

# Episode 49

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Food beverage music and more, Winner family business, grocery store ownership, independent IGA stores, Indian Lake Lakeview, meat department margins, sweat equity, business succession, restaurant operations, Mix 165 food truck, vertical integration, retaining employees, music and performance, Champaign County, supporting local artists, small town economics

## SPEAKERS

Jason Duff, Brad Winner, Ethan DeLeon

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B

**Brad Winner** 00:00

The first thing they asked me is like, how do we get more artists to live in Champaign County? I was like, can they make a living here? Great question.

J

**Jason Duff** 00:08

And, and great answer.

B

**Brad Winner** 00:10

Everybody's minds just like look so confused. And I was like, you're never going to foster a community around something if they can't support themselves.

J

**Jason Duff** 00:20

The economics have to work.

E

**Ethan DeLeon** 00:29

Hey everyone, my name is Ethan DeLeon and I'm here with our founder and CEO of Small Nation, Jason Duff. Today we're excited to have the local entrepreneur Brad Winner on the show with us. We want to welcome you to the Small Nation podcast where we share some of the valuable lessons with what we have learned about entrepreneurship, real estate, economic development, and more. The point of this podcast is to create value for you, the listener, and to create a space to learn, talk about what's trending, and inspire others.

J

**Jason Duff** 00:51

Thank you, Ethan. Brad, welcome to the show.

B

**Brad Winner** 00:54

Thank you for having me. It's, it's great to be here. I always love coming to Bellefontaine and visiting with you guys.

**J****Jason Duff** 00:58

Well, I was kind I was hoping that we would have some delicious food from Mix 165. It's probably just out in the car still, maybe.

**B****Brad Winner** 01:07

Yeah, yeah, you know, it's hot enough out there today to keep it warm. So hey, we might have to bring the food truck over here and feed you guys.

**J****Jason Duff** 01:14

I love that. I love that. No, Brad, why I'm excited to have you on the show today is that you have had, grew up in family business and also had a number of ventures and projects of your own. But I always love connecting with family business kids because it was so easy growing up.

**B****Brad Winner** 01:32

Yeah, yeah, it's, uh, you know, work and home life, it gets blended sometimes. It gets challenging. Um, you know, it's— I think that's a topic that over the years you and I have continued to explore as your businesses evolve and as ours have as well. Um, you know, you've got a great— a lot of great insight into that. Um, I appreciate a few years on you.

**J****Jason Duff** 01:54

So, uh, no, I mean, I think it's it is kind of like a fraternity when you talk to other people that have had a shared experience, because like going through that where you see potentially grandparents or mom or dad or brothers and sisters work along with you, um, it's a— there's so many joys that come from it, but it's certainly got challenges too. Yep. But like, tell us a little bit like what it was like growing up in the Winter family.

**B****Brad Winner** 02:21

Um, you know, we had that You know, that right now it's a major topic talking about how the American dream is dead and there's no opportunity out there if you're not born into it. And I had the unique privilege to kind of see that really play out. Um, you know, we spent the first 5 years of my life in a trailer while my mom and dad just grinded every day. They socked away as much money as they could to better our existence. And, uh, you know, my dad ran grocery stores for multiple owners. Um, when we were young, and in 2007 he had the opportunity to buy one from his mentor. He actually financed the deal with some funding from a local bank, and, you know, the rest is history.

**J****Jason Duff** 03:05

And a lot of people hearing that, what does that really mean? So like, you worked in the business, and how does an opportunity like that come up for an employee to buy a business?

**B****Brad Winner** 03:15

So it— at that point in time, my dad was in a kind of sweat equity deal with his partner, uh, at that point in time. And some things had happened, and it was a good time for him to exit. Um, and my dad had proven himself, uh, to Kenny. Um, Kenny was his mentor. Kenny, um, owned finance part of the, the first deal. And, uh, it was, it was more of a just proved himself, and he had people take a chance on him, uh, I love hearing those stories. I've seen them happen. I've, I've heard them happen for, for other business owners as well. A lot of opportunities where people are in the business for a long time, and as we were talking about earlier, um, you don't have the, the succession strategy, and then they don't want to see the business die, right?

