Application: 5981

# Eli Finkelshteyn, Constructor CEO and co-founder

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**Page: General Information**

Provide information about the company to be considered for the award. If you will be nominating an individual, specify the nominee's employer.

**Name of Organization/Company**

Constructor

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**Additional Contacts**

I do not wish to list additional contacts

**Page: Entry Information**

**Entry Title**

Eli Finkelshteyn, Constructor CEO and co-founder

**Category**

Q10d. Executive of the Year - Information Technology - E-Commerce

**Executive Nominee Submission Format**

Written Answers

**a. Briefly describe the nominated executive's employer: the organization's history and past performance (up to 200 words). Required**

Formerly a search engineer at ecommerce companies, Eli Finkelshteyn saw firsthand how traditional search engines—which count a "click" as a win—are too general-purpose for ecommerce—where metrics like "add-to-cart" and "purchase" are what really matter.

So, he co-founded Constructor in 2015 to address this: effectively tackling ecommerce search KPIs and enabling retailers to compete with the likes of Amazon—showing shoppers the right products at the right time. Constructor went to market in 2019.

Initially focused solely on search, Constructor now provides a platform for all ecommerce product discovery: enabling shoppers to easily find the best items for them. Retailers—including Sephora, Under Armour and Petco—use Constructor to personalize search results, browse experiences, product recommendations, AI Shopping Assistant results, on-site ads (new!), and more. Retailers can simultaneously optimize experiences for metrics they care about most: prioritizing revenue, conversions, inventory-balancing, etc.

Constructor is unique in being commerce-specific (not general-purpose) and built with AI at its core—not bolted on after-the-fact.

Performance:

*Nearly doubled revenue for fourth consecutive year

*Raised $85M+ in venture capital

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*Increased headcount 47% over past year

*Powered 250B+ shopper interactions last year—enabling brands to drive hundreds of millions of personalized experiences each day (8,000/second!)

**b. Outline the nominated executive's achievements since the beginning of 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words). Required**

Eli drives excellence at Constructor, among ecommerce companies Constructor serves, and in the ecommerce industry. Since 2023, Eli:

AT CONSTRUCTOR:

*Is heavily involved in product development. Eli led development of Constructor's groundbreaking AI Shopping Assistant (conversational product discovery tool), Attribute Enrichment (corrects bad product catalog data), and Retail Media Suite (personalizing ads on retail sites).

*Secured $25M Series B funding (2024)—an oversubscribed round when Constructor/Eli wasn't even actively fundraising! Constructor's valuation (now $550M) has nearly tripled since its 2021 Series A round.

*Led Constructor's expansion into EMEA.

*Led Constructor to nearly double revenue last year.

*Fosters a motivating, inspiring, fun work environment. Constructor was named to Will Reed's Top 100 (2x)—honoring founders/companies shaping workplace culture. ██████████

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WITH CUSTOMERS:

*Spearheaded optimization (A/B testing) programs.

*Works closely/personally with customers who rely on his counsel ████████████████████████████████████

*Is invested in helping them grow. Recent results with Constructor: Sephora—$40M revenue lift, Petco—13% increase in search revenue, Princess Auto—247% increase in revenue per visit, more.

INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTIONS:

*Constructor's recently launched "Experiments Blog"—sharing data and learning for the betterment of the industry—was Eli's brainchild.

*Speaks at ecommerce events (NRF, Shoptalk, eTail, more).

*Contributes articles to industry publications, participates in podcasts, speaks with retail/business media.

*Advisory board member of MACH Alliance (non-profit advocating for open technology ecosystems).

**c. Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other executives in your industry and/or to the nominee's past performance (up to 250 words). Required**

Under Eli's leadership, Constructor's revenue growth—and customer retention rate (98% over the last two years)—have been the highest among competitive industry vendors.

It's unusual for CEOs to be heavily involved in product development, but Eli's technical background, passion and leadership lend themselves well. He personally brings customer feedback, needs and pain-points into product development—including in the AI Shopping Assistant (ASA) technology he pioneered. A first-of-its-kind development then (2024), ASA enables shoppers on ecommerce sites to search using complete sentences ("I'm going to a wedding in the Caribbean in August—what should I wear?") and get results that make sense, are personalized and are in-stock.

Eli also led the development of Constructor's Retail Media Suite—propelling Constructor into the retail media space (where retailers provide advertising opportunities on their properties—e.g., website or app). Constructor now offers the only solution that personalizes/optimizes organic (non-ad) AND sponsored listings—instantly making a decision about which listing will maximize overall revenue for the retailer.

Under Eli's leadership, Fast Company named Constructor to its World's Most Innovative Companies (#10 in retail—alongside Amazon, J.Crew, IKEA, etc.) and simultaneously named Eli to its Impact Council.

Testimonial (not for publication):

*Sree Sreedhararaj, former CTO at Sephora (now CTO at IPSY—both customers): "Eli's work has helped advance the retail industry by leaps and bounds—giving more retailers like us the ability to deliver better experiences to shoppers that simultaneously benefit the bottom line. I'm always amazed by his vision and creative solutions, and how they propel our business and the industry forward."

**d. Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words). Optional**

Supporting materials showcase Eli's leadership/contributions—to Constructor, ecommerce companies and the industry at large.

*Q&A and in-depth interviews (please see Forbes and E-Commerce Nation attachments, plus Retail Times and The Ecomm Manager links). These discuss Eli's background, why he founded Constructor/how it works, innovative projects/research Eli leads, and milestones.

*Contributed articles (attachments in Progressive Grocer and The Current). These—along with the Experiments blog link—show Eli's desire to spark/contribute to important discussions. As he says introducing the Experiments blog (Eli's brainchild—and an offshoot of Constructor's main blog): "We believe it is our responsibility to play a role in building a vision for the future. Sharing our learnings is a small thing we can do to help the industry as a whole iterate and evolve. We think everyone can benefit, and ecommerce shopping experiences as a whole can become better."

*Additional interviews (links to CBS broadcast appearance, Retail Today, and Hunters and Unicorns podcast) show Eli is a sought-after media source.

*Product-focused coverage (One Amazing Thing, Retail Media Suite press release + coverage links, and AI Shopping Assistant press release attached) highlight Eli's key role in product development.

*Series B funding coverage (press release and Business Insider + Axios articles—attached). These demonstrate Eli's driving role in Constructor's funding, which came when the company wasn't fundraising (Eli was approached by investors).

*Additional coverage (Fast Company award link; Momentum press release + WWD/Yahoo/MSN coverage and Retail Gazette coverage attached) quote Eli, further showing his vision and company/customer successes.

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**Webpage Link 2**

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**Would you like to add an additional supporting document?**
Yes

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