggle that they experience. Unbiased as best we can, we're still not good enough. I'm still a white man, no matter what, and I just don't fully grasp the difficulty and I need to continue to learn and listen to them. You mentioned the Georgia controversy that we are currently involved in, and yesterday's statement around the voter rights legislation.

Just to correct the record, we didn't change positions on this. We've been along the way saying that voter rights need to be protected, they're sacrosanct. They need to be enhanced in terms of ensuring that there's equitable and fair access to the polls in a safe and secure manner. And we were doing everything we could over the course of the last few weeks in the legislature trying to get rid of a lot of very toxic provisions that were being introduced into bills brought forward for signature. The final bill did not contain many of the most onerous parts of proposed legislation. But when you still put the whole package together, it did not meet the objective we had set at the onset, that this has to be an enhancement to voter access and protection of your right to vote, not a step backwards.

And it was also something that became a lot clearer once we were able to get the full legislation. And in spending a little bit of time digesting what had happened, and particularly in talking to our Black colleagues and African American leaders, both here in Atlanta and around the country, it became really clear to me that this was offensive. It did not reflect the values and the objectives that we had set out at the start of the process.

And I want it to be unequivocal that we were not in support of this bill. And yes, there's backlash attached to it. But in a period of time, Bob, that we tell people that we care about them, that we're going to do our best to lift them up. That their voices matter, what in the world could be any more important than their right to vote, in doing that and standing up behind it? And if we're not willing to take that stand now, when will we? And they were rightfully calling to question, and it was absolutely the right call to action. And that's why I spoke out the way I did yesterday.

**SAFIAN:** It must be tricky sometimes in these kinds of moments or these kinds of issues where you personally may have a particular opinion about something, but that may not be appropriate to be Delta's position, and yet what you say of course is driving what Delta's position is. It's a very tricky balance to hold.

**BASTIAN:** It is, and this particular issue has been characterized by some, and I agree with it, that it's a moral issue. To send a message to the Black community that they're going to have to go through extra measures and extra steps in order to have their voices

heard, particularly what we've been through, it did seem like it was a moral issue and a moral imperative. And does everybody in our company agree with the position? I'm sure not. I know not. I shared this with some of my team the last couple of days. Ever since that law came out, I carried a really heavy heart for our people. It really weighed on me. I felt their pain. I was hearing it. I was talking to them. I was understanding it. I was moved by what it meant for them. And again, it's not something I could see as a white man as clearly.

**SAFIAN:** The pandemic has introduced all kinds of uncertainty. Some of that is about what habits from the pandemic days will persist and what old habits will come back. Do you yet know what air travel is going to look like in the long-term?

**BASTIAN:** I don't know exactly, but I have a sense. It's going to look more like it used to in terms of people wanting to travel than some of the pundits out there that indicate business travel is dead and other things are not going to come back, I think what we have learned during this last year is that people miss being with each other. They've missed the interaction, the creativity, the spark, the chemistry, the inspiration, the adventure, the joy, the belonging, the togetherness.

We've all lost so much in this past year. We've all experienced the loss, the personal loss of people close to us because of the pandemic, but also the emotional loss. Travel is going to be one of the ways we get back to life and enjoy being with each other. So my sense is you're going to see business travel return. It might be sluggish. It may take a year or two to fully get back. We need to wait until businesses are open and taking visitors in and understanding any new protocols in the next year or so. But I have great confidence in the medical experts of this world, that they're going to get the pandemic under control. And when that happens, I think you're going to see an explosion of travel. I really do, in the next 12 to 18 months. They miss it.

**SAFIAN:** You told me last summer, two to three years from now, we'll be a smaller industry with fewer planes in the air and some airlines won't make it. Do you still believe that?

**BASTIAN:** I believe that on a global scale, yes. I don't see that in the U.S. I think the U.S. government deserves a tremendous amount of credit for standing behind the airlines and providing us the Cares Act that allowed us to keep our people employed, keep our businesses together during this tough time. And then the extensions. So that's been a lifesaver for the U.S. aviation industry. Globally, a lot of international governments did not have the financial means to support their industry the way the U.S. did. And you've already seen many, many international airlines have died. The planes have gone away and retired. So I think international travel is going to be smaller for a couple, two to three years. Domestically, I think actually you're going to see domestic travel probably by next year back to where it was in 2019, because if you can't go internationally, they're just going to need to go somewhere in the U.S. So I think there's going to be a real boom in U.S. tourism.

