

Matt Bowles: My guest today is Danish Soomro. He is a Pakistani, Canadian tech entrepreneur, innovator and the creator of Digital Nomads around the World, the largest Facebook community for digital nomads in the world with over 150,000 members. Born and raised in Karachi, Pakistan, he got his MBA in the UK, then immigrated to Canada and now has been a full-time digital nomad for over six years. Danish is the founder of Devi, a productivity tool that monitors Facebook groups, [LinkedIn](#) posts and tweets for keywords and sentiment, saving entrepreneurs and marketers substantial time in finding business and brand related posts. He is also the founder of [visadb.io](#) which is the first online visa information database and visa expert's marketplace designed specifically to make global mobility easier for everyone on the planet. [VisaDB](#) is a completely free database of 800 temporary and permanent residence visas available in 150 plus countries including dozens of the latest digital nomad visas. It's all searchable by your citizenship and sortable by cost, time to citizenship, visa types and more. It also offers a marketplace to hire verified experts for immigration, tax and company formation in over 100 countries. [VisaDB](#) has already won innovation awards from the EU, Chile, Poland and MIT.

Danish, welcome to the show.

Danish Soomro: Yey Matt. Thank you very much. Thank you very much for the very kind introduction.

Matt Bowles: Brother, I am so excited to have you here. I have been part of your incredible Facebook community for quite some time now and following you very closely. So, I am super excited we could put this interview together today and the fact that you and I have agreed to make this a wine night. So, let's start off just by setting the scene and talking about where we are located today. Unfortunately, we are not in person. And let's talk about what we are drinking. I am actually based in Cali, Colombia today, and I actually bought a very special wine just for this interview. Danish. I went out and bought a bottle of Carmenère from Chile because I know that the country of Chile has a very special place in your heart and your journey. So I have just opened that today and I am cheering to you, my friend. But where are you today and what are you drinking?

Danish Soomro: Wow, man. To be honest, let me give you first a shout out. Cali is one of my favorite cities. I was there for Feria de Cali, which is like the biggest salsa festival happened in the world. I was just there a few months ago. I had an incredible time and everybody listening definitely should visit. I am drinking, as you mentioned, Chile is an incredible country, but also, they have an incredible wine. They have a certain, like, sort of atmosphere or weather or climate which makes the best wine in the world. So, I'm drinking Reservado actually from Chile. It's Cabernet Sauvignon and it's amazing and delicious. I'm really enjoying.

Matt Bowles: A Chilean wine night, my friend. And you actually happen to be in one of my favorite cities in the world tonight. Where are you right now?

Danish Soomro: Oh, yeah, I forgot to mention. I'm actually right now in the Rio de Janeiro, one of the best cities in the world. And I'm really having the time of my life here.

Matt Bowles: We have to give some love to Rio. And I want to hear about your experience. I will tell you this, Danish. The first time that I ever went to Brazil, I went to Rio and I went there for two months and I went to Carnival. I was there for one month during Carnival and then one month after Carnival. And when I came back, people said, you know, did you see other parts of Brazil? It's such a big country. There's so much to see. I said, no. I said, I stayed in Rio for all 60 days. I had 60 days, and I spent them all in Rio because I didn't want to miss one single day in that city. It was that epic. So, I tell everyone this, but I want

to hear your experiences for people that have never been to Rio, tell them what the city is like and what has your experience been like.

Danish Soomro: Rio is a giant magnet, is attracting people from all over the world. I think the party people, the best people. And so, it's not your fault. I hear you. I get you. And this is exactly the same thing happening with me right now, so quickly about Rio that if you love beach parties and nature, this is a very incredible city. Because normally, like, either you go for the city scene or you go for the nature. You go different destination for different activities. This is an incredible city which has everything for you, regardless of you come from party, nature and all kind of things. So that's why Rio, it's kind of, you know, one of the best cities. That's why you stayed there. I'm staying there. But having said that, Brazil has like a north. Totally different cities, different scene, different culture within Brazil. People actually travel from north to south because that's how different it is. So, I would encourage everybody listening to me check out Floripa. So, check that out. Porto Alegre is awesome as well. Falls Iguazu, you can't miss that is one of the top three waterfalls in the world. So, check that out as well. I've lived in Sao Paulo for a month. It's like a massive city, amazing underground scene, art scene. If that's how you jam, definitely got to check out. I'm saving North Met. I'm saving north Brazil for the next trip, but for now, yeah, that's my highlights for the Brazil.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, I totally agree. I've actually been to the Iguazu Falls, but I've been there from the Argentina side. So, the Iguazu Falls is on the border of Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. You can see them from all three countries. I've seen them from the Argentine side. Absolutely amazing. And I love that you've spent a month in Sao Paulo. I have subsequently gone back to Brazil after my Rio trip. And I've gone to Sao Paulo twice. And it is just a spectacular city. I think it's one of the most underrated cities in all of South America. I just loved my time there as well. And then I have been up a little bit further north to Pipa, to Jericho Cuara, to Puerto de Galinhas and some of those little beach towns in the north, which totally, totally different vibe. So, I am entirely enamored with the whole country of Brazil. But I want to ask you, how was your time at Carnival?

