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PARTNERS

**Benjamin Lambert**  
Founder & CEO  
Checkfirst

# SUCCESSFUL LEADERS

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IN THE TIC INDUSTRY

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FOUNDER & CEO  
CHECKFIRST

Checkfirst.ai is a technology partner for the TICC industry. They have created a platform to enable TICC companies to leverage AI in order to optimise planning, scheduling and the verification of data at scale.

Ben is based in Lisbon and is part of a team of 12. The teams are spread across six different countries, with offices in Lisbon, London, Riyadh, & Mumbai. Checkfirst has a product design team in London, sales & marketing teams in Lisbon and Mumbai; and technical teams spread across Riyadh and Cairo.

## CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW YOU GOT STARTED IN THE TIC SECTOR?

I have always been fascinated by the world of technology and how technology can enable people to do better. I have always worked with technologies that enable the enterprise world and I love working with products that can support enterprise businesses to do better and be more efficient. TICc acts as the underlying structure to regulate and standardise global trade and business and therefore the impact that changes in this sector can have is huge.

We were involved in a global trade business for 5 years. Unfortunately, due to various inefficiencies and problems in the market (made more clear during covid times and the rise of remote working), we had to close the business. We then understood that there is a lot of efficiency that can be gained using technology, but building this technology internally is extremely challenging as it isn't the core business of a TICC company. With the rise of AI, we wanted to help change the industry and saw the opportunity to provide TICC companies with a platform to enable them to do better by leveraging AI.



***I LOVE WORKING WITH PRODUCTS THAT CAN SUPPORT ENTERPRISE BUSINESSES TO DO BETTER AND BE MORE EFFICIENT.***

## CAN YOU SHARE WITH US A SPECIFIC PROJECT OR ACCOMPLISHMENT THAT YOU ARE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF AND WHY?

I am particularly proud of our newest product - Schedule AI, because of the impact it will have on people's lives and on the planet. When building our original product InspectAI, we realised that this wasn't a priority for TICC businesses, even if they showed interest in what we were building. We had to go and learn. Start again. And for this we had to speak to people in the TICC space: over 120 leaders who knew the space and its problems. ScheduleAI was the result and I am very proud of this. The platform solves one of the biggest problems we learnt about in the TICC industry: Helping planning teams to schedule people efficiently, using AI to assist in complex planning to create a level of optimization that humans simply cannot achieve. It focuses on the work of people, pricing and ensuring the best person is used for the job, whilst avoiding paying a premium for that. It also minimises the need to travel. It takes into account the many different understandings of the people involved in each aspect of the process so in the travel element it looks at the routes taken and the needs of companies and timing for when the product or service is needed.

The tool automates workflows and saves time and resources for the planners. Therefore it is vastly impactful for the people in the industry both within the company, for their clients, and for other stakeholders.

The way we are executing is new and different too. Although TICC companies now understand the need for it, it is hard to build a product like this internally, as it is not core to these businesses. As AI is still so new it is helping enable people to do their jobs so much easier. It's a truly transformative product for the TICC world.



**AS AI IS STILL SO NEW IT IS HELPING  
ENABLE PEOPLE TO DO THEIR JOBS  
SO MUCH EASIER.**



## CAN YOU SPEAK OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED IN YOUR CAREER AND HOW YOU OVERCAME THEM?

Challenges come in all sorts of forms.

### People.

Surrounding yourself with amazing people who inspire you and who are able to compliment your skillset is the biggest challenge. In the past my biggest challenge was finding the right people. People who will challenge you and support you, as well as having the skillset to build transformative technology. That is what we now have at Checkfirst.

### Cashflow.

Another challenge is ensuring as a CEO that there is enough money in the bank to support the great people in the team. Raising the right funding from people who believed in us as a team, before our technology was fully fit for the market was incredibly challenging. I had to hustle, meet and grow trusted relationships as fast as possible to ensure we were backed by the right investors.