**[AD BREAK]**

**SAFIAN:** I want to ask you about sustainability. You made a big announcement in early March of last year that the airline would be carbon neutral. That news was overshadowed quickly by the virus and everything else that happened. It was also an added cost at a time of financial challenge. Did you consider pausing that?

**BASTIAN:** We did not pause it. While the cost of being carbon neutral in 2020 is meaningfully lower than what we were anticipating when we made that announcement at the start of the year, there was about a \$30 million cost in terms of the carbon offset programs that we needed to invest in to ensure that we were true to that word. And we've made those investments in reforestation projects in Southeast Asia specifically, and certain other parts of the world. So we're going to continue to maintain that commitment. I think the pandemic has taught us a lot about wellness, about resilience, about our health, the things we took for granted. And just as we're going to all be much more focused on our personal wellbeing and health coming through this pandemic, we also have to be focused on the planet's health as well.

**SAFIAN:** And this is something that is the role of a business like yours? As opposed to a government, or larger institutions? Or do we all...

**BASTIAN:** I think it is. I think it is the role of business. We've got a business model today that provides and adds to the footprint, that carbon sits on our planet and it's growing by the day. And so it's an imperative. If you're going to have a business model that's going to tap into the world's resources, that you figure out a way to tap into them sustainably, rather than being seen as a net taker. It's tough in our industry, I've got to admit. The vast majority of our footprint is because of our use of fossil fuels and jet fuel. And it's over 90% of the footprint that we create. And there's not a good substitute at the present time for that. Sustainable aviation fuels are being developed and invested in. But if we were to, at Delta, acquire all of the sustainable aviation fuel production for the entire year in this country, that would be enough for us to fuel our planes for one day of the year.

Government has a big hand to play, role to play, in terms of incenting the production of new forms of aviation fuel, and we've talked to the administration about that. And I think you're going to see that be part of the agenda going forward. We're going to need that support. We've talked at Delta about setting a goal to be at 10% of our jet fuel needs provided by sustainable aviation fuels by the end of this decade. And the industry has since adopted a similar type of standard, or is talking about it. But it will require a lot of investment and government support to get that happen because today, even if we could purchase sustainable aviation production, it's somewhere between five to ten times the cost of jet fuel. And that's not a commercial proposition that we can afford to finance.

**SAFIAN:** Over the last year, how often has your vision of the business changed? Was it just the one big change last spring, and you're sort of been adapting since? Or are there points along the way where you're like, "Oh, I got to reset again. I got to reset again."

**BASTIAN:** I think the resets have come on the recovery side of that because when the pandemic hit, we went right to the bottom pretty quickly. I'll remember, I think it's April 14th, a year ago. As an industry, there were 85,000 people that traveled by air in the U.S. that day. That number should have been closer to two or three million. It was just unbelievable. The journey has kind of been sluggish. We've had some head fakes. Once the virus seems to be contained in one part of the country, people start to become a little more public and travel to those destinations. And then of course, then the virus comes back because of that. So we've had to be careful.

It's hard, Bob, in a business where you didn't feel comfortable actually encouraging your own customers to travel, you had to be careful how you actually marketed yourself. It's been an odd year. So yes, there's been a lot of resets along the way as to what the recovery curve looks like. But now that we're in this period where we, I think we're seeing sustainable improvement and confidence of containment of the virus in the U.S., you're going to see people come roaring back.

**SAFIAN:** It sounds like you're at the edge of this inflection point, even as a manager from sort of a more conservative posture, maybe, for the business, as opposed to one that's more aggressive. Which, certainly, you were certainly aggressive heading into the pandemic. How do you think about managing that pivot for your team, for your brand? When do you know to sort of step back in with both feet and be aggressive?

**BASTIAN:** So when we announced yesterday that we are going to be opening up the middle seat for sale in May, we launched a campaign as part of that, that we titled Ready, set, let's go. It's time. As part of that campaign, it wasn't only the middle seat. We're going to start to reintroduce amenities on board our planes, single serve offerings of not just soda, but cocktails, some really innovative, new thinking, designed to minimize the amount of human touch.

