

Maurice Fuller

Hi, everyone. I'm Maurice Fuller and thanks for joining us. Today I'm with Rick Maré, Founder and CEO of Shazamme and today we'll be discussing the latest tech solutions for building effective websites for staffing and recruiting firms. We'll also be talking about low and no code technology and what that means for staffing firms. Rick, welcome and thanks for joining me today.

Rick Maré

Hello, Maurice! Welcome to this chat, and thank you for inviting me to be on your podcast.

MF

Absolutely, We're thrilled to have you with us. So tell us about yourself and your background in the industry.

RM

So back in 2008 I started a business to be a commercial job board. But the GFC hit and we ended up pivoting quite quickly to use the technology we created to create what was back then really the first SaaS platform for recruiting and staffing websites. We launched Shazamme last year—a total reincarnation of my previous businesses—starting really with a blank sheet of paper because we came across a lot of technological challenges that we saw low no code platforms could actually fix. So Shazamme is totally brand new and built within about a year on purely no code and lowcode technology, which has been absolutely amazing and eye-opening for me as a technologist for the past fourteen years

MF

Excellent. So tell us where you are today with Shazamme and what the product is.

RM

Yeah, so as you correctly mentioned it is a recruitment and staffing website platform that solely builds on low code and no code technology. It's a number of them pulled together. We've got 130 clients ranging from one-man organizations to now some of the world's largest. The interesting thing is every person that we show, their eyes light up. They've just got smiles on their faces and they just can't believe the ease and simplicity of the platform now because obviously everyone is comparing us to the existing incumbents, which I used to own one of. They're clunky, they're outdated, and it's very hard to actually build your brand on it as a recruiter from a marketing perspective. So it is really exciting and it's almost a delight—or it is a delight—to work with clients because it's so easy.

MF

So in the past you had to go to a design firm essentially and give them your requirements and work through a process to build a web presence. But now you can

really build your own website. You've created a website builder. Is Shazamme essentially a Wix for recruitment?

RM

Absolutely, Maurice. It is the Wix for recruitment; people are actually saying It's more like Canva for recruitment. It's either of those, but it is super simple to use and very enjoyable to use. Like ourselves, we're onto our fifth iteration of Shazamme, and in the past we could never have done that as business owners. We would have had to sit with designers and developers and say, "can you move that box three pixels to the left?" or "can you do this..." Now you don't really need developers. That's why it's called no and low code technology. It just makes it pleasurable.

MF

Alright, fantastic. So what kind of results are your clients seeing with Shazamme?

RM

That's a great question. One of the things that we've seen is that the starting journey is not necessarily where people end up. So we've taken a lot of clients across from other platforms that have just said, look, we really want a different platform because we're not able to build our business from a digital marketing perspective, so can you just copy us over as we are today because we don't want to really go through the process again. When they're on our platform, you can then see them really starting to rebuild their brand because they have access to pretty much anything without writing a single line of code, that being html or css. You can see them really taking their creative thoughts that are in their head and putting it on their websites.

One client in particular, actually a lot of them, but one client in particular is on to the third version as well, and you just keep learning and saying, god, we've wanted to do all of these things for so many years like building microsites landing pages that we've never been able to do ourselves. We can now do it. Another client that works a lot with the government has now got about ten different landing pages for some high profile roles. They're saying the difference it's making for them to use those landing pages to push that through LinkedIn, Facebook, etc. and keeping them live for sometimes two to three months because they are high profile roles is just such a different way of recruiting. So they're exceptionally happy with the outcomes.

MF

So in the past when you've worked with a design firm, you've been able to take advantage of their expertise in best practices. How do you ensure that your clients are incorporating best practices for designing web pages?

RM

Yeah, another very good question. Having done this for fourteen years I think, again just to reiterate, creating the ideal recruitment or staffing site architecture is actually a recipe.

There is no doubt if you follow the recipe in terms of the site architecture, you'll win every single time. design agencies don't understand that site architecture, and you can download one of my eBooks talking about that. If you look at the best performing staffing sites globally, there's a pattern that really forms in it. The design is one element, but the site architecture is probably the most important element.

Now with our platform as it is now, you can pretty much design anything you want without again writing a single line of code. So we've created these building blocks where you can just drag widgets onto a page or sections onto a page which are predefined blocks. You can really start to build something that's exceptionally well-performing.

Whilst design agencies are important for branding, colors, all those sorts of things...

Once you've got those, it becomes really very simple to build a site.