Danish Soomro: So, guys, like, you know, we all are hearing about Brazil Carnival. Okay, guys, been to Feria de Cali, been to a bunch of other festivals. Don't sell me the Carnival. And I am not going to be sold on this. It's just a normal festival. That was my arrogance. Before coming here, I was in Floripa. And generally, Florida scene is like a lot of people out there. So, I was going out there were so many blocos where people gather and party on the street. And my friend said that Danish, how's the car? I'm like, oh my God, this is amazing. Carnival Z good, but nothing that special. He's like, dude, Carnival got canceled. What are you celebrating? I'm like, oh, shit. So, these are normal street parties then? So even the street parties are amazing. But now finally I found out that they are having it again. I'm like, okay, let's stay. And then I stayed. And then I got to Rio where the major scene happened in the carnival. And oh my gosh, Matthew, this carnival is one of its kind. You cannot see anything like that. It's so unique, you have to visit. It should be in your bucket list. And it's one of its kind. I've never seen anything like that. I've never seen any kind of festival like that. And the energy and the fun. And the best part is, starts at 10 o'clock in the night. And it's a whole night show. So, in short, take loans, but must visit the carnival.

Matt Bowles: I actually went to Carnival in 2005. 15. And I have been talking about it ever since. That was my first time in Rio and it just blew my mind. I didn't even have words to describe it. Did you go to the main event in the samba dome where they have 90,000 people and they have the samba schools that are competing in that main event?

Danish Soomro: Yes. So, I booked the very special because there are different grandstands. I booked the best one. I went there, full energy, full excitement, with some friends and we had the best time of our lives. And this is why I am recommending; you know what I'm talking about. And how was it like in 2015? Let me ask you as well, because I think maybe I'm too excited. But let me ask you, was it amazing?

Matt Bowles: No, it blew my mind. I mean, to this day I've never seen anything like it anywhere in the world. It's hard to describe it, right? So, you have to imagine folks, 90,000 people every. So, we were talking about for Americans, like the size of an American football stadium, completely filled with people, except there stands on two sides of a street. And what happens is these samba schools, which are like 5000-person dance troupes that have literally been training for this for 364 days since the day the last one ended, right?

In the most elaborate costumes, multi-story floats, doing these incredible performances as they come down the street and they go one after another after another. And it starts at 10pm and it goes until 7 in the morning. And it goes every night. And we were there, we got there at 10 and we saw them and they were going and they were going. And finally, it was 5:30, the sun was coming up. There was like one more float to go. And we're like, okay, you know, maybe we should go home and go to sleep now because it's 5:30, the sun is coming up. We literally got up and started to walk down the steps to leave at 5:30 in the morning. There was not a single person that had left. And everyone was looking at us like, where are you going? Are you crazy? Why would you leave now? And we're like, okay, sorry. And we just sat back down for the rest of it. It was crazy.

Danish Soomro: Oh my God. I'm glad that we both now I finally you validated my feelings because I was thinking maybe I'm getting too excited. But to be honest, just incredible as you said. And nobody's leaving. Kids, families, the whole night show. People must visit.

Matt Bowles: It was amazing, man. Well, Danish, I want to go back now and give folks a little bit of your back and some context on you. Can you talk a little bit about your experience growing up in Pakistan, what that was like for you in Karachi? And then as you were growing up, how did your interest in world travel start to develop when you think back.

Danish Soomro: Yeah, Pakistan is a very interesting place. I grew up there, come from a very humble, in other words, a very poor family. It's like a very high rates of poverty there. And I was one of them, grew up in that family. I was an entrepreneur actually. You know, like in Pakistan, if you're growing up on the streets or you come from a very humble background, you always are looking for opportunities. You're always looking for the way out. You're always looking to find ways where you can change your life, you change your situation. So that's how my growing up in Pakistan was like. It's a very interesting place. Karachi is a massive city, incredible city. I mean, like, there's pros and cons of cities like Karachi and other cities that maybe it's challenging to go by your day, but it also gives you incredible skills and resourcefulness because you have very limited resources and you need to make it work.

So surprisingly, people in Pakistan, this is a rich guy's game, you know, traveling first to live comfortably. That's the people's first goal. To have three meals in Pakistan and to make a decent living. This is what they're thinking. So, traveling is not top of the list. Even people who leave Pakistan, they are looking or migrating abroad for economic opportunities than exploring the world. That's the motivation, right? And that's exactly what my motivation was as well. However, I got to taste little bit of travel and I went to Dubai. If people don't know Karachi in Dubai is like one hour flight. So that's the first destination people go when

they travel because easier, cheaper, can go there and everybody has friends. So, you're not like living in five-star hotel so you can go. So, I went there for the New Year's Eve and I'm like, okay, that's interesting. Different culture. New Year's Eve, everybody's partying.

I'm like, oh, okay. Other than work, we can party as well. I was a gamer in Pakistan, so we were just gaming and playing all the time with computers and didn't see the party side where people dancing and clubbing or getting drunk. I didn't see that. So, when I saw that, that's a little bit of taste. So that was I. To answer your question, that would be the first trigger of. Okay, okay, there's a traveling, huh? Looks interesting. And then after that I've been to Malaysia and Thailand from Pakistan and that further developed my taste in traveling. And I explored. I'm like, okay, okay, this is not like Dubai. I thought everything is going to be like Dubai now. But now I have three version of people, food, way of living, street signs, smells. I'm like, wow, if I go to every country, am I going to get different taste, smell, sounds, everything? I'm like, oh, wow. So that blew my mind. And that's the first interest and it further developed and now it's unstoppable. Matthew, you know that, right, man?