**J****Jason Duff** 04:04

Because they put a lot of hard work and effort in creating it. And that term sweat equity, the ability to work in the business— like, you may have to sacrifice some things to get, the chance to own a piece of that business. Correct. So like, what does that mean for someone that may be listening, like, in a traditional job? Like, would they be taking less salary with the agreement or the option to like have ownership?

**B****Brad Winner** 04:30

Um, kind of anything goes in that scenario.

**J****Jason Duff** 04:32

It's true.

**B****Brad Winner** 04:33

Um, and so I think there might be some situations where somebody forgoes salary and it goes into a pot of money that ends up going to the current business owner. And sometimes it's just You know, it's that, that employee that grinds all the time, that's there every day, um, when things are hard, they are consistent. And, and, you know, I'm blessed to have a couple of those people on my teams right now, um, and they vary in shape and form. I've got 18, 19-year-olds, and I'm like, man, I hope they stay with me for a long time, right? And we've, we've had employees and, uh, that have been with us, worked for my dad through multiple you know, ventures, and they're still on the team now. Um, we had a staff member at our Mechanicsburg location that just retired. I want to say she worked for my dad for like 30 years. Wow. And, uh, you know, it's a— it's really cool to see.

**J****Jason Duff** 05:25

So the businesses— you mentioned the grocery store business. You— your family has moved into operating multiple businesses.

**B****Brad Winner** 05:33

Yeah, so kind of grew up in the food industry. Um, you know, Dad, give me \$20 to go push carts on Saturday morning when he was short-staffed.

**J****Jason Duff** 05:43

You know, I'm like, so you were out in the parking lot like, why did people stack the carts this way, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 05:48

Hey, if they— if, if they're in the cart corral, I'm okay with that. But when you're, when you're chasing that sole one at the end of the parking lot, you're like, who parked out here? Um, yeah, that's, uh, spent a lot of time in the stores. It was cool because I don't know if it was out of necessity where I I have two brothers, so my parents were always on the go, but we spent a lot of time in the stores with my dad. So I got to watch him interact with staff, vendors, um, delivery drivers. Some of those interactions were positive. Some of them, I got to see him, you know, rip into people who deserved it. Yeah. Um, so I got to see that at an early age, how to handle different situations. And honestly, I think it's helped me with how I interact with people now. Um, yeah. And It was one of those things where it was like when something needed to happen, Dad was there, Mama didn't help. If I needed to be there, we were there. And, you know, at the time when you're 12, you're like, hey man, I want to go play baseball. And we did, we did plenty of that. Um, but there were a lot of sacrifices. And, you know, when you're, when you're young, especially in your teenage years, my parents didn't really start building the company they have now, uh, until I was a teenager. And so there were some hard years in there, um, for everybody. Uh, you know, Dad wanted to be everywhere at one time, but ultimately you have an investment in a facility, you have an investment and a commitment to people. If something goes awry, you have to be there. And that's probably one of the biggest lessons I've learned from him over the years, is like, this is your responsibility. These people are relying on you. You are the leader. You are the consistency. In that building. You're the consistency for them when their lives go astray. Um, you and I have discussed this on regular occasions. Sometimes you're their financial advisor, sometimes you're their relationship counselor. And watching my dad navigate all of that from a young age really put me in a unique position, I think.

**J****Jason Duff** 07:42

So growing up in that environment, did that make you want to do something similar? Like, oh, when I grow up, I'm going to take over the family business? Or was that, oh man, get me out of here kind of thing?

**B****Brad Winner** 07:51

Yeah, so, um, when I was a teenager, I was that you know, walk the gray line. Yeah, uh, Rebel Without a Cause kid. Now, we weren't out there slinging drugs or anything like that, but we were the king of toilet papering in Champaign County.

**J****Jason Duff** 08:07

I like that.

**B****Brad Winner** 08:08

It was— we made it an art form. You like rolled up at somebody's house and 200 rolls of toilet paper in the tree, and we took pride in that. Let's go. Um, but that whole, um, kind of rebelling against authority thing didn't serve me well, and You know, as I graduated high school, I did the whole moving out of this town, never coming back. Um, so we moved over to Columbus when I was 18, really got into the music scene over there. I was playing on a regular basis. So I guess long answer to your question, no, at that point in time I had no interest in getting involved in the family business. And it was kind of the plan B, like, oh, you know, if I don't become a rock star and sell 10 million albums, I guess I'm gonna get— I guess I'm gonna go Join the family business. Um, and then over time when, you know, my responsibilities really started to set in and I had bills to pay and you were playing guitar till 2 o'clock in the morning with an open bar tab, uh, making it to work the next day is challenging.