MF

So when you think about the advancements that you've made with this technology, the ability to quickly build websites, how do you see the role of the marketer within the staffing firm evolving?

RM

I think it's very exciting because now they can actually focus on building a brand much faster. The biggest complaint that we certainly heard over the ten years prior to launching Shazamme was that they really were shackled by the fact that they had to launch a ticket, define what they wanted to do, then five days later they may get something back or they may get something back that's not quite where they wanted to be then have to redo it. If they wanted to build something really quickly like a landing page for a campaign that's coming up this week, they could never do it. So it's about really removing all the barriers of having to use old clunky technology and coders to actually achieve the outcome. I think it's fair to say that most if not all platforms in the ecommerce space, people can pretty much do what we've done now in the staffing space. So if you run an ecommerce store, you could pretty much build your ecommerce store without ever writing a signal line of code and it will always work. Canva, you can do the same. Wix, you can do the same. With staffing platforms in the past it's been very cumbersome and there was a lot of frustration out there with pretty much everyone that we knew that were our clients in my previous business—and also the competitors. The pattern was there that it was very restrictive to build a recruitment brand.

MF

So speaking of recruitment brand, you've built a solution for monitoring the health of your digital brand as a staffing firm. Tell us about that solution.

RM

Yeah. The approach that we've taken Shazamme this time is that there are a number of things that you need to do to make sure that your digital digital brand is actually performing. We've got a couple of products that allow people to evolve with us over time. So obviously what we recommend people to start with is an optimized and well built

recruitment website. Then the second item is our marketing dashboard and also our SEO tool. Now the marketing dashboard what it does is it connects all of your digital assets together. Think Google Analytics, Google my Business, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., anything digital that's connected to your brand. It puts it on a dashboard and once a week it will create an executive report and essentially tell you how you're performing. So what it's doing is while you're sleeping and working and doing all the bits that you're meant to do to create revenue in the background, it's actually analyzing your brand continuously and giving you suggestions as to where to fix it. That's the marketing dashboard.

Then we also have our very simple yet powerful SEO Analytics Tool. Now what that does is you connect your website and once a week it'll do a full order and tell you, for example, if you've created a blog article and the image is ten times too big, it will just say your image is too big so you can go and fix it. What it does is it keeps checking that you're in line with Google's latest core web vitals to make sure that your website is performing. Building a recruitment brand or recruitment website is more than just building it once and setting and forgetting. It's really about having the tools to monitor it ongoing.

MF

And traditionally you would have paid a company to do this kind of monitoring for you. But now the software just does it automatically, and you're providing it as a cost effective service to your clients.

RM

Correct—that's partly correct. There's another thing which it does, because obviously there are certain things that still require humans to do. There are things like SEO, and to build a better brand from an SEO perspective you still need people doing the backlinks, the blog writing, articles, and all of those things. But what this allows you to do, which again has been very difficult in the past, is to connect all of your analytics tools to the dashboard and make sure that whatever your third party firm is helping you with is actually translated into your dashboard. Because more often than not, you get very custom reports from them that don't tie it back to everything else that's going on in the digital world. So it is, from our perspective, keeping everyone really honest and informed as to how well everything is going.

MF

Okay, great. You integrate with most of the popular ATS systems like Bullhorn, don't you?

RM

Yes, we certainly have a bigger list than we've ever had before of integrations, partly because of the use of lowcode and no-code technology to power that. So we're integrated now in about twenty-five different systems in some shape or form.

MF

Wow, that's fantastic. Okay, so tell us about your branded client portal solution.

RM

So we have a client portal, and that's been really driven by the request from our partners like Bullhorn to say our clients often want a client portal where their clients can see what's going on with the assignments that are open. What it's doing is really bringing that whole element of client communication into the latest technology, whereas emails can get lost and it's not as effective as having a portal to communicate in. You can imagine you've got a client and you're working on five assignments from them; they can see real-time the candidates that you short-listed. They can add notes to it, you can add notes to it, and you can progress them through a kanban type board from stage one to stage five, and it's all integrated with Bullhorn. We're in beta mode at the moment with a couple of clients testing it, and the feedback so far has been very good.

MF

Alright. So we've talked about low and no-code technologies. I'd like to dive into this a little bit. First, for listeners that are not familiar with this technology, what is low and no-code technology and what's the difference between low code and no code programming.

