

EPIISODE 053

BLUE BIRD MUTUAL

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Ade Chong, Studio Chong

AND

Carl Mars and Emmanuel 'Manny' Mars, Blue Bird Mutual

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The Follow-up, a weekly podcast that goes in depth into projects recently reviewed on Brand New featuring conversations with the designers, and sometimes their clients, uncovering the context, background and design decisions behind the work.

ARMIN VIT

Hi, this is Armin Vit and welcome to episode number 53 of The Follow-up.

This week we are following up on Blue Bird Mutual, a mutual fund slash venture capital firm based in Florida with the goal to, quote, “inspire everyday people to make money through simple, socially conscious investment and impartial business support”, end quote. Founded by Carl Mars, the fund is built around a strong sense of community where, and here is another quote, “collective altruism underpins the every ambition”, end quote, to help the businesses and projects it invests in. A couple of its own projects include Berri, an app that enables fans to invest directly in the creators they love, and Blue Bird Airways, a potential passenger airline serving Haiti and Cuba. Still a relatively small player Blue Bird Mutual has the ambition to join the Alphabets, Y Combinators, and Berkshire Hathaways of the world.

The project, designed by London, UK-based Studio Chong was posted on Brand New on June 1, 2022. You can pull it up on your browser at bit.ly/bnpodcast053 that is B I T dot L Y slash bnpodcast053, all in lowercase.

This week we are joined by Ade Chong, Creative Director, Brand Strategist, and Founder of Studio Chong; Carl Mars, founder of Blue Bird Mutual; and Emmanuel ‘Manny’ Mars, board member of Blue Bird Mutual.

In this conversation we get to hear about the origin story of Blue Bird Mutual and how it was born from the founder’s experience of, well, having no experience with how financial investment worked given that his parents, who immigrated from Haiti, had to go through a generational shift in setting up roots by any means necessary and that did not involve VCs. Empowered by Studio Chong’s brand idea of “Investments that make more and mean more”, we hear how this almost-too-good-to-be-true client and designer relationship worked together to give Blue Bird Mutual a logo and identity that made them feel unstoppable. Complementing Carl in this episode is his cousin, Manny, who had no shortage of highly enjoyable and accurate metaphors and similes to describe the branding process and the solutions provided by Ade and her team.

Now let’s listen in as Bryony follows up with Ade, Carl, and Manny.

BRYONY GOMEZ-PALACIO The financial sector is one designers often label as too corporate or even bland. Today, we’re going to hear how a venture capital firm took a spin on the industry itself while evolving from a hatchling brand to a full grown bird, ready and eager to fly. And as you will see, a far cry from those perceptions Ade, Carl, and Emmanuel, welcome to The Follow-Up today.

EMMANUEL MARS Thanks for having us.

CARL MARS Thanks for having us.

BRYONY Just so our audience has a better context of who is behind each voice, if you can take a quick minute to introduce yourselves and tell us where you’re coming from.

CARL My name is Carl Mars. I'm the founder and CEO of Blue Bird Mutual, coming from Florida.

EMMANUEL My name is Emmanuel. I am a Board Member of Blue Bird Mutual coming right outta Florida.

ADE CHONG I'm Ade, I'm the Creative Director and Founder of Studio Chung and I worked with both Carl and Manny on the Blue Bird Mutual rebrand. And I'm calling from Amsterdam as well.

BRYONY Carl, why don't we take a few minutes to establish the origins of Blue Bird Mutual, and what the core principles are for the company that makes it quite different from other venture capital firms?

CARL The original Blue Bird came from wanting to give back, and to teach, and bring value to people in this new world of investment. Growing up, there's a lot of things that we didn't know as far as me and my family, and a lot of things that we had to learn ourselves in order to become as successful as we have been. My way of giving back is showing those minority communities and others how to achieve that, or start achieving that at an early age, to be able to coach them, instead of going through the same learning process and curves that I have been through.

EMMANUEL Carl hit right on the head. We both come from immigrant parents from Haiti who, you know, as soon as they got here, they were in survival mode. You know, you come over, you do what you can, you work as hard as you can to make a way, not only for yourself, for your family, that's what they did. And so being in the children of immigrants, who number one, didn't understand much of the language at all, or the customs. It's easy to see why we wouldn't have the tools to know about investing, and the different aspects of it, and planning for the financial future. So a lot of those things we had to take upon ourselves as we got older. Like Carl said, these are some of the tools and tips and tricks that we weren't afforded. So our goal now is to be able to afford that to other people who are in like-situations, or who just

don't have the information. That's why we started Blue Bird. This is the whole reason for that.