We talked about how to start to get our frequent flyers going again and giving them good incentives while there's some good pricing out there now. We've got up towards a 75% mileage boost, which we've never done before.

But, you're right. It's been an interesting time because you don't want to build too far in advance of how the demand signals your hearing and seeing are telling you. And the demand signals have been a little choppy, up and down over the course of the last six months. So we've opted on the cost front to be very cautious. We were able to get rid of and hold down over 50% of our total costs as a company right through the pandemic period. And now we're just starting to open up again, the purses, and invest in all the things that are going to be necessary to ensure that we don't miss the recovery.

You got to be out several months ahead of where the demand really shows up. That's why we talk to our consumers all the time. And our industry is one where people book out into the future. So not many people book their travel for the day of. You know, they just, "I'm going to go somewhere today, and I purchase a ticket." We wish we had more of those today. But they generally book out 60, 90 days, particularly for leisure travel, which is the prominent form of travel going on right now. So we're getting some indications and confidence that it's safe to build back, yeah.

**SAFIAN:** What's at stake at this moment for Delta?

**BASTIAN:** I think what's at stake is holding onto everything we gained during the pandemic. And it might sound odd to talk about that in those terms, because the pandemic has been a period of loss, but we've gained so much, also. So much insight into what our consumers want as they go forward around wellness and the care on board our planes, the cleanliness. We can't lose that. I tell my team all the time when our customers board the planes, they need to feel like they're factory fresh, just walking into a plane that just rolled out of a Boeing or Airbus production facility. And they have that feel. And I've been traveling right throughout the pandemic. Every week, I'm traveling. I'll be traveling tonight. And our customers are telling us they're seeing that. Twenty points of net promoter score growth that we've seen on a year over year basis, which is unheard of in a consumer brand of scale like ours. We went from the fifties to the seventies and we're going to try to do our best to hold onto most of that. I don't think we can get all of it, but most of that is retained.

We've got to ensure that the middle seat investment we made in consumers' safety on board Delta and confidence in Delta translates to the other side when we're now selling the middle seat. That it doesn't impact their view of Delta. That they actually appreciate it, and they'll remember us, and they'll continue to reward us into the future.

So those are some of the things that I think are at stake for us. Clearly, international is a big part of what's at stake because it's unclear how international is going to come back. And we've got big investments, and it's close to 40% of our revenues. And today, those revenues are next to nothing. Business will come back, and business is going to be led back by consumers and you already see consumers traveling. So business is going to be chasing consumers pretty quickly here domestically.

**SAFIAN:** We talked last time about marathon running, and you likened the pandemic to not looking too far ahead. You know, one step at a time. You said you don't worry about whether you're at mile 10 or mile 20. Do you still have your head down that way? Or can you see if you're getting closer to the finish line?

**BASTIAN:** We are getting closer to the finish line. And yes, I still use that analogy. And many of my team members asked me what mile we're in, and I tell them I know we're on

the back half of the marathon. And I don't know if we're at mile 18 or 24, right? And there's a big difference between mile 18 and 24. And I think we're probably closer to 18 than 24. So we're at the point where we've got a real jolt of energy by getting all the domestic. And really, I think this summer, Bob, is going to be gangbusters. Not just for air travel. I think it's going to be for people getting out into hotels and restaurants and reclaiming the joy that's been lost over this last year.

A lot of consumers have money that they've saved as they've been waiting that they're going to be deploying back into us. But we can't get too giddy because we know we're still missing a lot of our business. Once we get an indication of how international borders reopen and the confidence of people starting to go internationally, that's when I'll say we're truly in the home stretch and maybe mile 20, 23 or 24 at that point. And then we're going to go do our best to sprint towards that finish line and hold our heads high as we cross the tape.

**SAFIAN:** It has been a stressful year. How do you feel like that has impacted you, that has impacted your team? How do you manage that side of what we've experienced and maybe what we've learned?

**BASTIAN:** It's been a real struggle. For our crews that are flying and people that are on the line. Their life is actually a little bit more back to normal for many of our people than our people that work in our offices and our merit staff, our technology staff. The people that have still been working from home. We've taken pretty meaningful steps to facilitate and accelerate the reopening of our campus. I'm here on our campus today, I'm looking out, my guess is we're probably 30 to 40% back of people in office. And then hopefully by June, that number will be twice that. I'm hoping 60 to 80% back.