Matt Bowles: Yeah, absolutely. Well, I have to tell you, Danish, I was actually planning to go to Pakistan for at least a month back in 2020 and then Covid happened, so the trip got postponed. So, I have not yet been. I have been to India multiple times. I've been to Sri Lanka and Pakistan is just so high on my list. I've been to Punjab, but only to the Indian side. I haven't been over to Lahore and the Pakistani side, but I want to go much. It is perhaps my favorite food in the entire world, Pakistani food. And I just love all the Pakistani people that I know and the culture and everything. So, for folks that might be interested in visiting Pakistan, spending some time there, maybe nomading there for a little bit, can you share a little bit about it for folks? Because you have massive cities, you have incredible culture, but you also have some of the most beautiful nature and mountains and stuff. I mean, can you share a little bit about that? Just for folks that don't know much about Pakistan and what you might recommend if people wanted to go visit?

Danish Soomro: Yes, absolutely. So, guys, the second highest peak in the world is called K2 on the Pakistani side. Actually, you know what, seven of the highest peaks in the world, it's shared in the region. It's called Himalayan ranges, which is shared by India, Nepal and Pakistan and China. Right. So that's the reason you got to visit. That's where people go. So, it's called northern Pakistan. And if you love nature, if you love gigantic mountains, and if you're into hiking, that's your place. I would encourage everybody to go there. But northern areas, beautiful. There's a snow leopard which is only found in that region. And also, mountains are incredible. The one thing I want to share with you, that northern Pakistan has people like microcultures. They're totally different language, they're totally different dress, culture, people, different religion.

So, you're going to have the best time and you're going to explore many multi variation of cultures, shorter area. So that would be great. If you like cities, you want to check out the city people, meet Lahore as a good food culture. And you can go to the India and Pakistan border as well. There's a show they do that. And Karachi is the massive city. So, one thing about thing is that the culture is highly intact and not a lot of foreigners go to Pakistan. It's an incredible exchange for both Pakistanis and foreigners. When they meet, they love each other and it's an incredible experience. So yeah, northern Pakistan would be the first-choice city wise. Lahore and then Karachi.

Matt Bowles: That's awesome, man. Well, the other thing I want to ask you when you think back to growing up in Pakistan, is where did your entrepreneurial tendencies come from? Can you take us back and sort of take us on that entrepreneurial trajectory that basically led you to where you are now?

Danish Soomro: Yes, I am really grateful because you, of course, you are nothing without the contribution of others, without the favors of other, without the efforts or doing something for you. Without that, we are nothing. So, I'm going to really want to show my gratitude for everybody who was a part of my journey and still a part of the journey. Because the entrepreneurial journey is not done, right? It's not. Oh, we are done. We created one project and now we can retire now it's always going on. So still today I'm building projects which we can talk about later, but in Pakistan, it's an environment where you have to win your living or your survival. If you're growing up there, you learn one incredible life skill that be resourceful. Generally, there is a limited resources and a lot of takers. So, you have to be the best or you have to be unique or you have to put a lot of effort to get that resource. So that is generally the nature.

So, when you're growing up in that environment, I mean, of course not everybody become an entrepreneur, but it's like a thing which people have seen this side, how to be resourceful, how to be starter or take initiatives. Right, because you want to win. So, this was the thing. My first entrepreneurial thing, which I remember is that I was in maybe high school and in my apartment building there were some foreign students. Back in the day, Pakistani medical education was very high quality. So, people from Yemen, people from Arab countries go to study in Pakistan, which may be surprising for some people, but very high-quality medical education and cheap actually. So, people used to come. So, I met some Arab people and they were looking for some type of clothes they export. So, I was hanging out with them, practicing English. So that's the startup thing that I noticed. There are some foreigners. I used to hang out with them just to improve my English. Because in Pakistan or in general, in India and Pakistan, you know that learning multiple languages is one way of changing your life or creating opportunities.

So, I was practicing and they showed me this piece of coal and I'm like, hey, what are you guys doing? They're like, hey, we couldn't find this. And I'm like, okay, if I find you guys, can we make some deal or something? They're like, yeah, we found it. Let's say 80 rupees. If you can find cheaper, we can share that difference. 50, 50. I'm like, okay, give me the sample. They gave me the sample. You know, growing up in the street, so you know the areas, right? And I started like, it's like favelas. I went to all favelas and I found that same type of clothes and much cheaper because I'm local, right? I'm not gringo. They gave me the local prices and it was way cheaper, right? And then I'm like came to them. I told them, hey, this is the difference, but don't be greedy. I'm not going to give you that whole difference. We have to share, as you said. They were like, yeah man, we're getting it cheaper than 80.