BRYONY And in the beginning, when you founded it, there was an original brand that was developed. Can you give us a quick snippet of how that came to be and what was the thinking behind it?

CARL The thinking behind that was at first, when we started, there wasn't any exact direction that we had in mind that we wanted to go to. The truth is we were all over the place, wanted to do it all, really had to sit back and scale to see where we wanted to start. Initially it was in the financial sector, offering finances to people with lower interest rates and things like that. Then as we got involved in the process, we realized that that's something that we should bring on board later. So we scaled back, started from scratch again, to see what's the best way possible to do that. By that time, the first logo was already done. Then we decided, okay, how are we going to get ourselves out there? And that's where Manny came in. He's a huge brand person. Is big on that. And we wanted to be seen, to be heard, to be seen as reliable forward thinking and more. That's when we decided to move forward with a rebrand and to reclassify ourselves as to what it is, what services are we going to offer.

BRYONY I wanna hear from Ade as to how you got involved, but Emmanuel walk us through those first challenges that you found, and what led you to take the path that you took.

CARL One of the hardest things is streamlining your thoughts into one cohesive sort of machine. Right? And it's sort of why we were like, man, we gotta reach out to Adeline, 'cuz she had worked with me with a previous project. She has this way of taking the jumbled soup in your head <laugh> and then just focusing it into <laugh> into one cohesive concept and idea. We're like, yeah, we wanna do this, and we wanna save the world, and we're gonna do it like that. And she's like, okay, well let's start off by doing this, this little piece of puzzle first. And so with her help, it's been instrumental in our pursuit to

being able to streamline everything that we want do, being able to focus in the directions that we want to head in. So, the challenge to be quite honest, weren't that really challenging because she <laugh> just helped us dig through the trenches along the way.

BRYONY Ade do you agree? Or where the challenges a little bit more challenging than you led on?

ADE Honestly, not at all. Like I think most agencies, you know, talk about projects and clients, there's always a lot of ups and downs—challenges to get through. And there wasn't really any with this one. I think we... you know, I've worked with Manny before and this one, I worked more closely with Carl this time. And both projects I think they've been so trusting with us on the creative process, and really collaborative on it that it felt really smooth throughout the whole thing. It was almost kind of like, something's gonna go wrong at some point. It didn't<laugh>, you know, it was brilliant. It was actually such a great partnership.

BRYONY And just for our understanding who was on your team? Who was working on it from Studio Chong?

ADE So Studio Chong runs on a collective model. We run on teams of freelancers, which helps us to keep things pretty lean. That means we get to work with really nice startups as well. Our team on design, we had Harry Vincent he's like a brilliantly talented designer. He actually did a lot of the heavy lifting on this and I've worked with him for years. We had Lucy Sanderson, our copywriter, all things tone the voice—she's worked with us on loads of projects before as well, we absolutely love her Ann Marie, our project manager and uh, whip cracker. She's brilliant. Yeah. And we have Jordan Gilroy, who's super talented digital designer. He took the brand and brand guidelines and brought that to life on the website, which I think has received so much praise. And then we also partner with Studio 206, who did the development work for us on that too.

BRYONY It's good to have a good team. And how about on your end Carl?

CARL Emmanuel and myself. Emmanuel helped me develop my ideas and just helped me relay them to Adeline so we could see it clear as to what it is exactly we're doing, and to see our end goal.

EMMANUEL Yeah, a lot of what I was doing with Carl was: trust me, I've been through this process. She's gonna have it all. Don't worry. It's gonna be okay. That was really my role, because like I said, I had worked with Adeline before. A little bit about me is I'm a musician. And I think branding is an art, very akin to music. It's a creative process and sometimes you don't know where it's gonna lead you. Knowing that, Adeline and I had a conversation about that and I'm like, hey look, the creative process, I'd like you for you to have as much free range with it as you possibly can. And then we can parse, and remove, or add what we need to from there. Having worked with me was just easy for me to tell Carl, alright, it's gonna go smooth. She's not gonna miss <laugh>. So...