**J****Jason Duff** 09:08

Yeah.

**B****Brad Winner** 09:08

And, uh, you know, I was, that was before the time where anybody wanted to pay musicians to play anywhere.

**J****Jason Duff** 09:13

It was like, yeah, free drinks. Yeah.

**B****Brad Winner** 09:15

Free drinks and exposure. It's like, well, my landlord's going to love that exposure. Yeah. And so, um, I kind of had this, point in my life where, you know, college wasn't going real well for me. I couldn't find anything that I really loved. Uh, you know, I spent my first 2 years at Columbus State, got the GPA up, transferred into OSU. And the setting in OSU is just wild, where it's like, you know, sit in this lecture hall, have somebody, you know, read the book to you. My brain doesn't work like that, so I just started buying the books and reading the book from start to finish. And as we know, in college classes, like, you are reading way more information than you actually need for that class. Yeah. And so my dad and I had a pretty, you know, lengthy conversation, and he was like, just really think about it, you know. And at the time I was, you know, studying sociology and psychology, and I was like, I don't, I don't think I'm gonna make the money with this degree that I'm gonna want. Yeah. So I called him the next day and I was like, let's do this, like, I'm in. At that point in time we had just bought the location at Indian Lake on the north side of the lake there in Lakeview, and It had no modern technology systems in it, so the register systems were still stickers with, you know, hand-punched prices.

**J****Jason Duff** 10:29

As someone growing— that grew up at Indian Lake, I remember that there were people that would be in there that would like look at the price stickers and ring it on the register. But it was kind of known that some people working the registers would make mistakes, right? And that's a big problem as a business owner because your profits are working on very tight margins without really good systems were going right out the door.

**B****Brad Winner** 10:51

Yep. And, uh, and Larry, um, Finch, he's, he's a great guy. He— we bought the store off of him. He's probably one of the hardest working people I've ever met in my life, and his work experience, like, just insane. You know, the car dealership at one point in time, he flips houses still, and he still helps out at the store up there. And it was like, we've done several, um overhauls of grocery stores, uh, you know, IGA-branded stores that again have no succession plan. That tends to be the ones that we look for. Um, but when you don't have somebody invest in the technology systems for 20 years, it was my responsibility to build that file. So I walked through the grocery store knowing that 60% of the products on the shelves we weren't even going to carry once we sold out of it, but they still had to be in the register system. So I had to pull everything off the shelf one at a time.

**J****Jason Duff** 11:44

Wow.

**B****Brad Winner** 11:44

Build that digital file. And then that store has a hardware department too, so— oh geez, it was kind of a never-ending task. Um, but yeah, yeah, it's— that store, you know, is kind of a just weird operating store because in a, in a market that, you know, Fourth of July, there's 50,000 people up there for the fireworks. In December, there's a fraction of that.

**J****Jason Duff** 12:13

So imagine trying to track an inventory, right? You've got to be staffed at one level, and then being seasonal, that has to be tough.

**B****Brad Winner** 12:20

Yeah, it is. And, uh, there's a great team up there. Um, the, the general manager, Dina, she is a beast. Like, just handles the people well, handles the vendors well. Um, the deli manager, Michelle, she's another one of those staff members that has worked for my family since I can remember. Um, and it was just kind of when that we purchased that store, she was driving from Bellefontaine to Mechanicsburg to work for us. We're like, hey, we just bought a store in Logan County. She's like, wow, that'll make my commute a lot better. So she's, you know, again, just having that, those reliable people that can execute for you on a consistent basis, it works wonders.

**J****Jason Duff** 12:56

That's great. Well, the, the grocery industry, where, like, where do you make money? How do you make money in that business?