And so I think once we get back together, then we'll have a better sense for each other. How we're doing, but there's been a lot of people just checking in on each other. I think the people at Delta – maybe compared to other businesses – there's certainly more stress because we were more impacted than most businesses, but at the same time, more appreciation for what we've been able to go through because we got through this without having to furlough a single employee, without having to involuntarily cut people's pay. One of the things I'm most impressed with, Bob, is that indeed the job site firm that employees anonymously rate their companies on, named Delta, in January, the seventh best employer in the country.

That's in a pandemic, right? I mean, how crazy is that? I'm really proud of our team for doing that. And that tells me they're keeping really good touch with each other. We've introduced a lot more wellness and mental health resources, which I know are getting subscribed to and utilized actively. We hired just recently a chief health officer for the first time, Dr. Henry Ting from the Mayo Clinic. And he didn't come to help us navigate the remaining stages of the pandemic. He came to ensure our people are well in all aspects, physically, emotionally, financially even.

We've spent a lot of time talking about financial wellness during this period of time. So the pandemic has given us license to talk about things we'd never would have talked about as openly and investing in people in ways that we haven't maybe thought to invest in. And people don't talk about mental wellness because of stigmas. It's been okay for people to open up a little bit more. We don't talk about financial hardship cases because people are embarrassed or we feel that we pay our employees, it's their responsibility to take care of their money, not ours. But we're giving a lot more tools and coaching as to how to get their credit scores improved and how to feel more secure in life. These are all things that are going to keep with us on the other side of the pandemic that I think are going to be really important to our team and to the health of our company.

**SAFIAN:** Yeah, it's fascinating some of the things that you realize in these crises, you should have been doing all along, but it was just harder to see in some ways.

**BASTIAN:** Yeah. We were traveling literally at 500 miles an hour and the world stopped for a reason. Believe me, I would never, ever, ever want to go through the year that we've all been through ever again. I pray that that's not ahead of any of us. But in a strange sort of way, kind of glad we did. Not for the human toll, but for the learnings.

**SAFIAN:** Is there anything I haven't asked you about, Ed, that I should have?

**BASTIAN:** I think you've gotten a pretty good sense of where we are. We're coming back through this to come back strong. We've made a lot of investments, accelerated investments in airports, getting airports, JFK and LaGuardia finished. We cut two years off the LaGuardia timeline. We've taken advantage of the downturn in traffic to do that. We're doing the same thing out in LA we've taken two years off. We've made a decision to move to the cloud, our infrastructure, technology infrastructure, with AWS. Customers will really appreciate the fact we've made a decision to change wifi providers during this pandemic.

Full access, downloads, streaming content without having to take a penalty of quality of transmission. And we'll eventually get to my goal of making it free for customers. So we're coming through this actually faster, more resilient than we would have anticipated. And the confidence is there that this is going to be a sustainable recovery.

**SAFIAN:** Well, your demeanor remains upbeat and confident. You've had a lot of water to carry over the last year.

**BASTIAN:** It's one of the things that you lead a large consumer brand and a large group of people. We're smaller as we said. 75,000 strong now, rather than 90,000 when we last spoke. We went through an early retirement program with 20% of the company subscribed to, which was good for us, good for them. But you've got to be the face of forward leaning where you're headed. Customers aren't going to want to fly in an airline

that's not optimistic about what's to come. Employees aren't going to work for a company. And you're thrust in the CEO kind of in this odd way of being the face of that and the voice of that like never before. And yes, you're right. some of us, myself included, felt like we've had to put the company on our shoulders and kind of walk it back through this last year to hold it together and we've done that. And the rewards, I think, will be great for doing that. We say, keep climbing at Delta. That's our motto. That has never been more powerful than where we sit right now. We're going to keep climbing and we see blue skies ahead.

**SAFIAN:** Well, that's great. Thanks so much again for talking with us. I hope we can do it again.

**BASTIAN:** Absolutely. Let's check in the next six to nine months and see where we are on the prognosis. This has been fun.