BRYONY That's good to hear now, Ade, on your end, you say it was a very simple and kind of straightforward process, and at the same time you had a lean and mean team behind you. Can you walk us through the first phase of design? From those initial conversations all the way to your first concept presentation? I always wanna know if you came in with a single idea with 10 ideas, what did you bring to the table?

CARL I think what might be helpful was to talk about the initial thinking, how we wanted to look at the business first. Carl and Manny came to us, you know, wanting to move Blue Bird into this modern future. I don't know if you've seen the old website, but it was very much focused on the consulting side of things, focused at the B2B aspect of things. And Carl's brief was I think, widely that they wanted to be a new brand in the future that could stand one day amongst the giants in finance. A big holding company that would have all these subsidiaries under them, as well as the consulting arm, you know, so very big ambition. We were like, there needs to be some direction to that. They also had two different types of consumers. They had the B2B consumers like their startups and retail investors and things.

ADE And then they also wanted to look at like individuals who could be people who wanted to put money into these investments. And the difference as well was that they said they wanted to talk to gen Z and up, which is huge spectrum. Which is really cool, 'cuz most venture capital companies would be like, no, we're just gonna stick with all the people with all the money. It's kind of nice that that was something they wanted to consider. We looked at how to talk to those two audiences together. And we thought about a collective sort of mindset of both groups that had this, I guess the easiest way to say it is people who desire success. When you think about investments, you think about people who want to grow their money. When you think about people who are starting businesses, they wanna be successful.

Broadly speaking change makers are highly ambitious driven individuals, people who wanna talk to you. But then we also did loads of consumer research and found the other angle of it. This idea of these driven people who also want to make a mark in the world and make some kind of positive impact in the world. And that kind of made a connection. I think from research side, we found that it was something that consumers were wanting. There was this world we live in, that's super depressing right now, right? You've got climate change and presidents that are ruining the world, and you know, all that. People on a daily basis are trying to make sense of it all, but also try to make their own impact. And people are doing that by considering where they put their money and how they can use that to make positive changes with it, or maybe try to impact the world in a good way.

So there's a whole economy around that that we've seen. But knowing that kind of also connected with Manny and Carl... I'd worked with Manny on a project before called Berri, which is a concept of a social media platform that people could come and subscribe to creators, but they could also invest in the creators, help to grow their careers and gain back from it too. Which is a nice way of making a social platform, that was fair. Other projects that we know that the two of them working on as well, projects like Canari, which is gonna be somewhat

loosely Airbnb type concept, except you could buy timeshare in it, and what they would do with it, is proceeds from that would go towards rebuilding communities in underdeveloped parts of the world. I knew about all these little pieces of projects here and there. You know, all of them had that layer to it, you know, as well now from this just how they've talked really passionately about the business and how they want to give back, that I could see that passion from the conversations that wasn't present in the brand that existed before we came in, you know?

So, there was that kind of connection to it that I thought was really interesting that maybe we could make that the core focus of the business. It's such a nice part of their story already, and something that I think could draw people. We ended up with this direction of "investments that make more and mean more" as an idea. A place where people could come to grow their money, but know that it goes towards positive impact in the world. And the other layer that we had to that as well was that we wanted to start from the inside out as a company as well. We wanted to make it quite accessible. At this level of scale we would maybe not be able to go for your 23-year-old investor with just a hundred quid <laugh> kind of thing, you know? But still trying to make it as accessible as possible that we could. So things like the way we've created the tone of voice, we didn't want it to sound like a VC that was just talking to corporations, or B2B type things with all the jargon and everything. We wanted to make it a very accessible language around how we talk about investments. And that also influenced the style, and the colors, and things that we wanted it to feel a bit more warm and a bit more human, a bit more open as well. Well, that I think was the big picture thinking that we took to the project.

BRYONY That first presentation, have you presented various routes or—

CARL Yeah.

BRYONY —just the one or...