So that was my first. I remember sort of dealing with. And we did. I got them call, but they went Away they went back to their countries and they called me, hey Dallas, can you send us more? I'm like, dude, I don't even have ID card how I'm going to export from Pakistan to Yemen. And they're like, you know, we know you can do it. So, I use my friends, like friends, friends license and you know, some resources and made my first shipment, first export from Pakistan to Yemen. That was a piece of cloth, handmade embroidery. So that was my first entrepreneurial journey. I remember incredible experience.

Matt Bowles: That's amazing, man. Well, let's go from there. How did your career trajectory evolve? Because I know you eventually went over to the UK, you did your MBA and then you have been doing all kinds of incredible stuff since then.

Danish Soomro: Yes. So, I was a gamer in Pakistan. I was a professional gamer actually. In Pakistan they call you lazy, you're just playing games, you're just enjoying, you're just having fun. But I totally disagree because that actually really created opportunities for me. How so? I was a gamer and I noticed that at that time one of my team members was working for a call center. There was a call center culture in Pakistan.

Now still there is in India and Pakistan and Sri Lanka. You know, all the call centers are offshore call center. They go in India, Pakistan, there, right? So, there's a huge culture. Fifteen years ago, I'm talking about massive offshoring happening and a lot of people working in call center. So, there was a guy, my friend in my gaming team, he used to play and he always like at 11 o'clock in the night, run away. I'm like, dude, where are you going? Who goes like 11 like where are you going? We are playing game, let's have all nightery. They're like, no, dude, I have to go to work. I'm like, you work a whole night. He's like, yeah, I work for the U.S. company.

So that was why. I'm like, okay, that's interesting. I'm like, what do you do? He's like, I make calls. I'm like, okay, you make calls abroad? He's like, yeah. I'm like, okay, that's cool. You get paid. Like I get paid a lot. I'm like, okay, wow, that's interesting. So, I play, I always sit in game zone and everybody leaves at night. And I'm like, wow, all these computers idle. These are waste of resources and the whole country is sleeping and my friend is making money. What if we convert these game zones to call centers? Because these are the same resources you need for a call center. You need a computer, computer. You need a headset, only the Internet connection is missing. You add Internet connection and you create a call center workstation, right? All these gaming zones. So that was my idea first.

And I'm like, okay, so I converted, I talked to the gaming zone owners and it's like, hey, in the night you close your shop, your resources are wasted. Give it to me and I will generate money from these resources. Actually, that's how I started my first call center, you can say. And then I talked to five other gaming zone gaming arenas owners, and I also converted them. And all of a sudden, in one year, I had 70 people working all in the night. And I was just the age of 22, 23 actually. And in three years, entrepreneurship, business. That's why I also am a big supporter that everybody should start something because it can change lives. It changed my life. So, I had this capital and I decided to reinvest this capital on me by getting higher education to create further opportunities. So that's how I went to do my master's MBA from University of Wales Institute, Cardiff. It's called UVic. And that's when I moved into the UK end of 2008.

Matt Bowles: So, I also want to talk to you about the country of Chile, which I know has a really important place in your heart and a really significant place in your overall business and travel and life journey. So, can you talk about what initially brought you to Chile and then what happened in Chile?

Danish Soomro: Yeah. So, guys, I was working in Toronto in tech company. Fast forward 2015. I am in Canada, migrated to Canada from the UK and now I am a naturalized Canadian citizen. I'm working in Canada; I'm working in Toronto for a tech company and then remotely actually from Toronto. You know that bug we talked about earlier, which was there was not coming out, but it finally came out and hell with everything. And I quit my job and I went on backpacking tour in South America and I, you know what, I came to Rio. That was my first country. That's why Rio is also very important for me. And I came here six years ago and that's where I started literally backpacking. Because in Pakistan, backpacking is literally a luxury thing. Maybe in west, backpacking is like a student travel and want to see the world on the budget, but in Pakistan or in Asia, it's considered an experience.

So, I really wanted to experience the backpacking like everybody do, like invest people do. And that's what my first backpacking trip literally with the backpack. And I hit Chile after Rio, Uruguay in Argentina, I went to Chile and at that time I was taking small interviews from my cell phone. I wanted to make a cell phone documentary, something like that. Just, just a little bit of creative project while I'm backpacking, right? So, I've found out Startup Chile, which is, if your listeners don't know, is one of the most prestigious startup accelerators for tech startups, actually. And talk to me if you need help because they give you funding and

they give you the office, they give you the network, they give you everything, to be honest. They give you all the resources to be successful. You just need to have a good team and an idea. So, I went there and I talked to some entrepreneurs. They're interviewing them and I'm like, wow, I love this place and I really want to come back here.

And later I thought, okay, let's create a company. I went back to Canada, I'm like, okay, let's think about ideas. I'm not going back to job after backpacking. I was never made for job, right? And I was just doing it. And then I'm like, okay, let's get back to creator mode. What shall I solve? What shall I solve? So, while doing this backpacking, I have already founded Community with Juan from Spain. We both have founded this group. He was in Thailand; I was in South America. But we were connected. We founded this Community Facebook group. To be honest, you were not even thinking. It's like few hundred people, that's it back in the day, right? And few thousand people, like 3,000 or something like that, not so many people were doing digital nomadism that time. I'm like, okay, let's solve something. Let's solve any problem. And then I collected some surveys and I found out that visa and immigration is the number one issue for digital nomads or remote workers. And that trigger something because I am an immigrant myself and I've been applying.

