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ENTREPRENEUR

WORLD



THE MOST INFLUENTIAL

Business Leaders To Watch In 2026

LUIS
PAARUP

JAVI
PALAFOX

PABLO
PALAFOX

**FROM MANUAL BOTTLENECKS TO
AUTONOMOUS FLOWS: HOW HAPPYROBOT
IS REIMAGINING GLOBAL LOGISTICS**



ROCK, HAWKINS & THORPE
COACH BUILDERS,
BRIDGE WELLS, & 24, BAKER STREET

*The carriage parts, wheel spokes, etc. to be provided in
such blue painted with three lines of white ship's
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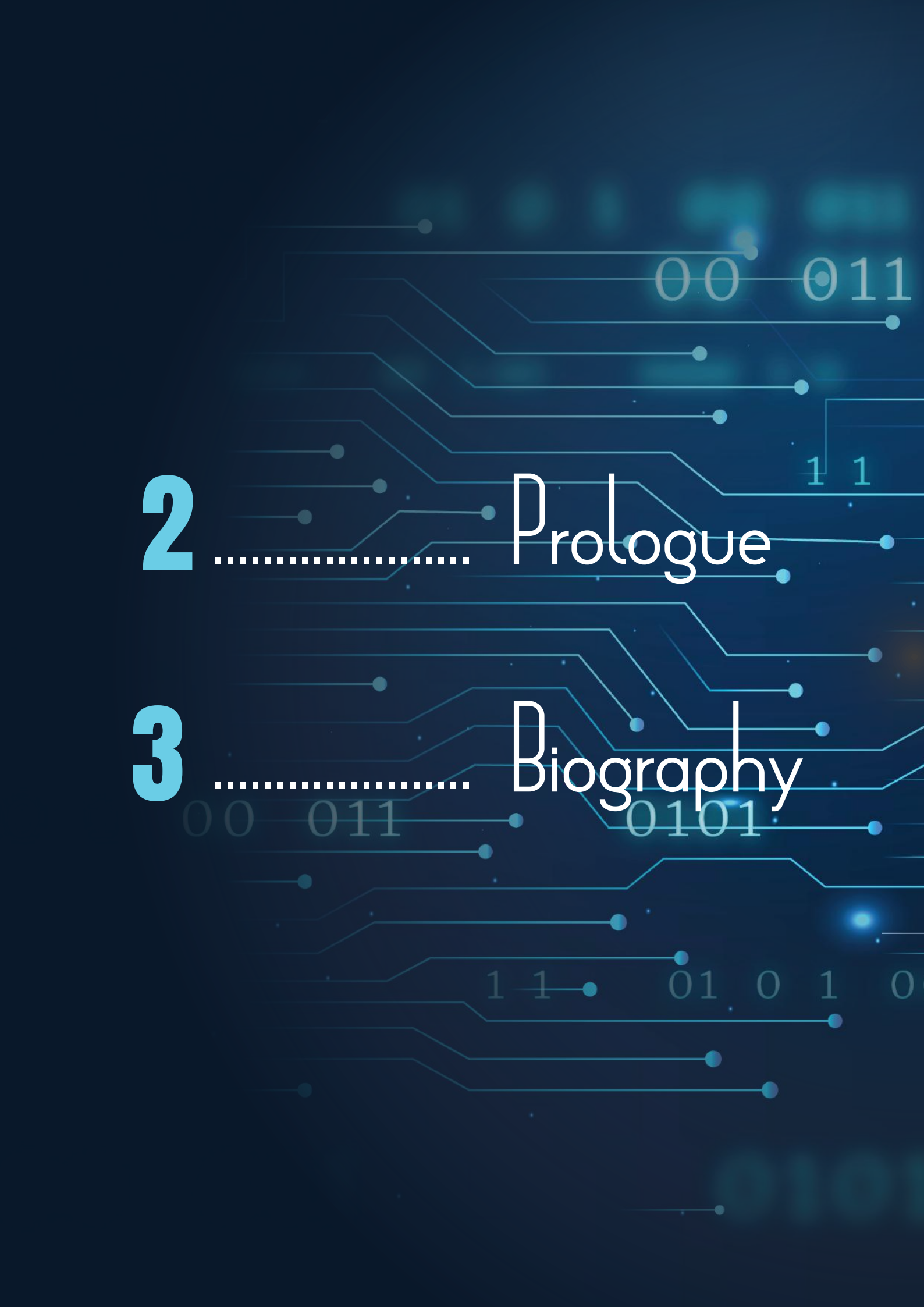
Editorial

Welcome to Startup Rise USA special edition “The Most Influential Business Leaders To Watch In 2026,” where we spotlight individuals redefining what’s possible in supply chain, logistics, and enterprise operations through innovation, grit, and ethical purpose.