CARL This is how we run actually, most of our projects, we try and do a lot of work around the mood boarding stage. And we usually come in with a couple routes as to how we could bring to life this direction. And from there we kind of hone in and we just present one route. And we'll do lots of stuff internally, on exploration and everything. We might come with multiple directions, but we generally try to focus on one that we think is the right one, and take it from there. We came in with one route and that was, I think <laugh>, there was no feedback on that. They loved it, which was brilliant, I think is something that I can't say for that many projects, which is why I feel like it was smooth sailing, but obviously we did chip away at it as it went on. There was one route, one logo that we came in with.

BRYONY So I wanna know about that meeting from Carl and Emmanuel, what were your first impressions, your feelings, your reactions to what was being presented?

CARL When I first saw the logo, it took me some time to get accustomed to it as I was looking at it and analyzing it, I'm like, okay, this could definitely work. As I saw Adeline sending me some more things with the logo on it, I'm like, yes, this is it. We gonna be unstoppable. You know? And the way I was thinking about it, the feathers or the wings, it could represent each line, or each thing we looked to do with Blue Bird and within even the secondary logos, it all fits in so perfectly together. And under each project that we're doing the sub-projects underneath it, and the way the logos are it's perfect. And it's just the perfect brand identity for us.

EMMANUEL For me, as soon as I saw the logo, I was like, yes, this is it <laugh> right. Because in my mind's eye, I was sort of like, okay, if we had a modern looking brand that still had classical undertones as if it's always existed, and James Bond was the founder, <laugh> that's exactly what it would look like. And so—

BRYONY That is a new parameter!

EMMANUEL Right. You know, it's just got this really sleek look to it, and it just looks like, okay, yeah, this is a modern, but this could have existed for 50, 60 years. And one of the coolest guys on the planet probably founded it, you know? As soon as I saw it, the logo resonated with me. As Carl said, the rest of the branding material started to pour in. It was like, yeah, this is a no-brainer. This is exactly the direction that we wanna head into. I kind of gave Adeline a baseball analogy: when you're playing baseball and you haven't missed a pitch yet, you know, you're batting a thousand. And I kept saying like, Adeline, you're batting a thousand. You're not missing. Right. <laugh> so yeah, it was brilliant, such a good feeling to just have a thought, and have somebody just pull it out of your mind, pull out of the sky and then here, here's what you're thinking. You can properly have done it yourself, but here's the interpretation of it. That was such a great feeling. Every single step of the way. Every week we're looking forward, like, yeah, Adeline's about to drop something new. <laugh>, you know? Like it's coming, it's coming. Forming our weeks around the drops, you know? So it was a really great feeling.

CARL Definitely looked forward to those Mondays and Tuesdays man!

BRYONY Ade expand on those Mondays and Tuesdays.

CARL Oh my God, it's been great. That's one of the best things about the project. Just how excited Manny and Carl were about the calls that we had. It got us pumped to, with everything that we were working on as well, it just made us really excited to see how much energy they bought from it too.

BRYONY Now the sub-brands were there from the very beginning. That those come in later as a request, not so much as a part of your first round presentation?

EMMANUEL Here's what happened. The more reassurance that we sort of got within our own minds that, oh my God, like she's really kicking ass. It was like, okay, let's throw this <laugh> oh, by the way, Adeline, we've got this! And oh yeah, one more thing, we've got this idea. So there was a lot

that we just kept spitballing her way. The more and more we're like, okay, like she's, she's just doing an amazing job. A lot of the sub-ideas, and brands, and concepts, they weren't there from the very beginning. They just slowly started pouring in the more we were like, okay yeah, we can definitely trust her. The brand is in good hands.

CARL You know, everything we're throwing at her, she had her bat right there. And then <laugh>.

ADE I'll say one thing about the logo. All the new brands came in later. But when we did the logo exercise, when we did it internally, we knew that we wanted to continue with this bird, like it's Blue Bird and the previous logo was a bird, so it was just how to bring that into the new world. And we did loads of exploration around multiple birds, birds in various positions of flight, and different angles, and everything. And the one we went in was the one we felt most drawn to, but there was a lot of other really good ones in there that we had explored. And it was to us a little bit of, uh, it'd be a shame to throw all these away. So we did take a bunch of them that were in the same style, the same sort of icon style with these kind of like concentric lines, different icons that were the same style, and we thought let's try and breathe some life back into these. So we brought them back into the brand as the sub-icons and we thought these could be things we could reuse. You know, we created patterns out of them, we could create graphics out of them like textures that we could use on photography, which actually worked really well. And it still had that same idea of soaring with us, the bird taking off, the bird in flight. There was a nice story to that. So we brought that in. So I think when these sub-brands came along, it was quite natural for us to say, we have a bit of a system and we know how to create more bird icons in this style. It's just about directing that towards what that new sub-brand was, and what the story around it was.