**B****Brad Winner** 13:02

So I always joke because, you know, we operate restaurants as well, is they're like the exact opposite. So grocery is— you want high volume because the margins are low. And a lot of the things that people buy in high volume are price controlled. So your alcohol is, you know, your state regulates that, state regulates it. You're making the same margin on it. There's not really any pricing strategies that's going to better the opportunity in it. Cigarettes, you're working on like a 7% margin. So if you got somebody stealing cigarettes you're losing all your profit just off one person stealing them. And so what we've done is we, we look for small format stores and we increase the grocery capability in them to a massive level. We put good fresh produce in there, nice freezer section. You know, when people walk into our store, like, I can't believe you have all of this. And I think the key to it is, is choosing the right SKUs, the right products that move, and not keeping all of the excess stuff.

**J****Jason Duff** 14:01

And could that be different by neighborhood, like by store?

**B****Brad Winner** 14:03

Every single one of our stores operates a little differently, which is cool, but it's also challenging because you rely on that manager and those department heads to fill the store with what they think is going to sell. And, you know, sometimes you're wrong. Yeah, there is some overlap, but, um, it's amazing when you go 3 counties away how different a neighborhood and a community can be.

**J****Jason Duff** 14:29

And so when I think about the produce versus if you carry meat? Like, where, where is the, the money to be made?

**B****Brad Winner** 14:38

So I'm glad you said meat departments. Our meat departments do a phenomenal job, um, and I would say that that's probably one of the more profitable segments of the store.

**J****Jason Duff** 14:47

But high customer focus, like you've got to have people that know how to correct cut and package and provide a fresh product.

**B****Brad Winner** 14:53

Yep, you can lose a lot of money really fast in meat department because proteins—

**J****Jason Duff** 14:57

we know this— proteins, when you buy food in a restaurant, that's the bulk that's where a lot of your money is, right? So you mess a steak up and you misserve the temperature of how it's served, like, your whole profit for like the dinner could be the whole evening, correct? Could be messed up just on steaks.

**B****Brad Winner** 15:12

Well, and again, kind of blessed to have the team that we do. Our meat manager at our Springfield location grew up in the meat industry. His family had a butcher shop and he grew up cutting meat, wrapping grinds, and he's probably one of the most experienced people in the meat industry that I know personally, which obviously benefits the restaurant as well. Um, we get commodity reports before— like, you know, if you were to purchase your meat from a warehouse, we, we kind of vertically integrated and we purchase it from ourselves, wholesale it from ourselves. So when we get those commodity reports, we start to prepare specials in advance. And, you know, we were expecting major beef cost increase increases going into the summer holidays. And as I was telling you, it didn't end up happening. So all the specials we had planned with beef, we were like, okay, we need to go premium with it so that we can get — justify the price. And, you know, it helped the margin.

**J****Jason Duff** 16:10

Wow. You mentioned like finding the right people that are going to work in your meat department is a big kind of competitive advantage. How do you find and retain really good people? What do you think the winner secret sauces with that? Because I, looking from afar, I think you guys do that really well.

**B****Brad Winner** 16:26

Well, I appreciate that. And I think a lot of it is just a testament to how long my dad has been operating in the industry. Um, the, the number 2 that's kind of working in behind the main meat guy at our Springfield location, he worked for my dad when he was in high school. And so he was, you know, COVID hit and obviously we couldn't cut enough meat for the world. It was going out the door so fast. And his job at the time was like started to cut back and and he reached out to my dad and was like, hey man, I need some hours. And we're like, well, we definitely need you. Yeah, right. He's, he's probably the fastest meat cutter I've ever seen. So I think just kind of operating in the industry for decades, on top of consistency, consistency, trying to treat your people well, trying to pay better than the competitors. And kind of with, with the meat industry now is when you go into a Kroger or a Walmart, a lot of that's warehouse cut. They're not they're not cutting that in their facility. It's being cut at a giant warehouse. You don't know who's cutting it, you don't know who's packaging it, you don't know how often the stuff's cleaned. Again, not to take a shot at them, I still, you know, I still buy stuff from them from time to time.

**J****Jason Duff** 17:33

Sure.

**B****Brad Winner** 17:33

Um, but that is, I think, the advantage to being an independent operator is that you control a lot of the elements that the corporate operators don't.