Since 2020, Startup Rise USA has told the powerful stories of entrepreneurs via immersive interviews, video features, and thoughtful narratives. In this edition, we are proud to feature the Supply Chain AI Trailblazers—Pablo Palafox, Javi Palafox, and Luis Paarup—who believe that resilience in operations must never come at the cost of speed, and that AI agents, voice technology, and automation can help bridge the gap between manual drudgery and autonomous efficiency.

HappyRobot was born from a vision to create an AI-native operating system for supply chains—addressing the delays, risks, and fragmented workflows that hinder global trade and delivery.





2 Prologue

3 Biography

The background is a dark blue gradient with a complex pattern of glowing blue lines and dots, resembling a digital circuit or data flow. Binary code (0s and 1s) is scattered throughout the background in a light blue color. The title 'Table of Contents' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, oriented vertically on the right side of the image.

Table of Contents



Happy Robot was founded in 2023 by Pablo Palafox, Javi Palafox & Luis Paarup with the vision of turning supply chain companies into autonomous entities.

They provide an AI-native OS that sends digital AI agents to automate tasks at scale, enabling them to respond faster and better vs. traditional platforms. Their platform is built around real-time risk anticipation, guaranteed scalability, and domain expertise, aimed at eliminating pain points in logistics, freight, and customer support for companies like DHL, Uber Freight, and Flexport.



The future of the supply chain no longer looks like reactive logistics and siloed tools; it also lies in what AI can do to build proactive, resilient networks that anticipate disruptions. Enterprises are often subject to archaic manual systems that hinder the delivery of products, drive up costs and leave businesses open to risk. The result is a widening gap between global demand for goods and the infrastructure's ability to deliver them efficiently.

HappyRobot has positioned itself directly in that gap. The company's mission is to ensure that operations never become the limiting factor in economic resilience, speed, and expansion.

The founders understood that what the industry lacked was not just technology but intelligent autonomy. Supply chains have traditionally been fragmented, where tasks are manual, risks are reactive, and interactions lack seamlessness.

HappyRobot challenges each of these conventions. Their AI OS operates as a central brain, mapping organizations, predicting issues, and acting in real time with an AI workforce. Their model is bold; timelines are accelerated, outcomes are predictable, and accountability is built into every agentic workflow.

This approach required difficult decisions in the company's early days. Instead of chasing broad, generic automation, the founders chose to embed voice AI, domain-specific agents, and ethical scalability from the start – pivoting from computer vision ideas during their Y Combinator batch to focus on logistics after spotting opportunities at industry conferences.

That meant navigating pivot hell and slower initial traction, but it ensured that trust and impact would not be compromised as they grew. This foundation is now their competitive strength, proving that principled pivots and hard-won insights can shape an entire sector's future.

HappyRobot's model also speaks to the wider changes occurring in logistics and global trade. As the need for faster and more reliable supply chains takes off amid the boom in e-commerce, geopolitical changes and artificial intelligence-driven forecasting, past practices such as phone-based negotiations or tracking with spreadsheets can be slow to change.

A company can now formulate brilliant strategies in days, but if the execution is still dependent on human-intensive processes, an entire pipe of potential is clogged.



HappyRobot's solution is to apply cutting-edge AI intensity — rooted in voice technology and agent orchestration — behind the invisible work of operations, so that value flows effortlessly from planning to delivery.

Another principle of HappyRobot is the predictability and commitment that it encourages. In an industry where cuts can ruin revenue and timelines, the company vows AI agents that you can trust to consistently deliver.

This shift in expectations is significant and enables supply chain leaders to plan with confidence, allocate resources more efficiently, and communicate more effectively with stakeholders — from drivers and brokers to executives and investors. By removing uncertainty, HappyRobot not only accelerates logistics but stabilizes the business strategies built around it.

Equally important is HappyRobot's attention to human-AI collaboration and operational integrity. Operating with a partner-led approach, the company embeds expertise and forward-deployed engineering into every deployment. For the founders, speed without synergy is meaningless. Their AI systems are not just about automation; they're about working side by side with teams, learning from real-world interactions, and upholding standards for resilience and ethics.

In a space where regulatory and reliability scrutiny can make or break partnerships, HappyRobot offers the certainty that every agent, every call, and every workflow is prepared to drive real impact.

Today, HappyRobot is not just a software provider. It is a paradigm shift in the way enterprises make decisions about their operations. HappyRobot clients aren't just given tools — rather, it's more like entering a long-term collaboration in which transparency, autonomy, and growth are ensured. For the industry, it heralds the end of the notion that efficiency and human empowerment have to be mutually exclusive.

