

Chris Barton



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Short Description

Founder & Creator of Shazam, Entrepreneur, Inventor, and Tech Investor

About

Chris Barton wanted a way to identify songs anywhere he heard them. There wasn't one – so he invented an app called Shazam. Chris's creation is nothing short of pure magic. Chris seeks to delight people by using technology to make seemingly impossible ideas come to life. Shazam is just one of them. It changed the way the world discovers music

and laid the groundwork for the consumer AI industry we know today. In addition to creating Shazam, Chris holds twelve patents and played key roles in the early days of Google and Dropbox. Chris's newest venture, Guard, aims to use AI to detect drowning in swimming pools – a never-before accomplished effort. In his speeches, Chris's story and storytelling completely captivate audiences. He inspires people to make big things happen in their organizations – to create magic in defiance of the obstacles.

Chris grew up with a French mother and British father – both of whom were university professors. Academics were a struggle for him, and Chris would come to realize he had undiagnosed dyslexia. Chris flipped this challenge on its head and learned to embrace what he now calls his superpower. Chris believes that dyslexia has allowed him to overcome barriers to achieve his many accomplishments.

When Chris had the idea to identify music using a mobile phone, no technology existed to achieve his goal. He was told by Professors at MIT and Stanford that the necessary pattern recognition algorithm was impossible. Even after inventing a new technology that didn't yet exist, he had to build a search engine supercomputer from scratch, create the world's largest music database, and create a user experience on very basic mobile phones. Did Chris ever think the experts were right? "No way," he says.

When Chris came up with the idea for Shazam in 2000, it was three years before iTunes and eight years before the App Store. Shazam launched as a phone number that you dialed, and the service struggled, teetering near bankruptcy for six years until the App Store launched in 2008, allowing Shazam to unleash its full potential on the world.

In 2018, Shazam was acquired by Apple for a reported \$400 million, making it Apple's 6th largest acquisition of all-time. Shazam has been downloaded over 2 billion times and is used each month by over 300 million people, making it one of the world's most popular apps. It has become an integral part of our everyday lives, with its ability to instantly identify songs and provide a range of music features such as lyrics. Shazam has become a verb, and it has changed the way the world discovers music.

Chris has also played a key role in tech history as a founding member of Google's Android Partnerships team where he created Android's mobile operator partnership framework. He also spent four years at Dropbox where he led carrier partnerships and was one of the first 100 people at the company.

Holding 12 patents, including one found within the Google search algorithm, Chris has made significant contributions to the tech industry. He also invests in a wide range of start-ups, including artificial intelligence for heart health and inflammatory disease therapeutics.

Today, Chris spends much of his time building his third startup company, Guard, an artificial intelligence system that detects drowning in swimming pools.

When he has time, Chris enjoys speaking at events and sharing lessons learned from his experiences overcoming the impossible. He inspires people with firsthand stories that highlight key take-aways across technology innovation, persistence, removing friction, and entrepreneurship. Chris gives audiences a new framework for making big things happen. His truly inspirational story motivates them to take action.

Prior to his technology career, Chris was a strategy consultant and earned two master’s degrees from UC Berkeley and Cambridge University.

When he isn’t working or speaking, you can find Chris enjoying the outdoors and spending time with his son, Jude.

Contact/Quote

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Videos

Requirements

Engagement	
Price Range	\$25K to \$50K