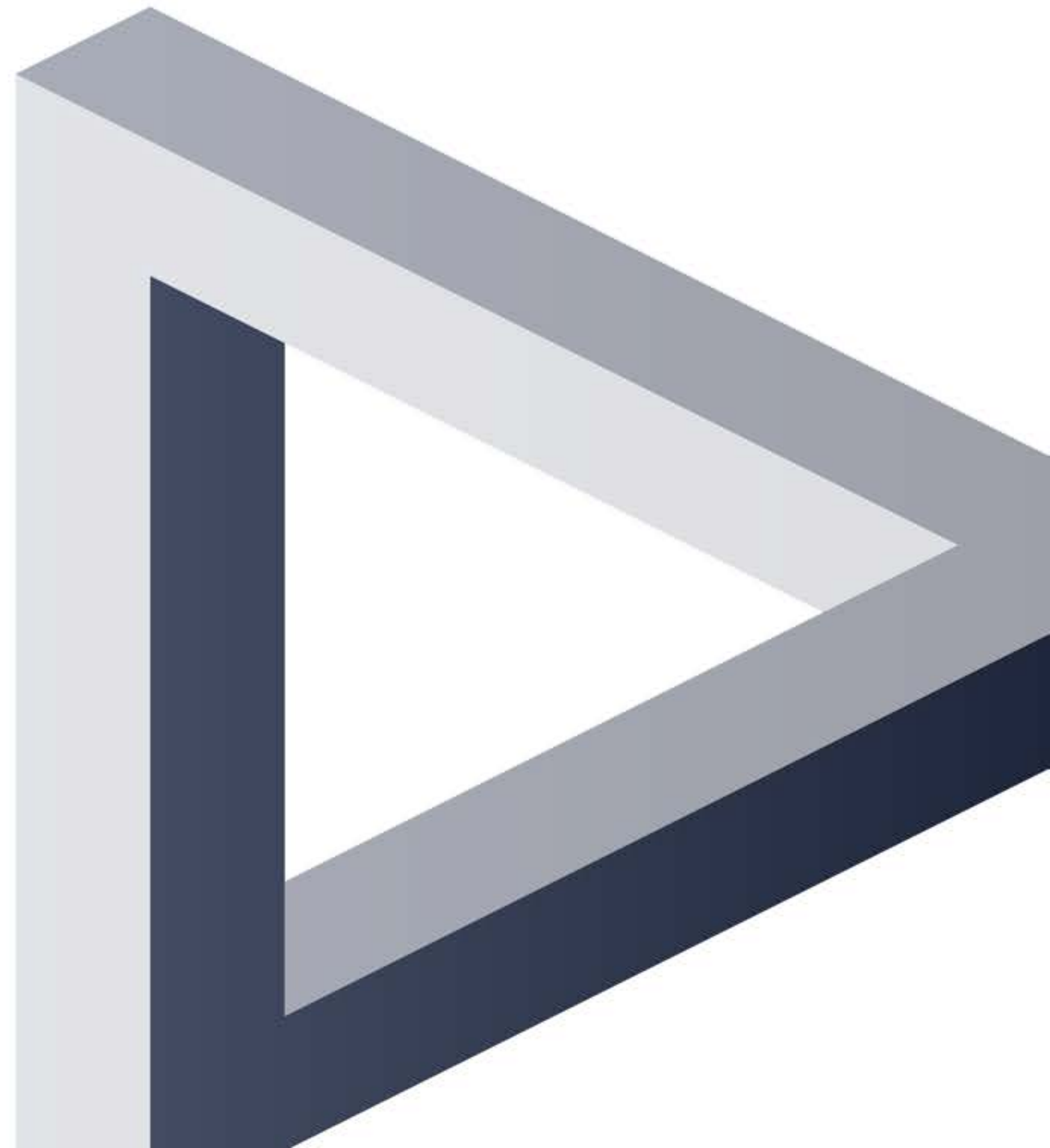


piano | *CAFE*

Membership has its perks:
How CAFE Insider reached
more than 15,000 members
during its first 90 days