**J****Jason Duff** 17:44

So take, take me back with you. Okay, so we're talking a lot about the you know, your grocery store industry and the family you grew up in, and that's kind of like your base is what you came from. But then you said you jumped to Columbus. So take me through, fill in the gaps here a little bit from Columbus. What made you want to leave the big city, leave the music scene, and then get into— I know we've— you've got some restaurants too, and talk to me about the parallels and what made you get into that.

**B****Brad Winner** 18:07

So yeah, so I mean, music's always been like an artistic outlet for me, um, and that was nice getting that, you know, live exposure, um, kind of putting the pressure on yourself to get in front of, you know, hundreds of people with an acoustic guitar and a microphone is— it knocked a lot of the nerves out of me that I think was beneficial to me to this point.

**J****Jason Duff** 18:26

And we've talked about that, how music— confidence. Yeah, you know, get pushing people out on stage and like learning the skills to— you've got to communicate or sell something, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 18:35

Yeah, yeah.

**J****Jason Duff** 18:36

And I mean, you said earlier, like, I've got to sell this, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 18:38

And I think some of it was like my parents forced us to do tap dance dancing when we were real young. So that was even like the performing, the beginning stage of like, you're not gonna be embarrassed to perform in front of people. And, and as you know, in business, I mean, especially in what you do, you're in front of new people all the time and you can't freeze.

**J****Jason Duff** 18:57

And I embarrass myself a lot.

**B****Brad Winner** 18:58

Yeah, well, and I think that's part of it, is like, as you evolve, you're like, great. Yeah, you just embrace it. You're like, I know I'm a human. And, uh, and one of the cool classes I took at OSU was, was acting. And I don't know why I fell in love with it, but The teacher was like, look, when you go to a Broadway performance, do you think that everything is being executed the way that they plan? He's like, absolutely not. He's like, when you do it, you just— you're still the person, you're just taking on that persona. And as you execute and things evolve on stage, you just roll with it.

**J****Jason Duff** 19:26

And that's right, I love it.

**B****Brad Winner** 19:28

Yeah. Um, but yeah, so kind of how I got from Columbus back to Urbana, I was living in the Short North at the time, and my neighbor was walking their dog. I knew the dog's name but not the neighbor's name. And that's when it hit me where it was like, you know, my, my wife Samantha, we had just started dating at the time, and I was like, do I want to raise kids and have a family in such a non-connected environment? And then at that point in time, my grandpa started having some minor health issues that we had, you know, he didn't He's not going to tell you what's really going on, but we had some suspicions and I was like, look, right now, like, family is the value. I apologize, my phone should be on silent.

**J****Jason Duff** 20:13

This is my email productivity. We know we're busy people when you hear that.

**B****Brad Winner** 20:18

Yeah, no, you're good. Small business owners. But, uh, yeah. And so we moved back. Um, I think also like housing costs was a big thing too. Um, yeah, I was looking for houses, Short North, Grandview, Hilliard, and Yeah, going through that right now.

**J****Jason Duff** 20:35

It's tough. Rather not talk, right? Right.

**B****Brad Winner** 20:37

And so for what you could buy a house in Champaign County or Logan County for— I mean, at that time, even Plain City, that was before all the development, and Plain City was still getting, getting outrageous, right? Yeah. And so I sent, I sent Sam a realtor.com listing and I was like, look at the price.

**J****Jason Duff** 20:57

She looked at it.

**B****Brad Winner** 20:58

At that time, we weren't married yet. She's like, I'm down.

**J****Jason Duff** 21:01

So we— would that surprise you from her?

**B****Brad Winner** 21:04

Very surprised, because she grew up in Mason, like Northern Cincinnati area. Yeah. And, you know, she went to OU, moved to Columbus. And when I sent her that and she was like, I'm down, that's kind of the moment I was like, okay, she might be a keeper. She's gonna kill me for talking about it. Um, but yeah, so we looked at literally 3 houses, fell in love with the second house. When we went to the third house, like, I walked in and it was I, I love Victorian houses. So our house was built in like the 1890s, uh, early 1900s, um, somewhere in that time frame. And we walked in, it was immaculately maintained. You know, you're a real estate guy, when you walk into a property like, man, I gotta tear down everything and replace it.

