

Born to Disrupt

Entrepreneurship, Rock and Roll, and Surviving the Shitshow

A loud, irreverent, very British field guide to turning science into scale—told at guitar-amp volume.

Summary

Born to Disrupt is a voice-driven, crossover nonfiction book that reframes startup survival through rock-and-roll stories. It's part startup memoir, part cultural essay, and part field manual—for founders, operators, and the people who invest in them. From hydrogen refuelling networks and graphene filtration to boardroom reality and investor narrative, the book blends scars, humour, and practical tools with riffs from the history of music.

Positioning

- Business-meets-music narrative: startup survival at guitar-amp volume.
- Anti-playbook tone: honest, funny, and practical—never preachy.
- Deep-tech credibility: decades building and chairing companies across hydrogen, materials, and instrumentation.
- Cultural crossover: for readers who loved memoirs with craft—Bourdain, Byrne, Kay.

Primary Audience

- Founders & CTOs turning lab results into repeatable revenue.
- Chairs/NEDs who want governance that creates rhythm, not noise.
- Investors seeking credible, execution-ready narratives.
- Music & culture readers who like sharp, funny nonfiction.

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Comparable Titles

- Ben Horowitz — The Hard Thing About Hard Things (HarperBusiness)
- Adam Kay — This Is Going to Hurt (Picador)
- Anthony Bourdain — Kitchen Confidential (Bloomsbury)
- David Byrne — How Music Works (Canongate)

Author Bio

Tim Harper is a deep-tech entrepreneur, chair and advisor. He founded Element 2, building the UK's first hydrogen refuelling network, and has led/chaired ventures in advanced materials and water tech (Evove/G2O). Previously he built Europe's first nanotechnology commercialisation platform (Cientifica) and authored the widely cited Nanotechnology Opportunity Report. Tim speaks on clean energy,

deep-tech commercialisation, governance and investor narrative.

Representative Highlights

- Element 2 — UK's first hydrogen refuelling network; £6.5m equity + £3m debt raised.
- Evove/G2O — Graphene water filtration; Innovate UK funding + pilots in desalination & aquaculture.
- Cientifica — Early commercialisation platform for nanotechnology; global policy & industry impact.

Sample Contents

- 1. Rhythm over Noise
- 2. From Pilots to Proof
- 3. Investor Narrative that Holds
- 4. Shipping Under Pressure
- 5. The Messy Middle (First £1–5m)
- 6. Fire the Guitarist (and Other Unpopular Decisions)
- 7. Reinvent, Don't Pivot
- 8. After the Encore

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