



# What is Polidea's product? - Birthday <sup>'''</sup> speech



Jakub Lipinski | [Follow](#)  
Investor, Founder & Chairman ...

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*Polidea 10th Birthday speech by Jakub Lipinski, Founder*

Dear Guests,

I believe there are at least a couple of people here who have no idea who that guy is, standing on the stage right now. So let me start by introducing myself. My name is Kuba. I co-founded Polidea ten years ago and served as its CEO for seven years, until Greg took over.

I will not tell you that we had a plan to celebrate the company's tenth birthday back in its early days. Nothing could be further from the truth. In those early years, our main goal was to survive for another month, find new clients, learn new platforms, hire more smart people, and repeat.

But here we are today, celebrating our tenth birthday. How cool is that?

We may ask: does Polidea today have anything in common with the company in its early days?

When I think about it, I realize that Polidea today differs greatly from Polidea then. Let me give you a few examples.

I realize that Polidea today differs greatly from Polidea then

We always wanted to understand our clients' needs and help them to solve their challenges.

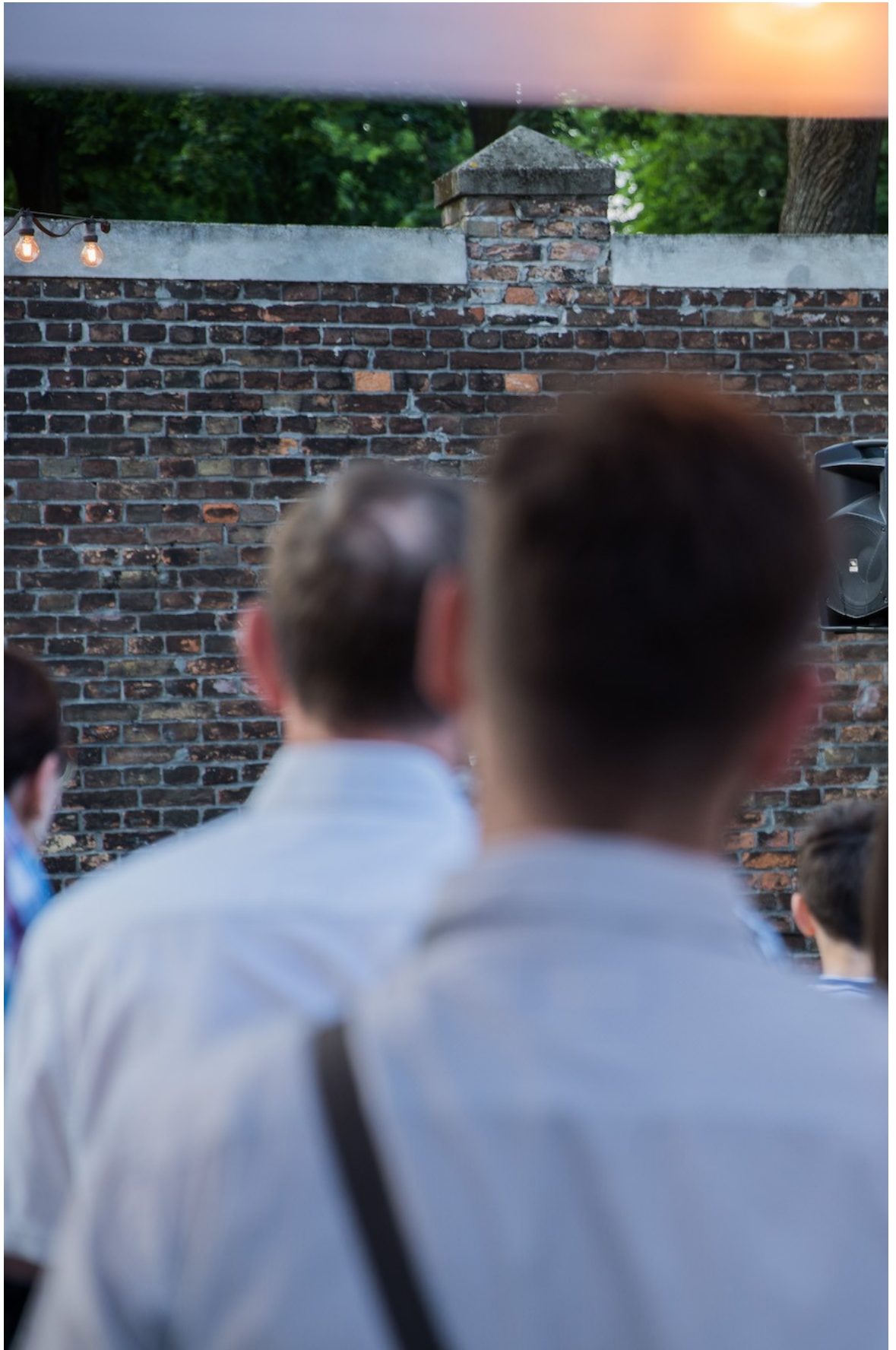
When we realized that design was becoming important, we quickly built a design team. We didn't quite figure out how to do it in the very beginning. We thought design didn't differ much from engineering, and as you know, engineering was always in our DNA. You know what we used to call our designers? Well, they were UI Engineers or UX Engineers. People say that when the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. Since Jarek and I were both engineers, we thought that engineering was everything. Fortunately, we learnt over time what design really is, and how to run it. It changed Polidea tremendously.

