



## **MAXIMIZE BUSINESS VALUE PODCAST - EPISODE 244 Transcript**

### **Tom Bronson (1s):**

Welcome to the Maximize Business Value Podcast, brought to you by Mastery Partners, where our mission is to equip business owners like you to maximize your business value and achieve the exit of your dreams, whatever that means to you. With insights gained from over a hundred business transactions, we share real-world strategies, lessons, and expert advice to help you build long-term sustainable value in your business. Each episode is hosted by one of our Mastery-certified partners, their seasoned experts who've helped countless business owners navigate the complexities of growth, scaling, and building value.

### **Tom Bronson (45s):**

They bring firsthand experience, actionable insights, and a passion for helping you build a business that thrives. So, let's dive in.

### **Dave Casey (58s):**

Hi, this is Dave Casey and welcome to Maximize Business Value. This is a podcast for business leaders that are passionate about building value in their business, long-term sustainable value that will really carry them forward. Today I am excited to introduce or reintroduce, 'cause I think he's been on this podcast before, Jim Brewer, who's the principal at Brewer Leadership. So Jim, welcome.

### **Jim Brewer (1m 23s):**

Hello Dave. Good to see you. Yeah,

### **Dave Casey (1m 25s):**

So we've known each other quite a long time, but, but we have, tell us a little bit about Brewer leadership, what, what that's all about. Got it.

### **Jim Brewer (1m 33s):**

Yeah, I'd love to. So I have spent most of my career as an entrepreneur, right? So I started my first business when I was literally 21 years old. We wait till we incorporate till my birthday, so we could incorporate legally, and that was a success. It was a small retail business and, and small manufacturing business. And had a successful exit from that. Did some more specifically entrepreneurial kinds of roles. And then I went to work for the man. I went to work for a larger organization, a company called CompuServe, back in the day.

**Dave Casey (2m 15s):**

Remember them well in the Dallas market, you know?

**Jim Brewer (2m 17s):**

Yeah. But CompuServe was literally Dave, a great company. One of the things that made it so was that we were providing, my role was typically providing network services to our clients. Those tended to be entrepreneurial companies. It was the early days of hooking up your PC to a mainframe back in those days, back when we had mainframes. And, and, and so literally on a day-to-day, week-by-week basis, I had a chance to hang out with entrepreneurs I supported, was responsible for several branch offices, and the branch offices were great.

**Jim Brewer (3m 2s):**

They would tee things up and then I'd get an opportunity to come in and finish the deal, meet the people that were driving the business, make sure it was a good fit for them and for us. And it was just a joy. And ILI learned so much. Several of the principles of there from CompuServe had come from IBM. Yeah. We were highly skilled, understood what the complex sales process really looked like. We did a good job of training younger people to uncover the leads, close the leads, and provide the services. Yeah. At the copy serve. And it was just, you know, it was ideal and

**Dave Casey (3m 43s):**

Yeah, it's great when you have a, a, an entrepreneurial company, but you have that underpinning of people that come from, from Fortune, you know, 50 or Fortune Yeah. 20 companies, probably back then, you know, that helps a lot.

**Jim Brewer (3m 56s):**

But it was still entrepreneurial because the growth curve was

**Dave Casey (3m 58s):**

Yeah. Oh yeah. You

**Jim Brewer (3m 59s):**

You know, it was extraordinary, right?

**Dave Casey (4m 0s):**

Yeah. I started my career with Burrows Corporation, which was competitor, a very small competitor to IBM in relative terms, a 10th or size, but number two in the mainframe world. Yeah. So, but it, it was a good opportunity because you do learn business from the aspect of, of a, of a fortune size company and, and how to do business and how to, how to, how to conduct yourself personally for one thing, but, but also just, you know, how business works and that that's wonderful things to apply when you're dealing with smaller businesses. So

**Jim Brewer (4m 34s):**

That's, that's, you know, I hadn't, I hadn't even really thought about this. I didn't know which questions Yeah. Or what path we would go down together. But I remember when I hired on at CompuServe, the CEO at the time was a guy by the name of Charlie McCall. And we were a small enough organization. I was less than employee number 50, I think. And so Charlie interviewed us all, and that interview was really interesting because, you know, I came to listen to the CEO, the words from down on high and, and he said, Jim, what business do you think we're in? I said, Charlie, it looks like we're in the timesharing of, of business.