BRYONY That is a beautiful evolution of both processes internally and the company as you evolve what it is that you're focusing on, and what other projects you wanna launch, and from the creative side.

Additionally, for the creative side I would like to get a little bit more info, not only on the voice, but the photography, and the color palette that you ended up going with. What was the thinking behind that approach?

ADE I think when we did the early mood board phases, the main route that we had landed on was something like “investing in humans”, we had called it, which was still kind of sleek and modern, but somewhat warm and inviting because we wanted this idea that—there was a tension I think we wanted to get between being big, future, Alphabets of the world, modern, forward-thinking. But also wanting to be an honors brand that gives back, we wanted to be open, we wanted to be approachable enough for your everyday investor. Those two things, a little at odd to each other, but we wanted to be able to address them too and create that kind of balance. Those two things led a lot of decisions we made, like having the color palette with a lot of black, which feels quite sleek and quite sophisticated, paired off with that warm, tan color, or these soft blues, which has a bit of that humanness to it, as well as, you know, the photography style that we chose.

We didn’t wanna go with corporate photography for investments. We wanted to tell the story of your regular, everyday investors. We wanna tell the story of the people we’re giving back to the communities, that were giving back to as well. So those are things we wanted to portray. We used stock photography to keep within budgets, but I think we found that there were still quite a lot we could do with selecting the right images, using the right sort of tones in them to make them warm and feel a little bit more grainy, so it has a bit of that humanness to it that we could add as much as possible. And similarly with the fonts as well. There was a bit of this—I know there’s been a lot of discussion around the fonts!

BRYONY Yes. We do need to get into more detail about the typeface selection, and not only the typeface selection, but how it’s been applied.

ADE Yeah. There's been a lot more conversation around the typeface selection than we thought there would be, actually. The typeface selection was a similar answer to why we chose the colors. We wanted to again, create that tension between the two, like the sans, which had this modern feeling to it very clear, very easy. And the serif that had a little bit of prestige, had a bit of that sophistication and trustworthiness to it. We kind of tried to marry those two so we could create the both in one, that's a simple answer to it <laugh>.

BRYONY That's a simple answer, but the application of those two is fairly unique, and that's where our readers on Brand New have been having a lot of discussions about how you're mixing them within sentences, and especially on headlines and things like that. So it'd be great to hear from all three of you, what was the thinking and the perception, what is the concept behind that mixing of the two typefaces on a sentence?

EMMANUEL You know, as soon as I saw it, I got it. For me, what it represented was okay, any other company that you go to, there's a unique to them, there's a specific form factor, right? You get on the website, very clinical and it's very straightforward, very sanitized. And that's what you get. So for us, and specifically in my mind, it was like, okay, we can speak at people or we can say, okay, Hey, let's have a conversation. As soon as you see it, it's like, okay, this is different. I'm supposed to be thinking financials here, but there's something else going on. It's a little bit more playful than I've ever seen before. It's a bit more subtle, but it's still sharp, and it's still there. So what's this about, it's about reaching that point of curiosity that we all have, when we see something that we've never seen before. I fell in love with it right away for that reason.

CARL Manny said it best. From the get go, I loved it as well. To me, I was like, okay, this is definitely gonna take us to the next level. Let's capitalize on it. Let's make it work.

EMMANUEL To follow up on it again, one of my favorite pianists—'cuz I'm a pianist myself—is Elton John. I heard him in a documentary saying how he

was speaking to Freddy Mercury about the Bohemian Rhapsody and how there was never any song like that on the radio ever before. It was super long, there were so many different parts, and so many dynamics, and he's saying, look, that's not gonna work. We actually had that reaction from a few people that we've shown it to. It's like, okay, man, that looks a little weird, but we're doing something that's never been done before. We're trying to trailblaze a new path. That's what this represented for me. It was like, okay, we're gonna do something new. We're gonna do something fun, still serious, but not too serious. Right? Not too clinical, not too sterile.