**J****Jason Duff** 21:46

I gotta do that in my, my work life, right? Don't want to do it my home life, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 21:50

Yeah. So we, uh, you know, we fell in love with the house, put in an offer, and that was before all these crazy, you know, real estate prices. Everyone in the world is buying a house right now. And, you know, we were in, um, you know, her grandparents weren't real fond of the thought of us buying a house together before we were married. And the way I look at everything is it's either as temporary or as permanent as you want it to be. I was like, we can always sell a house if it doesn't work out. And thankfully it worked out. We've got 2 kids now, and just kind of life's evolving.

**J****Jason Duff** 22:19

Yeah. Wow. So you moved back to the area, so obviously you're closer to family, you're closer to the business, Tell me about how that transition moved in you, how you moved into the, the businesses.

**B****Brad Winner** 22:30

And yes, so that was always the, you know, grocery is kind of what built our family business. And I always joke with my dad that it's like watching paint dry. You put it on the shelves and wait for somebody to buy it. And so when we were buying the Springfield location, there was a deli that wasn't being utilized and we were paying rent for it. And the landlord couldn't really rent it to anybody else because there was no firewall there. And he did not want to put a firewall in there, and I'm sure you know why.

**J****Jason Duff** 23:00

Oh yeah, it's expensive.

**B****Brad Winner** 23:01

Very expensive. Yeah. And, uh, so my dad was like, oh, what can we do with the space? I was like, it's like the perfect size for a Subway. And so we put a Subway franchise in that store, and there's access from the parking lot and also from the grocery store to bring some like immediate recognition to the fact that there was a new operator in there. That was— the store was kind of beaten down, uh, customer count was real low. My dad had actually ran that store for the previous owner back in the '90s when I was a kid, so it was kind of like that full circle moment.

**J****Jason Duff** 23:35

Which I have to say, that's a pretty bold move, like, you know, for independent people running independent grocery stores to then say, hey, we want to bring a franchise in. Yeah, that's a— probably was a, some learning curve there, but where it's really smart is how oftentimes do you see with a gas station that they'll partner up with a franchise like a Subway, right? Because inherently it's going to bring more traffic. And I love that because you partner with a national brand, the credibility that brings to the grocery store right next door and the foot traffic.

**B****Brad Winner** 24:02

I mean, it was an immediate foot traffic increase. And, you know, we were still— we didn't close the grocery store while we were doing maintenance on it. We got it to where it was operational, um, and then we really started construction on the subway. And kind of the, the cool and somewhat frustrating thing about my family is we do a lot of construction ourselves. So I was laying the tile in there, we were hanging the, the wallpaper. And, you know, it's— you learn a lot when you do that. And it's, you know, your team I have so much appreciation for because of how quickly they knock stuff out, man.

**J****Jason Duff** 24:37

We do appreciate them. Yeah. And it can get very stressful because you have all these unintended consequences that come up. And then you've got regulators that are reviewing plans and drawings, and then those are different people from the inspectors that are actually inspecting the work that you're doing.

**B****Brad Winner** 24:53

Well, and sometimes, uh, going from county to county, codes change. All different, you know. Inspectors sometimes don't actually know the codes as well as they should, and so you end up wasting a lot of time. And I think the, the most challenging part for us doing our own construction was that you're still maintaining the businesses that you have while you're doing the construction.

**J****Jason Duff** 25:11

So Evenings and weekends.

**B****Brad Winner** 25:14

Evenings and weekends. Um, you know, I'd be laying tile there when the store's closing on the other side, and they're like, hey, you going to stay in here for a while? I was like, yeah, just— I'll lock up when I'm done. But, um, again, that goes back to like watching my parents grind it out every day on a consistent basis, regardless of how good or bad everything was going. You still show up, you still put up, you still get the work done. And you know, it, it, it saves a lot of money. I mean, hiring those contractors out at Save hundreds of thousands of dollars on a project.