**Jim Brewer (5m 17s):**

And, and we were back then. And he said, you're right. He said, but what I want you to know is we'll change. We have changed a number of times of before this. We will change a number of times after this. And so what we're looking for is quality people and, and, and the right mindset. And if, you know, don't get attached to the business that you think we are in. Yeah.

**Dave Casey (5m 46s):**

Yeah. Oh, that was great advice. You know, great advice. Super. So, so you're at comp, you serve, how do you, how do you get to Brewer leadership?

**Jim Brewer (5m 58s):**

Well, it was from boredom, first of all at the time, and it doesn't sound like a boring job. I was responsible for the, one of the things we did in network services was carry credit card transactions for both authorization and settlement. And I was responsible for the Visa relationship, the sales side Yeah. Of the visa relationship. And if there's only one thing that's more frustrating than working with a bank and it's working with an association of banks. And so, you know, so I've been doing that for a while. I went to my boss, a guy, the name of Clark Woodford and my mentor there at CompuServe.

**Jim Brewer (6m 38s):**

And I said, Clark, I'm bored to tears. Yeah. I, you know, he said, brewer, you make a lot of money, you fly around the country, you've got the perfect job. I went, yeah, but it looks the same day after day. I mean, problems are slightly different, but they're really the same. And if we solve them and move on. And I'm just bored to tears. Yeah. And Dave, he said, Well, interesting. You should bring it up. He said, We have just bought a company that's in your neck of the woods, is down in Dallas, and they are a local area networking company. They sell the workstations, and they figure out all the connectivity to hook those workstations together.

**Jim Brewer (7m 26s):**

It's the perfect partnership, 'cause we're doing wide area networking. They're doing local area networking. We think that there's great synergy, and I need somebody on the ground to take them. You know, they, they're a great company. The only thing wrong with 'em is they're a single city model. They're really only in Dallas. Got some large customers like MCI that have locations around the country, but they're really a single city. And we, you know, we're a national model. We need them to be a national model. He said, so I want you to meet the entrepreneurs that run that company and see how you can help 'em. Well, the entrepreneur who ran that company was a guy by the name of Mark Cuban. Hey. And he and his partner were the first, you know, Mark had had a couple of entrepreneurial ventures.

**Jim Brewer (8m 10s):**

Before that, but nothing of any

**Dave Casey (8m 12s):**

But Micro Solutions was that one.

**Jim Brewer (8m 14s):**

Yeah and Micro Solutions was that one.

**Dave Casey (8m 16s):**

Yeah. Yeah.

**Jim Brewer (8m 17s):**

No, well, so That was, so that was great fun. And he's everything that If you seem to be on Shark Tank or Yeah, yeah. Or if, if behind the bench at the Mavericks in the old days.

**Dave Casey (8m 29s):**

Wow. So that moves you from IBM big behemoth kind of company to medium sized company to true entrepreneurship, and let's, let's grow this thing. That's cool. Yeah. That's cool.

**Jim Brewer (8m 41s):**

Yeah. And so that's what I like to do, Dave. You know, we have an opportunity to work together. It's one of the joys I have in working with Mastery Partners, and your family of companies is that you work with great entrepreneurs. And that's my life's mission. Yeah. That's what I really enjoy doing. Yeah. That's what Brewer leadership is all about.

**Dave Casey (8m 60s):**

Is all about. That's perfect. So that leads me into my next question. So we're, we're talking about, you know, the reason that we work together is, is EOS the EOS framework that we've adopted at Mastery Group, and you are our implementer. So you're the ones that keep us on the straight and narrow. My pleasure. So talk about your EOS practice, and, you know, how does EOS, and I know this from our standpoint, but just overall, how does EOS work with a company, and what does it add, and how's that work, and how long have you been doing EOS stuff?

**Jim Brewer (9m 38s):**

I, I've been doing it, I'll answer the last question first. I've been doing EOS since 2019. Okay. And began to license the intellectual property for EOS and, and I was a Vistage chair at the time. I'm still a Vistage chair. Yeah.