So, listener, if your listeners don't know, I have the best password in the world and the worst password in the world, I traveled on both. So that triggers. I'm like, oh yeah, this is emotional for me. Visa and immigration, I need to solve this problem. And how I'm going to solve, I don't know yet. But let's start with creating a free information for user and they can find information they don't need to browse the bad government website. So that's [VisaDB](#), called *Visa Database*, inspired from IMDb Internet movie database. So, I start manually going to the government website and creating a small database which kind of went viral on Reddit and HuffPost. Did a cover and then five other news covered that prototype and it got 100,000 visitors in 24 hours. That made me like, wow. I'm like okay, this project has something. Let's apply in a Start-Up Chile. I've seen that Start-Up Chile program. It's highly competitive. Thousands of people apply, they only accept, acceptance rate is 0.97 or something like that. Like out of 100 they accept 1 or something. I forgot back in the day it was very tough.

So, I applied it and I got in Startup Chile. So that time I was in Poland and I went to Chile. So again guys, if you are entrepreneur, tech entrepreneur, especially if you are a woman founder, they have a special program. It's really, really helped the projects like [VisaDB](#) because these are innovation project, they are solving something. May not necessarily be making money, but solving incredible challenges or problem. So, we don't get funding to make this project happen. So, Start-Up Chile like programs really help you to actually prove your concept or finish your project for the world. So that's how I got into Chitty and that's why Chile is really important because they believe in the project and they put down the funding.

Matt Bowles: That is so amazing. Well, let's talk a little bit about what [visadb.io](#) actually offers. I have spent some time on the website and it is absolutely incredible. Can you talk about what the actual value proposition is? I mean first of all it's free for people to use, which is amazing. But when people go to the site, what does it offer? Talk about some of the visualizations that you have there, the searches people can do. What can people get from the site when they go and visit it?

Danish Soomro: Yeah, to be honest, this has been done out of passion, out of my emotion towards global mobility towards immigrants, towards children of immigrants, towards the benefits immigration brings towards the open mindness. So, it's literally I pour my heart and soul into this project. That's why I wanted to keep this information free. Thanks to government of Chile, European Union, Government of Poland

because we have won innovation grants with these projects. So, the idea was if you are a person in country a and if you want to go or travel to see the world, either you can go on a tourist visa. But half of the world require tourist visas. Even tourist visas, they have a lengthy process. If you want to go for work, that's a different story. If you want to go for volunteer or event like there are different type of purposes people go. But if you want to see what are my options, what are my possibilities, right. There is no way you can do that today.

The only way for you is to visit 200 government Foreign Ministry websites to find what visas are there for you for your citizenship. That's the only way 200 governments you need to visit the website. So that is the information part. [VisaDB](#) is solving what it does. It collected all the information for every citizen at one place. Now you can go there, you can say, hey, I'm Chilean, I'm Polish, I'm German, where can I go in the world? And it shows you all the visa options available for you, regardless of the purpose, immigration, investment, residency, student, volunteer, religious activity, any kind of thing. So that is the one part of the [VisaDB](#) which is very close to my heart. Second thing is just not only the visa information, but it shows you cost of living between your country, shows you the number of expats live there from your country or from other countries. So, you can see what communities of immigrants are there. And it also shows you the type of health care you can get, salaries and everything an economic migrant is looking for before he migrates. He's looking for opportunities.

Every data is there free of cost. Maybe it asks you to sign up after a certain time, but it still is free. Everything is free for you, for everyone in the world. For 7 billion people, it's made with love. So, check this out. The second part of [VisaDB](#) is actually we have collected a lot of data where people are saying, hey guys, okay, I got the information, but I want to apply the visa. Can you connect me with someone? So, we were getting this a lot and finally we thought, okay, let's do that. So now we are a marketplace connecting people with our digital nomads, with immigration and tax experts. We just added the tax and company because a lot of people were looking for that information. So now you have a free information and free expert database. If you'd like to hire them, hire them. If you want to do DIY, be my guest. Everything is free. So that is the [VisaDB](#) in a nutshell.

Matt Bowles: That's awesome. Well, one of the things I know about the site is that you actually vet these experts. You don't just let anyone come onto the site and offer their services. Can you talk a little bit about the vetting process and how you do that?

Danish Soomro: So, immigration has a good or a bad side? Bad side is a lot of fraud here, especially in developing world. There's a lot of fraud around immigration. And so that's why you want to make sure the project funded by EU and different governments, which already has a credibility, it keeps that credibility and don't makes go into the, you know, the fraud spectrum. So that's why it was really important to anyone you are approving or anywhere you are making a deal or as using them as a supplier. Has to be credible, has to be registered business and somewhat very good customer service, right. This is we are still struggling. So, I personally talk to everyone you see on the platform. Personally, I have read them, I have a video meeting with each one of them. We have about 256 services from 70 different providers. So, I have talked to everyone and then of course when you talk to them, they will talk to you about your specific case. Now we are adding more experts around company and taxes because that's the new need for digital.

