

WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO SHAPE YOUR WORLD?

The desire to create crosses all boundaries: from Fortune 500 executives to bootstrapped startup entrepreneurs, from college graduates to high school dropouts.

GoEngineer is lucky enough to be connected with brilliant individuals across many industries whose businesses are driven by a passion to design, engineer, and manufacture.

This interview features Trevor Milton, CEO at Nikola Motor Company.



GOINSPIRE

WHAT WERE SOME OF YOUR MOTIVATIONS FOR STARTING NIKOLA MOTORS?

My dad always pushed me to live my dreams. Driving locomotives with my dad as a kid opened my eyes to the efficiency of moving freight. The idea of being able to increase the freight efficiency of trucks has always been very exciting to me, even as a boy.

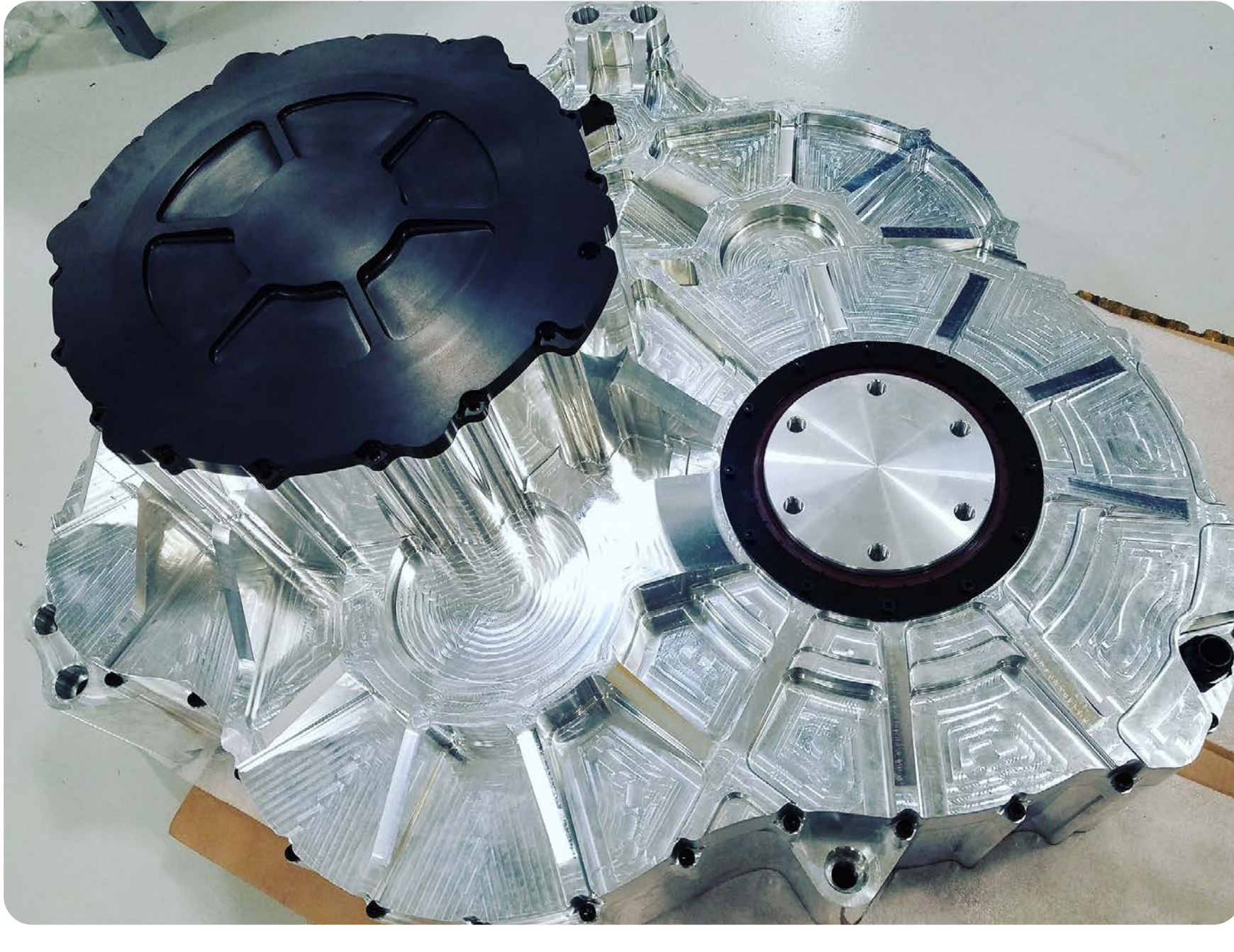
The other part that interested me was emissions – I wanted to create a truck that would not negatively impact the environment and also perform better than a diesel. Solutions to these trucking industry issues are also a huge market opportunity, which continues to greatly motivate me today.