**Dave Casey (9m 53s):**

We'll talk a little about that later.

**Jim Brewer (9m 55s):**

I had a couple of, I had a couple of clients that EOS would do. So I put my foot in the water and began to implement EOS. The interesting thing about your question, Dave, is I think it has to do more with the mindset of the leaders of that company than it does the business. That they're in the stage that they're at the opportunity profile of that they look like it's about the mindset, right. EOS is a lousy fit for organizations. You know, what you might call lifestyle businesses, right?

**Jim Brewer (10m 36s):**

Yeah. Yeah. It, it, it takes people that are more of quo than by the adventure of doing something different. Right. You know, partly it is that we're going to bring some tools and they have to have the mindset to adopt those tools, but they have to be growth minded sort of folks of, to make that work. Mastery Group would be a great example. Right. You know, so that's the mindset you bring to the table for you and your clients. And, and that's why I think if, if it's been a success and, and you're the best judge of that, if that's why I think

**Dave Casey (11m 20s):**

Cool. Yeah. And it's, it's certainly has helped us, you know, just from the standpoint we're, we've, we are three companies under one umbrella. And so right away there's, there's a division of effort and, and communication. You know, there's inherently communication issues that happen and then, but it's a wonderful discipline for us to minimize unnecessary meetings is what, what I'll just say and, and then focus on what's important and, but make sure that we've, we've created those communications back and forth between the, the divisions or the companies, if you will.

**Dave Casey (12m 4s):**

And it's provided a great platform for us. So it, it's, you know, when we encounter business owners and, you know, as you know, our sweet spot's, kind of that 5 million to \$50 million size companies, we tend to be probably on a lower end of that a little bit for most, most opportunities. And a lot of times a business is, is great business and great idea, great people, but just a little jumbled, you know? And, and, and it, look, and EOS is something we always recommend to folks. And even if they don't use EOS, if they use any of the platforms, it's not like they're exclusive to EOS, but we know it well, we use it internally.

**Dave Casey (12m 44s):**

So it's kinda like we, it's kind of an advantage that we have. And you know, I liken that to back in the days, you know, I was in the IT services business as well when Windows NT came out, you know, and, and it was a pretty big undertaking to deploy Windows NT a lot more involved than saying, doing Novell, which was another operating system at the time for local area networks. And, but we did NT internally because our clients were doing nt. So we were, we weren't big enough that we probably needed all that, all, all that Microsoft could do for us. But we, we did it so that we kind of knew what the customer experience was gonna be like.

**Dave Casey (13m 26s):**

So I like that, in our EOS environment, when we talk to people. So

**Jim Brewer (13m 31s):**

What would you, and this is your interview sounds strange, but, you know, I'm a question ask asker, what would you say the biggest impact that EOS has had on some of your client portfolio?

**Dave Casey (13m 45s):**

You know, it gives us a common language, which is really good, 'cause as you know, our clients are all over the gym. We've got people in steel fabrication, business, software companies, home services companies, you name it. If there's a, if there's a way to make money, we've probably got those guys in our portfolio. And so it's, it is a common language. I mean, we can, we can quickly, when we sit down for our, our monthly visit with a client, is a, how are we doing against our rocks for the quarter, right? And when we look at numbers and scorecards, it's a common language. So it, it really makes our ability to zero in on the things that we, we think we can help them with much quicker.

**Dave Casey (14m 33s):**

So we we're not, we were not gathering and trying to sort a lot of different information, and, okay, I gotta remember this company does it this way, this company does it that way. So if they're doing it the EOS way, we're, we're, we're pretty much,

**Jim Brewer (14m 45s):**

And from my perspective also, Dave, it is a perfect fit because what EOS doesn't do that Mastery Partners does, mastery Group does in various different ways, is identify the inherent value of right, of an organization. And for that entrepreneur have the opportunity to focus on, on, on what that

value is. You know, I think one of the slogans that runs around the organization is everybody's gonna have a transition event sooner or later of one kind or another. Yeah. And the inherent value is really important. And, and EOS addresses growth, that addresses accountability, it addresses, you know, setting some 90 day goals like rocks and, and, and yearly goals and 10 year goals and all that stuff.