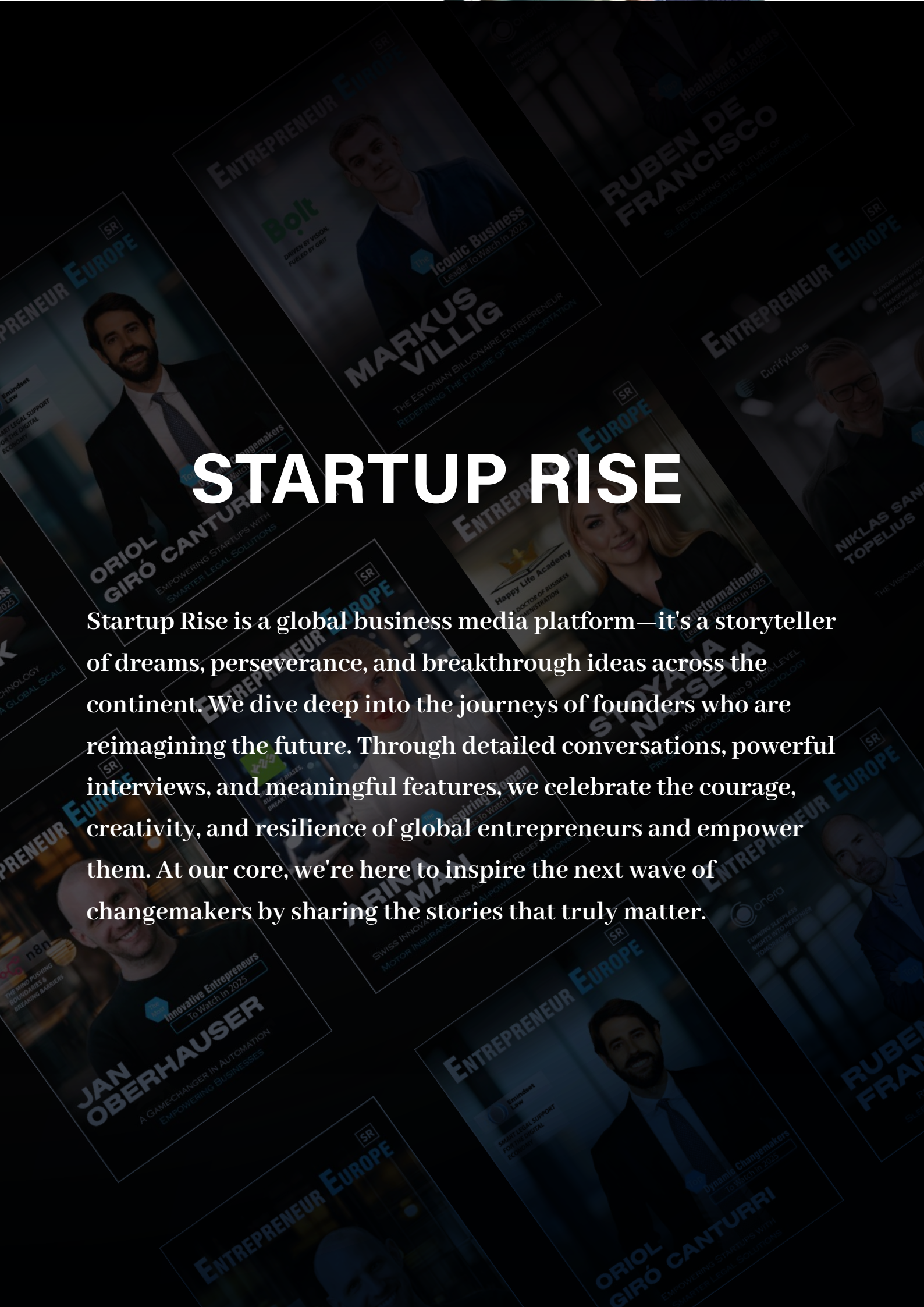
HappyRobot's aspirations go far beyond their current deployments. Backed by a \$44 million Series B led by Base10 Partners, with participation from a16z, Y Combinator, Tokio Marine, WaVe-X, and others; following rapid 10x revenue growth and expansions into energy and manufacturing; they are now primed to scale across the broader supply chain ecosystem. Their long-term plan includes advancing multi-agent systems, making their voice AI very good at complex negotiations, and creating predictive orchestration that can anticipate the ebbs and flows of worldwide trends to optimize end-to-end reads. At the heart of their vision is the belief that transparency and responsibility are as important as innovation.

The founders often repeat that innovation without accountability is fragile, while innovation with accountability has the power to reshape industries. HappyRobot embodies this principle, designing every AI agent, every operational workflow, and every enterprise partnership with trust and transformation at its core.



HappyRobot





STARTUP RISE

Startup Rise is a global business media platform—it's a storyteller of dreams, perseverance, and breakthrough ideas across the continent. We dive deep into the journeys of founders who are reimagining the future. Through detailed conversations, powerful interviews, and meaningful features, we celebrate the courage, creativity, and resilience of global entrepreneurs and empower them. At our core, we're here to inspire the next wave of changemakers by sharing the stories that truly matter.