Matt Bowles: Danish, I want to ask you for some business tips based on your years of experiences in the entrepreneurial space. The first tip that I want to ask you for is to talk a little bit about growth hacking and productivity automation and any tips that you have for entrepreneurs in those areas.

Danish Soomro: What my productivity hack would be to use? Tooling to use tools. If you use the tool first, you don't need to review the work because tool is sort of like a piece of code, a piece of software which exactly does what you want it to do. So, it can never do anything else. Now what tooling of course it depends on what type of projects you are in and how is your team size. Let me name some as people are listening, I'm using Click Up a lot even for personal because it can show you give you a lot of pictures. I use Pomodoro technique and I also use a framework called HBA (High Value Activities). So, it's on 80 or 20 division. Any activity I would like to engage my attention or four hours which I have creative force which I have like a deep work.

In those four hours of deep work, I only focus on HVAs means high value activities which is bringing either some sort of network or revenue. To be honest, I mean everything was slow for Visa because Covid nobody was moving. It was very challenging for us but we wanted to just stay afloat. But now we are back, the world is opening, people will be mobile. So, I just want to focus on this sales and marketing HBAs and just focus on putting my time in high value activities. So, my productivity tip please divide first high value activities and always link high value activities with revenue. For us cash flow is very important. I have got funded from different organizations but that funding finishes. We need to have a revenue. We need to have A sustainable cash flow coming in. So, for that always HVA should be linked to money or potential revenue or clients.

Matt Bowles: I also want to ask you for your tips on managing fully distributed teams, including how to build company culture in a fully remote company.

Danish Soomro: Guys, let me tell you, this is the most challenging thing remote building remote companies. I am an advocate; I am an activist about 100% remote companies. It doesn't mean it doesn't have challenges. It's like all rosy picture, you guys are having fun and dancing. No, this is not happening. You need to vet people. There is a certain type of people who could only work remotely. Let me tell you this, remote working remotely is not for everyone. That's my first tip. And if you find those people who could work remotely, you should build remote distributed team. You should build remote companies. Why? Because you know when everybody is remote, if everybody is digital nomad, let's say they are having a best time outside their work hours, right? Like me, I went out for a beach volley just after work before this interview, right? So, I'm all my all energies are back, I'm in a good mood, I'm having a wine and tomorrow when I show up Thursday morning, I would not be jaded, I would be fully excited to work.

So just imagine all your team members around the world having this best time of their lives. So, when they show up for the work, of course they're going to do the best work. So distributed remote work is the way. The only challenge is to find the right people and create the right processes so you do not harm your productivity. So, you need to find people who can responsible for their own thing. If you do that, then building a remote company will give you more value. To be honest, 200% more value than in office. Now how to manage it, right? This is a lot of challenge. I managed team of 10, 12 all in five continents. Oh my gosh, that was really crazy. I don't know when to organize team meeting because it's not a good time with some people always, right? And we try to reduce the meeting for Asian people because in America it's like 4:00AM I don't want people to do that. But we divide into two meetings.

We have one meeting and then we have two meeting. Or if when somebody's showing up very early, we give them a day off or something as a reward because they're waking up in the early morning. So yes, there are times when challenges but the bigger challenge is not the time zone, is not the tools, but is the relationship with the people. It's true in person is totally different than remote. But the problem is remote

brings so much value that you would like to invest in building relationship. So, meet them at least one or two times a year. That's why all the companies are doing it. But it is extremely challenging first to find people who could effectively work remotely. Second to organize these meeting in different time zones. But it's worth it.

Matt Bowles: Alright now I also have to ask you about your Facebook group, Nomads around the World. I have been a member of it for quite some time and you have grown this Facebook group to 150,000 thousand members. The largest digital nomad Facebook group in the world. Can you talk about the origins of that? How it started, what people can expect from the group, what it offers, what it is and how did you grow it to 150,000 people?

Danish Soomro: Wow. To be honest, this is my favorite thing to do. I'm a volunteer, just to let you know guys and really want to give a shout out to all the volunteers who contributed towards the community. Giving back to community. I'm also a volunteer. I've been volunteering for six years now and it requires significant time. But of course, when you're passionate about building communities, when you love to hang out, it's like your digital hangout place. And when you love doing this kind of work, you don't see it as work. So how it grew, it's a lot of efforts from a lot of people, including me. Of course, most of the time I invested, but other people also contributed. So that's number one, good energy and a lot of people. Number two is that actually strategy. I realized that things do not just grow themselves.

You really need to put attention some little bit of love, but some tactic and strategy as well. What was my strategy? Because let's say its Facebook people are not here for business. I mean everybody's talking about business work. We all are doing it. Everybody's pitching them how to become a remote company. I went for entertainment. I'm like, okay guys, this is a social network. People wants to hang out as well. There's too much pushing and pitching about work, about business or selling something less focus on fun and entertainment. So that was my sort of, I would say secret recipe to have a lot of fun in the community or in this Facebook group. You will see me as well myself. I'm really enjoying in comments. It's a text sort of text entertainment, but I'm really enjoying commenting, having fun. So that is the secret recipe to grow a lot of hours efforts and strategy, which was to have a lot of fun.