**Jim Brewer (15m 38s):**

But we don't identify the inherent value of the company in the relationship to that ultimate transition event, whatever it turns out to be.

**Dave Casey (15m 49s):**

Yeah. And then, you know, of course, obviously the title of this podcast, the Maximize Business Value Podcast, we're all about helping the business owner maximize the value of their company. And, and that may be different, different tasks or different procedures or things that you do at different points in time. So when we, when we work with a client, we'll, we'll normally identify the levers they need to pull to generate the most value, let's say, in the next quarter or the next year or whatever. So let's concentrate on those things. Doesn't mean we're gonna abandon the other things, doesn't mean we'll never get to 'em. It's almost like short term versus long term issues or, you know, what's a rock and what's an issue and those kind of things.

**Dave Casey (16m 31s):**

So it's, it's fun. I mean, it really is and it's very helpful. And, and that we,

**Jim Brewer (16m 36s):**

Dave, do you remember a couple of years ago when we started the journey with a mastery group? If after we get everybody on the same page and just, if I have a meeting to introduce the concepts, the first formal meeting we have is called Focus Day. Yeah. And, on focus day, we talk about a concept called hitting the ceiling.

**Dave Casey (16m 59s):**

Yep.

**Jim Brewer (16m 60s):**

And every growth-oriented organization is gonna reach critical times. Yeah. That, that they're stuck. Yeah. Either they're stuck personally, their division, or they're the folks that they're responsible of for in the organization are stuck, or the whole company is stuck.

**Dave Casey (17m 21s):**

Stuck. Yeah. Yeah.

**Jim Brewer (17m 22s):**

And one of three things happens, right? They either take 'em down, and that happens all too often in entrepreneurial companies. You know, the stats better than I do. I'm sure everybody who's watching this knows the stats. Most entrepreneurial companies don't survive, or that inflection point might just be limiting their growth. They might just flatten out, but there is an opportunity to do what we call breaking through the ceiling. Right. And so what I think is so unique with EOS is we don't start with, I mean, we've got a great one-page strategic plan called the VTO.

**Jim Brewer (18m 6s):**

You know, we get into that in subsequent meetings, but we start with the organizational structure of the organization. We start with tactics and then go to strategy. Yep. Right? And it's because that hitting the ceiling and recognizing that some tools will help you in those challenging moments of that we start that way. Everybody expects us to start with the VTO and the 10-year target, where are we gonna be in 10 years, and all those kinds of things. Yep. But we don't.

**Dave Casey (18m 37s):**

Yeah. It's, it, it, it, and that was hard. I mean, that was hard to how do we, how can we be tactical if we don't know the strategy? You know, but

**Jim Brewer (18m 46s):**

How can you be strategic if you don't have? Yeah. You know, the foundation in place.

**Dave Casey (18m 51s):**

Yeah. It's, it's very, very true. So cool. So EOS and then I, you know, I know you've been involved for quite a while with Vistage as well. Vistage is another organization. I was in Vistage as a CEO in a CEO group for I think seven or going on eight years. And thoroughly enjoyed that experience. And also, it really helped me when I actually exited my business. I had my Vistage brothers greatly impacted by that transaction and how things worked for me there. So tell me about your involvement with Vistage.

**Narrator (19m 33s):**

Thank you for tuning in to the Maximize Business Value Podcast. This episode is the first of a two-part release. Part two will be posted next week.

**Tom Bronson (19m 53s):**

Thanks for joining us for another episode of the Maximize Business Value Podcast. I hope today's conversation sparked new ideas on how you can continue driving value in your business. But remember, it's not just about listening, it's about taking massive action. Visit our website [masterypartners.com](http://masterypartners.com) for more resources. Grab a copy of any of the books in the Maximize Business Value series on Amazon or via the links below. And don't hesitate to reach out if you want to know how to apply these concepts to your business.

**Tom Bronson (20m 33s):**

So until next time, I'm Tom Bronson, reminding you to relentlessly execute while you Maximize Business Value.