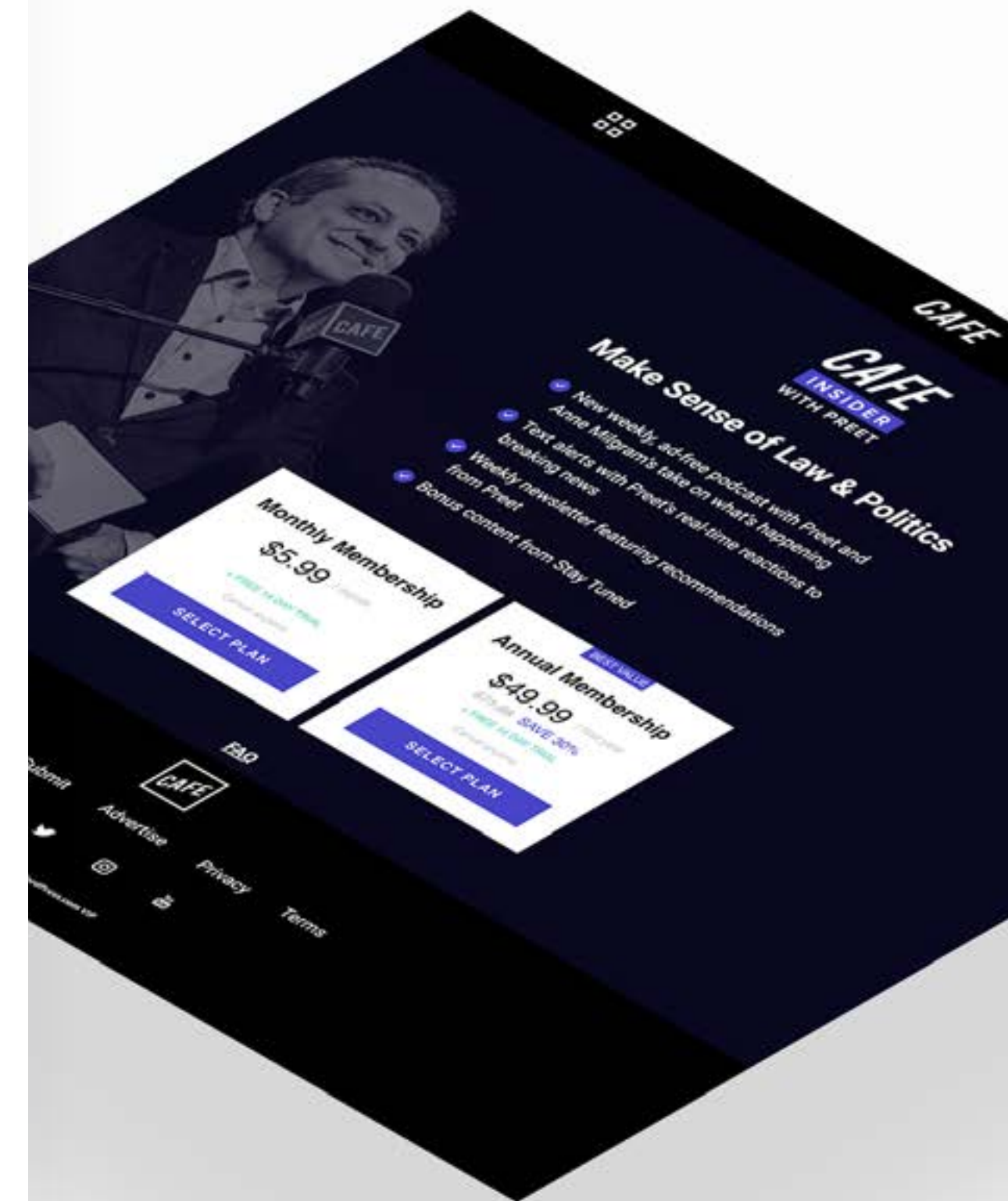


As the company behind Scary Mommy and The Dad, Some Spider Studios has demonstrated its ability to build identity-based brands with a focus on entertainment and community. The company's third brand, CAFE, targets a somewhat different market. Led by former U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara, it helps its audience make sense of news and politics through the lens of the law.

After building a demonstrably engaged audience for CAFE's flagship podcast, Stay Tuned With Preet, Some Spider knew there was passion for the brand and interest in an expanded product offering. While they wanted to keep the podcast free to users — ensuring the community remains open and accessible — they also sought to monetize audience engagement by giving users more of what they expected from the brand. With that in mind, the company designed a paid program that would offer members access to additional premium content in an ad-free environment, including the new CAFE Insider podcast, alongside a deeply researched weekly email, bonus content from Stay Tuned and regular conference calls. After a user survey and focus groups substantiated their hypotheses on interest in membership plans,

Some Spider moved quickly, searching for an audience engagement and subscription commerce engine that could handle their evolving needs and tight timeline.

"Our strategy was to allow users to sign up, try the product for free for 14 days, and then convert them to paid memberships," says Some Spider's Chief Business Development Officer Geoff Isenman. "We needed a platform to integrate efficiently with our current systems and allow us to charge members with the minimum possible friction."



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GEOFF ISENMAN

Chief Business Development Officer

Challenges

- Market and distribute new paid membership content through a free two-week trial
- Integrate with existing infrastructure across audio, text and video offerings
- Get to market quickly to take advantage of audience interest and the fast-paced news cycle
- Maintain the option to adapt the product to take advantage of new opportunities as CAFE continues to grow

Putting Audience First

Some Spider chose Piano Composer, ID and VX to help launch the membership plan, and Some Spider CTO Jason Burfield and his team began building out the offerings in August 2018. Piano's ability to swiftly integrate with CAFE's site, built on the WordPress platform, was a primary benefit, Isenman says. "The ease of implementation, and then immediate access to actionable data post-launch were key selling points," he adds.