BRYONY Now in terms of the entire package of the branding and the whole process, I would love to hear from all of you... I'll kind of give you a choice of question and answer. If there was a moment, or a detail, or an aspect of all of this where you said, this is it, there's no turning back, we are going to be as successful as we want our customers to be. Or if you have a favorite aspect or element.

EMMANUEL We knew what we wanted to do. We knew the services that we wanted to offer and the general direction that we wanted to head in. But like many things in life, it's like, okay, you've gone to school for X amount of years and you're gonna be a physician, but it just doesn't feel real until the diploma hits your hand. Until you've gotten that certification like, oh my gosh, I've done the thing. For me, the first time was when the logo came out, I was like, okay, this is it. Then when Adeline started pouring in more and more materials, I'm like, oh my goodness, it's getting better. That's when it really hit. When I could look at the brand independently of myself, when I could pretend as if though I was a bystander, and if I saw this on a billboard, how would I feel about it?

Because like all things, you see a Starbucks logo, you feel a certain way about it, there's a certain connotation, there's a certain thing that happens in your mind when you see a brand, when you see a logo. And when I was able to look at it, and all the materials as though I was

some guy walking down the street and I saw this on a billboard, I was like, okay, this is it. This is the real deal.

ADE For me. The most pivotal moment would probably have been the strategy stage. That point of deciding that the business would be one that was focusing on the good that investments could do, because there were so many ways we could take it. And I think we did come in with ideas like, you know, we could be a little more future focused, lean towards tech, or we could be sleek and wanting to seem like this massive corporation, you know, 'cause the holding company, which is part of the ambition. And then there was this softer route, which was, we wanna focus on the good that we do. And that was the one that I think Carl—I think it was Carl and you and your wife actually on that call—and you both had this, I don't know if it was an emotional reaction, but a reaction to it. And they were just like, this feels right. I just think if we had gone with any of those other routes, it would've been just such a wildly different brand that's come out of it. And this one just felt so good, you know, to us as well. That led us down this really good path.

CARL For me, it was mainly how Adeline brought the story together. The way she took what was in my mind, what I was thinking, every idea, and put it together in the way that she did. And then she hit us with the logo, hit us with the website, back-to-back. First expression was... okay, we're gonna make it! Second was wow, we're gonna be unstoppable. Next was wow, we're gonna be around for a hundred plus years. <laugh> So for me it was the way she took all the stories, everything we wanted to do and put it all together, and just kept doing it justice. That was when I knew we were going to make it.

BRYONY I've heard what your reactions were, what your favorite parts are, what the process was like. But now I'm interested in hearing about any feedback that you have received, be it from other employees, from family, from customers. What is the chit chat in town in regards to the new brand?

CARL So far, I would say there hasn't been any negatives. Most people have liked it. The logos, the way the website is written, the typography, and stuff like that. The only thing that we had gotten was: some people were like, why these, you know, letters different, you know? But once you kind of explain it, uh, okay, it might take some getting used to. But other than that, no negatives at all, which you know, makes us feel good.

EMMANUEL For me, the feedback was sort of a confirmation of the old adage "if you build it, they will come." As soon as we started putting out little tidbits here and there, posts and images, people started giving us messages. I got a lot of messages, oh, Hey, my wife does X-Y-Z, maybe we should talk to her. We wanna work with you. We've had some people start to pour in with requests to wanting to work with us. When I approached Carl and said, Hey, we gotta do the rebrand. That's why. Because I knew that we're visual creatures as human beings. There are things that we see and we have a mode of responses to them. You can approach someone, and you can have the best whatever in the world, but sometimes if you just can't reach them emotionally through visuals, you might reach a dead end. It's more palatable, at least in my philosophy to just be able to say, Hey, look, this really cool shiny bird <laugh>. And people be like, you know what? That is a beautiful, shiny bird, what's it about? So far in terms of feedback, that's made all the difference.

BRYONY And Ade for you now on the other end, slightly detached by time seeing how the brand is cementing itself, what are you seeing? What are you most excited about? As all things fall into place?