Matt Bowles: I love that, man. That's amazing. Well, I want to ask for some of your reflections, Danish, on all of your nomading and your travel, especially with regard to the journey that you've shared so far and all the different places that you've lived and you've spent time. At this point, can you reflect a little bit on this concept of being a global citizen and micro identities and how all of that has come together for you at this point?

Danish Soomro: Yes. So, guys like, you know, I grew up in Pakistan. The second identity I start relating to was Canada. And then when you start traveling, all of the digital nomads who are listening to it, they would relate. Because when you are living in a freaking neighborhood in a small town in Mexico and you are going to buy groceries every day, there is no way you don't feel connected with those people. There's no way. Right. So, when you do that, you start feeling a part of that town, a part of that city or that experience, and you start caring about it. So, when you become a part of something, the second consequence is that you start caring about it. And that's the definition of id, that you feel the part of something and you care about something. So, I noticed that, okay, this is getting ridiculous because everywhere I go, I'm becoming a part of it. I'm becoming identified to that place. I care about that place, I love those people, that culture, and just me being a part of that experience. So that is the concept. Microsoft identities, I thought.

So, I start collecting micro identities without me knowing, because I love them, I care about them. And I think that's the definition of global citizen. When you are not strongly identified with one piece of land, rather with the whole Pachamama or the whole Earth. This is your home; everybody is your people. Everybody. It's like a part of you. The whole world is yours. Right. This is an incredible enlightenment; I would say so which digital nomad are lucky bastards too? Have to be honest, that kind of experience, because you cannot expect that unless people have lived in different places, they would never understand you, what you're talking about. But that's how I collected micro identities and that's how I became a global citizen. And I think personally, whoever is listening to me is. That is extremely important right now that we all become global citizens. Why? Because when you identify something, you protect it.

So, if we all become global citizens, we will protect the Earth, we will fight for the causes of human rights or climate change or anything which is global. It's not going to be like, oh, it's not Pakistan, you're Canadian, so I give a shit. Because I'm identified with these two countries only. So, anything happens in the world, I don't care. But when you become global citizen, when you identify it as a global identity, then if any violation of human rights happening, you will stand up or you will make a noise or you will talk about it. So yeah, that is my experience and I want to stay like this. I think that's my mission that more people should experience traveling, moving abroad so they all become global citizens and we all together can address the global challenges.

Matt Bowles: I love that, man. I think that is actually an amazing point and the main portion of this interview and move into the final part at this point. Danish, are you ready to move in to *The Lightning Round*?

Danish Soomro: Yes. Let's do this.

Matt Bowles: Let's do it. Alright. What is one book that has significantly impacted you over the years you'd most recommend people should read?

Danish Soomro: Yeah, Lean Startup, I would say it's come straight to my mind, which was incredible and sort of gave me a lot of ideas.

Matt Bowles: All right, what is one travel hack that you use you can recommend to.

Danish Soomro: People when people are boarding? I on purpose go right at the end because everybody has sat down, any empty seat left, nobody's going to take it. And then I find the three seats together which are empty and I go there and enjoy the whole roll.

Matt Bowles: I love that, man. All right, if you could go back in time, knowing everything that you know now and give one piece of advice to your 18-year-old self, what would you say to 18-year-old Danish?

Danish Soomro: I think give more, take less. That would be my advice. Always focus on giving more than you taking.

Matt Bowles: Awesome. If you could have dinner with any one person who's currently alive today that you've never met, who would you choose?

Danish Soomro: I think I would say Tim Ferriss because his experiments actually were incredible and I could not do them on my own. So, he was doing it and I was learning from his experiences. So yeah, it'll be nice to thank him.

Matt Bowles: Awesome. All right, of all the countries and all the places within those countries that you have been to at this point, what are your top three favorite travel destinations you would most recommend people check out?

Danish Soomro: So, Poland. Go there, guys. Especially these months in summer. It will blow your mind. The quality of life and the cost effectiveness. It will blow your mind. Chile, of course. They are incredible people. Good wine. Elki Valley has the best. If you want to see the stars, there's the best place to see there and they are incredibly trusting in innovation and new projects. So definitely Chile. So, Chile, Poland. And I would be biased. Allow me for I would encourage everybody to visit Pakistan and Canada. If you haven't been Canada is change me and teach me the concept of how to be actually nice. So definitely visit Canada. Pakistan. So, kind of four, but yeah, please allow me.

Matt Bowles: All right, I will give you four. And we've already talked about Pakistan, but I want to give you an opportunity to. To say a little bit about Chile because I have to say I absolutely love Chile. I spent a month in Santiago and it was just magical. I mean, the poetry of Pablo Neruda is in the air and you're drinking Carmenera wines. And I went out to Valparaiso, which is now just one of my favorite places in the world. It's some of the best street art on the planet of Arthas City because basically this port city, but they've turned it into this open-air museum with street art everywhere and they've got the Pablo Neruda house up on the hill. It was really just a magical time and experience for me. But I'd love for you to share a little bit about. For you. What does Chile mean to you and what should people do when they go there?