The same way that we are now building capabilities in the backend, embedded so as to further extend what we can offer.



This may sound crazy, but during the first years of Polidea we had no Project Managers. This doesn't mean there was no need to manage our projects. Of course there was. But we decided it didn't require any special skills and could be successfully carried out by – guess who? – software engineers. For each project we appointed a software engineer to act partly as PM. It sometimes worked, on small projects. It failed miserably in bigger ones. We changed our mind and hired full-time project managers. It was one of our most important decisions, and again it changed the whole company. We had a strong conviction during the first years of Polidea that hiring people was so important, it could only be done by – guess who? Yes, engineers again. We even thought

everything from mistakes? Why didn't we use professional help from the very beginning? It's a similar story for many other roles in our company: QA Engineers, Communication Specialists, Office Managers, Growth Team, and so on.



We always wanted Polidea to be a great place to work. Our offices were always in convenient locations, and we wanted our work environment to be friendly and productive. We were proud that we all sat together under the same roof, and believed in-person

...of maintaining quality and consistency, have anything to do with the company in its early days? While there may be a lot of differences in the details, there are foundations that are unchanged. We introduced design and other new capabilities to our offerings because we have always listened to our clients and always wanted to respond to their needs. We introduced Project Managers because we always wanted our projects to be run professionally. We changed our recruiting process to enable us to attract even more talented people. We still want to create the best work environment, and that may mean introducing remote working. Our foundations stay the same, while the details evolve and change as we learn.

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One little-known fact is that 10 years ago, I didn't want to start a software house. I wanted to start a product company. Unfortunately, or fortunately, right after I decided to start my own company, the financial crisis of 2008 started and it was impossible to raise money to develop innovative ideas. I started Polidea and you know the rest of the story.

For many years I would ask myself, "What is Polidea's product? What do we really build?"

The projects we build for our clients are not our products. They are our clients' products.

What is our product? I didn't find a satisfactory answer to this question, all the time I was CEO. It came to me only recently, during a visit to our office. I had some free time so I just

sat down and watched the office life. There was a team doing a stand-up by the whiteboard. Someone came into the office and greeted co-workers. A group of people

debated some technical issue while making coffee. And then I realized it. This is exactly

what Polidea is. The people and their expertise, our work environment, the challenges we

tackle, the things we learn and the social life we lead. The product of Polidea is Polidea

itself. And as we learn and grow we need to constantly reinvent ourselves to continue being

Polidea.

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Published By



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