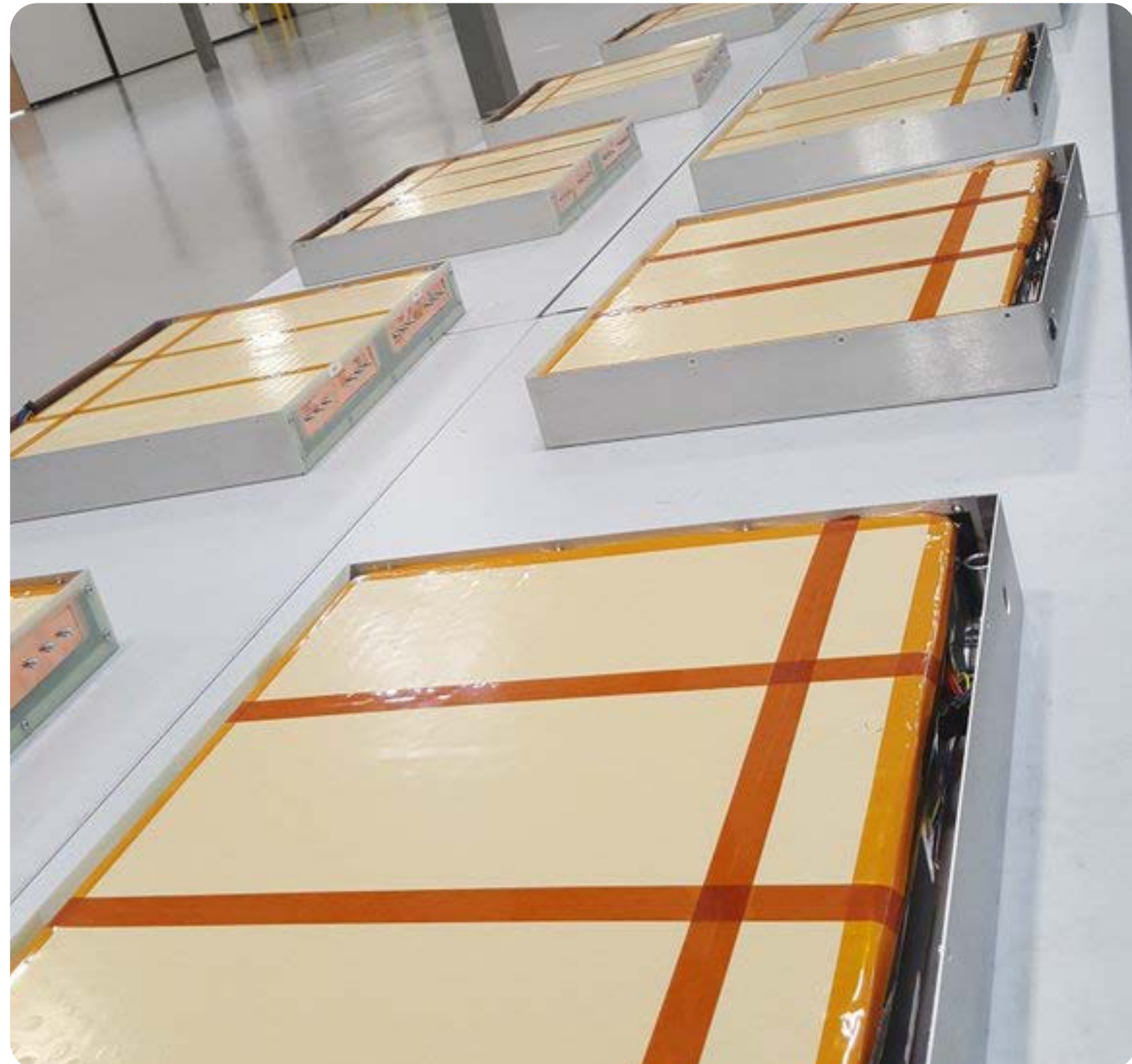
Yes – a ton! Many people think the type of change we are looking to achieve is not possible, and I understand why they may think that. We are looking to tackle a huge and established industry that doesn't believe that we have a chance.

Also the press – for the first six months after we launched our website – some reporters described us as vaporware and said that we were stealing people's money. Not all of the press, but some of it was pretty tough on us. But some reporters were very favorable and excited to see something new in the industry that could disrupt everything.

DID YOU HAVE NAYSAYERS ALONG THE WAY?



HOW DID YOU GET HIGHLY SKILLED AND TALENTED ENGINEERS TO LEAVE THEIR JOBS TO WORK FOR, WHAT AT FIRST, MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED AN UNPROVEN TECHNOLOGY?



It comes down to the fact that people are inspired by our technology solutions that will change the trucking industry. When I talk to engineers about our vision, and they see our product and the passion that everyone on our team has, they want to be a part of it.

This is the kind of opportunity most engineers dream of, so they are able to get rid of their fears and take this chance



They want to be a part of what we are doing at Nikola and believe that the upside of this opportunity is greater than the downside.

The most important advice I got from my dad was never to give up – that means not after the 5th, 10th, 20th, or 40th time. Most people take failure very personally. For me, failure is a gift from God. It humbles you and teaches you how to be a fighter, to fight for every little thing. Fighters are driven to see things from a different angle. If you look at our logo, there are six angles to it. And for our company, that means you ought to be considering six different ways to look at every problem. We have to be better at making decisions than our competitors.



WHAT IS SOME OF THE BEST ADVICE YOU HAVE GOTTEN ALONG THE WAY?

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A BUDDING ENTREPRENEUR WITH A NEW IDEA FOR A PRODUCT?

Do what you love and are passionate about, and don't be so worried about tomorrow or the next ten years. If you are happy with your ambitions and desires today, you will be a great entrepreneur. Your happiness affects your ability to be creative. And don't think small. Think absolutely massive. Don't be afraid to revolutionize an entire industry – think that big.



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Nikola Motor Company

Nikola Motor Company designs and manufactures electric vehicles, vehicle components, energy storage systems, and electric vehicle drivetrains. NMC is led by its visionary CEO Trevor Milton (Twitter: @nikolatrevor), who has assembled one of the most talented teams in the country to bring the Nikola products to market. The company is privately-held. For more information, visit nikolamotor.com

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