Piano enabled the CAFE team to take an audience-first approach, using a free trial of paid content to demonstrate the value proposition and allowing those interested to create credentials and a digital wallet. "The notions of community and engagement, whether paid or free, are at the core of what Some Spider is building across its portfolio of brands," Isenman says. "For CAFE in particular, Piano spoke to our needs when we identified the opportunity to launch a paid product."

Some Spider partnered with Piano to launch in just three months, in November 2018. Pricing was set at \$5.99 per month or \$49.99

per year, with more than 15,000 paying users joining in just the first 90 days. "We are pleased to have attracted more than two times our projected number of members in that time," Isenman adds.



Results

14.8%

Overall user conversion rate

+15,000

Paying members joined in the first 90 days

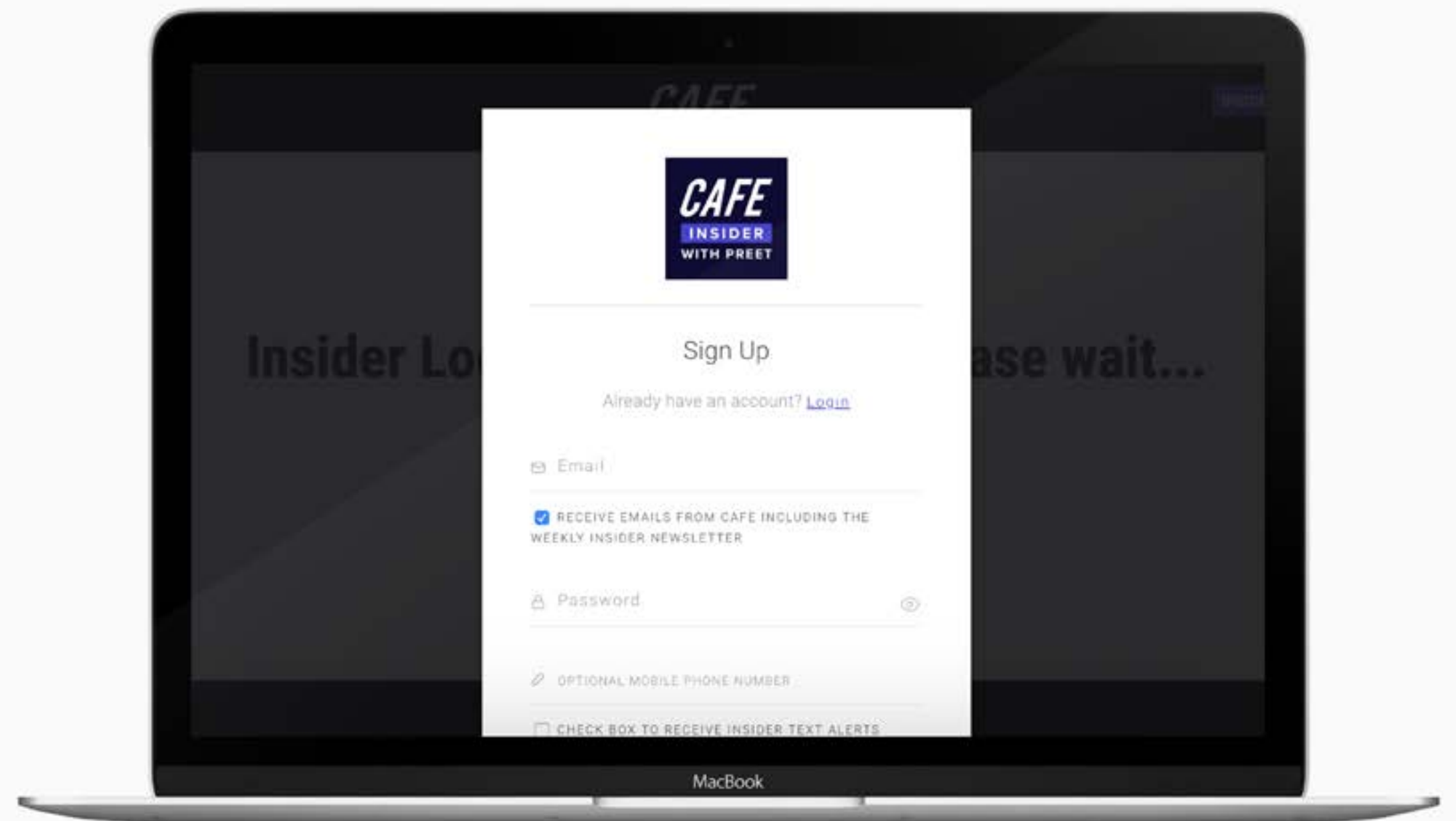
88%

Of all free trials converted to paying customers

2/3

of people who joined during the first three months opted for an annual membership

Piano's technology and team allowed CAFE to launch quickly and then provided clear insights to guide the evolution of the Insider product. Today, Piano continues to empower Some Spider, allowing for continued growth and informing new paid offerings to come.



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