RM

So no-code technology is really where you don't ever need to write a single line of code. Think Canva, think Wix, think anything where you actually as a user don't need to write a line of code. So that's the simple way to look at no-code. Low-code is sort of one level up where you may still need someone to do some coding, but primarily the platform has been designed and developed with the framework in place. What we've done is we've combined no-code platforms with low-code platforms to serve the purpose that they're doing. The no-code is for the web builder. It's purely drag-and-drop, never writing a single line of code. Our platform that sits behind it that does all the integrations is low-code because you still need to, for example, integrate with Bullhorn or JobAdder or Broadbean, and there is some coding involved where you need to map things and so on. One is a drag and drop interface; the other one is still where there's some coding involved.

MF

Got it. How do your customers benefit from that?

RM

The stats show that low-code to no-code on average are ten times faster to build and to deploy solutions than doing it the old-fashioned way. So it's about building apps faster, working to get together faster, to scale faster, and to future-proof your innovation cycle. All of those I've seen myself firsthand, and I was a bit of a skeptic before I started on the Shazamme journey because I've run a global platform business before with a team of 20

to 30 developers. I thought, how are you going to replace them? But the simple analogy I can give is we used to have someone looking after APIs and maintain them and develop them; what low-code has been able to do is as soon as we make a change to anything, at a field, at a table, you press a button and the API platform is totally instantly updated in seconds. So yeah, you can see that having a low-code platform and absolutely no-code gives you just the ability to move at such speed that you can build better features, better functionality, and update things very quickly.

MF

So you've seen dramatic improvements in programmer productivity. What do you see as the future of low and no code programming?

RM

Look, there's some very interesting statistics out there. So there are two that are worth having a look at. Microsoft has said that it anticipates that 500,000,000 apps will be created over the next five years and 450,000,000 of those will be designed on no-code or low-code platforms. Gardner, which is obviously another of the well-respected research firms, they're saying by 2025 seventy percent of all applications, new applications, will be built on no-code or low-code technologies. So you can see it's no longer just a hype or anything like that. It is the next generation of building quality applications.

MF

Alright. And also thinking about the future, what do you see as the future for websites within this in so the staffing and recruiting sphere.

RM

Look, where we are going is that we are looking at this as a modular delivery of products where we know what people are doing out there. We are going to be offering them as building blocks. For example, you can start off with your website which obviously is really what we call the foundation. From there you can add your marketing dashboard to see how your brand is actually performing in the world wide web, then add things like SEO, marketing automation, and then a lot of the other things that are currently provided by third parties that more often than not don't really integrate as well, like review sites, reference checking tools, those sort of things. Because we already have all the data and we understand the integration points, they become for us building blocks to create a single platform where everything talks to your ATS, but it's all managed from the one integrated platform. That's where I think no-code and low-code technology will lead us, but we'll see.

MF

Yes. So speaking of this modular building block approach, if a staffing recruiting firm has an existing website that they've built and they want to bring in just one part of it, for

example the solution for monitoring the health of your digital brand, is it possible to get started with Shazamme that way?

RM

Absolutely. And that's partly the reason we architected it in such a way that if you have your site with someone else and you want to see how well it's performing and how well your brand is performing, you can certainly use that marketing dashboard to get a grasp of your brand on the world wide web. Absolutely.

MF

Alright, fantastic. Well Rick, this has been a great and highly insightful discussion. How can listeners learn more about Shazamme?

RM

Firstly, I highly recommend they go to our website, which obviously is www.shazamme.com and have a look around at the customer showcases that we have, the pricing which we're the only SaaS platform in the staffing space that openly advertises our pricing schedule, so we're very transparent. Have a look at all the widgets that we've got and very quickly you can see that it is a very robust SaaS solution for the staffing space with ultimate flexibility. Then I encourage them to schedule a brief 15 minute demo to talk about their challenges and how we can do that. The feedback—just to add to your earlier question of what makes us different and why people should think about looking at Shazamme—the feedback we've had is because of the speed that people can learn about using the platform. There's the fact that we've got twenty four seven chat: 95% of all chat questions are solved within five minutes because it is so easy to use. You don't need to understand coding, there's no contract, and we have a super low starting price of 99 USD per month. So all of those things really put us right at the front of the industry in terms of the latest technology.

MF

Alright. Well Rick, kudos on all your success and everything that you've accomplished. You're really helping to move the industry forward and it's been great speaking with you today. Thanks everyone for listening, and we will see you on the next Staffing Technology podcast.

RM

Thanks, Maurice—it was great to be here.