Danish Soomro: I'm literally nomad. I think we need to hang out because you are extremely experienced nomad because you know exactly where to go. You mentioned the right things. The open-air art galleys were funny, but it's actually true. If you are going to Chile, guys, let me tell you, Chile is like actually a Chile. It's like a very narrow country, but it's very long. And at the north is Atacama. Deserts must check it out. And on the south, of course, we all know it's Antarctica. And in the middle, you meet Santiago and Valparaiso, which Matt just said, burning pot of culture, art. And I wouldn't say incredibly food, but wine, if you love wine, culture, art, that is your place. Go north for deserts, go south for Antarctica. So that is my advice for everyone.

Matt Bowles: Amazing. All right, last question, Danish. What are your top three bucket list destinations? These are places you've never been. The highest on your list you'd most love to see.

Danish Soomro: Number one would be Bali. So, Japan, let's say would be the second, Korea would be the third. But let's combine Japan and Korea. But the other countries I want to visit is the seven towns' countries. So, Pakistan is one of them, of course, but there is another, Kyrgyzstan. All those countries, it's called Seven Towns, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and five other countries which end up with 'thans'. So, Kyrgyzstan is one of the countries, which I'm hearing a lot, so that will be my third option.

Matt Bowles: Those are really great picks, man. I definitely want to do Central Asia as well. I have done virtually none of it. And so, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. And that whole region is just supposed to be incredible. And you can go. I've interviewed people on the podcast that have done the Silk Road, and they've gone all the way from Western China all the way through those countries in Central Asia and all the way out to the Caspian Sea. And it is just supposed to be an incredible travel experience. So, it's super, super high on my list as well. I love that. All right, Danish, I want you to let folks know how they can find you, contact you, follow you on social media. Definitely let folks

know how they can check out visadb.io, and all the other stuff that you're up to. How do you want people to come into your world?

Danish Soomro: So first, Matt, I really want to show my gratitude for you to invite me to consider me as one of the guests. I'm really, really grateful before I give people how to contact me. So, thank you. Matt, I think I love your energy. I'm talking to you first time, but I'm really feel connected with you. And to be honest, you seem like a very experienced nomad and you've been everywhere. I think it would be fun to hang out with you so that I will be doing it.

Matt Bowles: Let's do it, man. Let's make it happen, bro. Maybe later this year or something like that. I would love to cross paths, man. That would be fun.

Danish Soomro: Oh, definitely. I would love to hang out. It would be so much fun to have an actual wine and share travel stories. So, guys, find me digital nomads around the world. If you search on the Facebook, you'll find that group. Join that group and there you will see me. I'm always posting. If you join this amazing community, why there's a lot of massive value. You're going to learn a lot from the experienced nomads who are there. That's number one value you can get. You can always connect with me there, right? I'm there in the community and Danish wants to know. This is sort of like a fun hashtag I create. I ask very silly questions. I want to be stupid and silly so you can meet me there. But if you want to connect for professionally [LinkedIn](#), amazing [Instagram](#), amazing Facebook, I use a lot so you can connect there two things if you are looking for finding visas. Please share this project. As I said it's free. I mean of course if you hire experts you have to pay them but generally everything else is free. So, share with the people, connect me from there. The other startup I just founded is called Devi which is kind of monitoring digital word of mouth. I realized that managing the community that a lot of brands are being bashed in Facebook groups or a lot of leads can be generated from the Facebook groups. So that's why I created this tool after managing the community for six years. So, Devi is called devi.com Try it. It's free trial. Use it or connect with me there as well. Facebook would be the best channel. Second best would be [LinkedIn](#). Third would be [Instagram](#).

Matt Bowles: Awesome. We are going to link all of that up in one place in [the show notes](#). So just go to themaverickshow.com and there we're going to have the links to the digital nomads around the world Facebook group where you can join for free. We're going to have the link to the visadb.io site where you can check out all the visas for free including all of the digital nomads visas around the world. Look for your country of citizenship and where you can go and get nomad visas as well as any other type of visa totally for free. You can use that site. We're going to link that up as well as all of the other things we've talked about in this episode, the book recommendations. Everything else will be in one place. Just go to themaverickshow.com go to [the show notes](#) for this episode. Danish brother, this was amazing man. Thank you so much for coming on the show and let's definitely hang out at some point later this year.

Danish Soomro: Oh man, that would be so much fun. Let's party. We are nomadic people and boundaries doesn't matter to us, right? We can meet in Bali or we can meet in Santiago de Chile. So definitely let's hang out and I'm really interested to know your journey because you nailed it. Like you know a lot. You know every information for each city and you're in Cali. People who go to Cali, they are my favorite.

Matt Bowles: I love that brother. Well, as I told you too, I'm planning a trip to Pakistan, man. So maybe we could cross paths there and meet up in the homeland and hang out in Pakistan. So, lots of different options, brother, but we'll coordinate schedules and definitely prioritize meeting up somewhere in the world. But thank you so much for coming on the show and sharing your journey brother. I appreciate it.

Danish Soomro: I am really grateful and everybody I just want to show my gratitude to everybody is listening. I am a yogi as well so thank you very much guys. Please connect with me. I am on a principle of giving more taking less. So, if you need any help, any pointer, connect with me. But the biggest star of the night met. I really want to show my gratitude. Really appreciate it for connecting with me, inviting me and sharing this amazing positive energy. We need more people like you sharing the love in the world.

Matt Bowles: I appreciate you so much brother and thank you everybody for tuning in. Good night.