CARL What is coming out in the world is stuff that we're still working on. We've been able to quite nicely see through a lot of the brand coming into the world. We're still working on stuff like physical stationary and things which is actually something that I really enjoy in the studio. Seeing those come to life is really cool. What is exciting for us is the future projects that is coming out of Blue Bird, seeing the continued work that Carl and Manny are putting into the company. And we still

stay in touch, they tell us about new projects that they're doing and things like that. And that's exciting to see that kind of forming under this umbrella of Blue Bird Mutual. That to me is just really cool to see as an extension and growth of this future Alphabet of the world. <laugh> You know, seeing that come to life, I think is just very exciting.

BRYONY And just a final question for Emmanuel and Carl, as you're looking ahead, now that you have all of these tools, and these assets, and most important this experience, how do you see this influencing what you do next?

EMMANUEL Personally, I see it as this. Once you've taken off the training wheels on a bike, you figured out how to ride, then you could say, okay, I'm gonna go a little bit further down the street, I'm gonna take a left, I'm gonna take a right. You can venture into new areas, into new grounds that we couldn't before, onto new terrain. One of the things that we really pride ourselves on, Carl and I, is that we're not one-trick-ponies. We have so many great ideas that we absolutely believe in. And now that the training wheels are off, we can head into any one of those directions that we see fit. And on our time as well, right? So that's something that's really special for us. And Ade's involvement really made that possible for us. It took those training wheels off, and now we're like, okay, we can rock and roll in any setting. We get it now. That's something for us that's been really invaluable.

CARL This whole project, I could say was hardest part of this whole project. So moving forward, I feel everything else is just gonna come as easy to be honest. Everything is out there. It's on the website. The wording is perfect. So now we just gotta make it work, and do our best work, so that we survive long enough. Or forever. Moving forward, one of the things that we are really excited about is one of the programs we will be launching, which is Blue Bird Nest, that is the epicenter of how we plan to give back to the communities, back to the people, to teach, and stuff like that. That's what we're preparing ourselves to do right now, we're just excited for that.

EMMANUEL One example is that project called Nest. What Nest does is specifically what we talked about earlier. It's a platform that's gonna allow people to allow us to hold their hand through their process of learning when to invest, what to invest in, what investing is, and how to properly financially set the tone for your future. Having been through this process, it was really like a matter of an email, I think it was. Oh, by the way, Adeline, here's a curve ball, we want to do Nest. Boomerang. Okay. Here's a logo. <Laugh> It kind of greased the skids for us having gone through this process. And one thing I'll say is when you have someone who is in line and can understand your methodologies, and the ways that you think, it becomes easier every single time that you're doing something new. That's why that experience with Ade was quick, but yet, still robust, right? Oh, we're doing this. Side note. Oh yeah, here you go. That's part of the beautiful experience. And quite frankly, it's like, okay, why work with anybody else? Like she gets us. We enjoy working with her, and it makes everything else that we can possibly think of going forward, any other projects, yeah. This is who we wanna work with.

ADE I'm very excited about any future projects that I have with these two.

BRYONY Sounds like a great partnership that has been slowly growing, and growing, and I can't wait to see where it might take you all, you know, in the next 10, 20 years as you evolve other projects, and different brands, and further your impact on the community, and on those individuals that usually do not have access to those opportunities, and those educational resources that can help people move ahead in ways that can seem intimidating and out of reach for so many. But yet you're bringing them down to an accessible and approachable level. I'm really, really interested in seeing how you all continue to evolve. So I want thank you all for being on The Follow-Up today, for sharing your time, your insight, and most of all, your energy and what you're putting out there into the world.

EMMANUEL Thanks for having us, and stay tuned.

ADE Thank you.

CARL Thank you for having us.

ARMIN It's always uplifting to hear when a client and a designer have a seamless working relationship that yields satisfying results for all involved. Carl and Manny's deep appreciation for Ade and her team's work was palpable and it was a good reminder that ultimately, a client's satisfaction is what we are here for. It certainly helped that the logo, sub-logos, and all of the identity were great as it helped overcome Manny's insight that, quote, "if you just can't reach people emotionally through visuals you might reach a dead end" and that's a position no one wants to be in. It was also interesting to hear Carl describe the rebranding process as difficult, not in a bad way, but in a way that really pushed him to find answers that mattered to his business and how, once the project was accomplished, it felt like Blue Bird Mutual could finally take flight.

Today, thanks for listening. Until next time, we'll be here, we hope you'll be there.