### Product-Market-Fit.

Understanding the biggest problem in the market was a challenge. We interviewed over 120 leaders, spending time getting to know the TICC sector to understand their issues and what would really move the needle for them. Going back to basics even when we had early traction for our initial idea, ensuring the products that we are building are specifically designed to solve problems in the TICC sector.

**WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BIGGEST FACTOR AFFECTING THE TIC INDUSTRY AT THE MOMENT?**

Being stuck using technologies that have been built internally.

TICC companies will hugely improve growth and profitability if they integrate with external expert technologies who accelerate them. AI and blockchain will change this moving forward.

**AI.**

As a TICC specialized AI company, we have seen first hand the impact that AI can have on supporting humans through automation of repetitive and mundane processes.

**Blockchain.**

As transparency, trust and authenticity remain the focus, blockchain can provide the underlying infrastructure for a trusted world in TICC.

**WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP AND TEAM MANAGEMENT?****Work flexible, work efficiently.**

We run a “remote-first” ideology, and we believe that the people we have working with us, want to be there and if they don’t they would tell us. So we have a very free way of working, non-hierarchical. We all – including the co-founders – have a very open door approach. We try to create an in-person feel through bi-monthly sharing sessions. We understand that people like the flexibility to complete work on their own clock so as long as they are not blocking team members and they show up (on video), then we are flexible with how they prioritize their work.

**Family and health come first.**

We also have unlimited holidays, and an unquestioned prioritization around health and family. For example, if I need to spend 2 hours with my daughter, I block that in my calendar. The only limit to this is when people expect something from another person. We make sure we have clarity around the project objectives to ensure the team can support them and we are super productive when we are not together.

**Never leave a team member blocked.**

We believe people want to achieve what they need to achieve so we ensure they have the tools and space they need so that they can unblock each other. We run the business with streamlined tools, which allows everyone to know what they need to do to achieve their goals on a weekly basis. We have a range of check-ins/ stand-ups to ensure people have what they need to go on. Our project management tools also allow us to be productive when not together.



***I AM INSPIRED BY THE MISSION I AM ON TO HELP TICC COMPANIES DO BETTER.***

**HOW DO YOU PRIORITIZE AND MANAGE YOUR WORKLOAD TO ENSURE SUCCESS?**

I try to stay unblocked, mentally and physically so I can support others.

On a daily basis I make sure I achieve the goals I have set for that day.

I write down what I need to achieve. I like to set morning meetings, 10 – 1pm for external stuff. Then in the afternoons I do follow-ups. I like to get back to people within 24 hours. I also plan to spend time with my daughter and try to avoid work commitments between 5 – 8pm when she goes to bed.

I use tools and people to make myself accountable.

I set modes both with family (when working from home) and team when I can’t be disturbed. We call this “Fortress time”, essentially it’s time where one of us has to lock down and focus in order to complete something difficult.

I am inspired by the mission I am on to help TICC companies do better so every task I do, should contribute to this goal.



## HOW DO YOU SPEND TIME OUTSIDE OF WORK?

### Family and Health.

I'm very active. I have two dogs and a toddler so I love taking walks in the hills close to home and spending time with my daughter whenever possible. I try and follow breathwork programmes once a day and go swimming 2-3 times a week. I also like spin cycle and paddle tennis so I try and do both when possible. Cooking is another passion that also drives my creativity and food is one of the main things that bring us together as a family every day.

### Learning.

I try to limit screentime unless I am learning. I often

watch highlights of team sports as it inspires (and reminds) me to see that anything is possible even when all odds are against you, and working as a team can help you achieve this.

I advise and invest in startups and attend a lot of events. The main focus is to learn and challenge my/our ideologies. This is engrained in me and this is why I speak 8 languages. I am fascinated by culture and spend a lot of time trying to learn about people by speaking to people in their own language.

## IN 3 WORDS ONLY - WHAT IS THE SECRET TO YOUR SUCCESS?

RESILIENCE, LEARNING, PEOPLE