**J****Jason Duff** 25:43

What a lot of people don't realize is that a lot of your family time in a family business, the kind of what's non-traditional about it is you work with your family. Like, that's instead of like going home and having dinner, you're probably eating at the business together. And then holidays, like my, my holiday experience, because both my parents were small business owners and my mom had a retail store a Hallmark shop. So Christmas Eve, we worked up till 6 o'clock PM on Christmas Eve. That was all I knew. I like, I thought that was normal. Is there anything like you can speak around like what your experience was of what maybe would be unusual for a lot of people, but to you was like, this is just should be a normal thing, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 26:26

So, and you talk about Christmas Eve, um, the Mechanicsburg location was, it's a, it's a like large gas station that we turned into kind of a small grocery store, has fuel there, and it was open 24/7 all year. Wow. Except for Christmas Day. And so closing down an operation that's open all the time is big deal, a big deal. And so for years it was our, our Christmas Eve thing. We like all piled in the Suburban together, rolled to the gas station, because you gotta turn gas pumps off. And when you're open all the time, people are accustomed to you being open all the time. So my brother would be standing at gas pumps, be like, hey, I'm sorry, we had to power these down for the night. Wow. And then I'd be standing at the front door being like, hey, the doors close at 10. Merry Christmas, hurry up and get your stuff. You know, got guys walking like, hey, I need beer. Like, all right, bro, like, get it and roll, because like my staff wants to be home with their family. Yeah. And, uh, yes, that was always, that was always like our Christmas Eve tradition. And we've changed the hours since then, but, uh, you know, and that's one of the things is, you know, I told you, Dad's starting to plan for retirement some. Um, we'll see if he ever fully retires.

**J****Jason Duff** 27:35

I've heard the same thing in my family, and it's kind of a double-edged sword because, like, I can't imagine what the businesses would be like without him. Yeah, and I don't like saying that. You know, you and I've had these conversations where it's like, we need them because we depend on the institutional knowledge. Replacing someone that does the job of 4 people is not just going to happen overnight.

**B****Brad Winner** 27:58

Well, that, and like the part that kind of, you know, makes me feel mortal about it is like when I have a problem, like walk in, talk to my dad about it. And the thought of like not having any more projects to pursue, like we spent hundreds and hundreds of hours executing projects, whether that's residential properties or the commercial properties, um that's a lot of quality bonding time. You just like listen to classic rock, hang out, talk, you know, how's life going? And so again, back to like what you're saying, that's a lot of bonding time. And when I was younger and I couldn't participate in it and that's what they were doing, like as I got older and I could participate in it, I enjoy it. I enjoy that. I, I enjoy the project side of business, um, probably a little more so than just the, the operational stuff. I love putting something together, getting it launched, and seeing it come to fruition. And so yeah, that's kind of the, the part that hits me and makes me feel real mortal, is that, you know, there's always gonna— at some point there's gonna be a last project.

**J****Jason Duff** 29:01

There will be. Um, one of the— my favorite podcasts that we've recorded so far was inviting my dad in. Oh, that's cool. Scott. And he got to share kind of from his perspective what it was like being you know, the, the son of the founder, but then also now, you know, passing the skills on to me. And, and like you, like, I every day by 7 o'clock AM, my first hour of the day is in the family business, and I see him every day. There's not many kids that when you're, you know, become our age and older, get to say they get to see their parents.

**B****Brad Winner** 29:33

Yeah, every day. And then like when somebody'd be like, hey, could you ever go take a normal 9-to-5 job? Like, I think part of what keeps me in it, even when, you know, Dad and I are pissed off at each other. Sure. Is like, tomorrow's gonna be another day, we're gonna get past it. And it, it poses a lot of stress to the father-son relationship. Um, my mom is, is pretty much retired out of the business now. She, she still helps with projects and stuff, uh, but her and I, we, we didn't work real well together. Her, her, her motives of operation in mind, just we didn't blend well. Different. And so that was a challenging thing for me when I was in my, my 20s, is it's like, oh, this is how I should do it, and my mom's got her way of how she, she should do it. And my mom's a beast. I've never seen anybody run.

**J****Jason Duff** 30:22

She'd have to be to do all the things to achieve the success that your family has.

**B****Brad Winner** 30:26

Yeah. And so I've never seen anybody run a store like her, and I can't do it the same way. Um, and my dad is— it's kind of the same thing. It's like the stuff that he achieves, like, I can't achieve it in the same way. And that's the beautiful thing and the challenging thing is like when you gotta mold your minds together to achieve a common goal, it's not always easy.

**J****Jason Duff** 30:47

We had another podcast with a personality brain type expert, uh, Benji Raypan, and Benji really kind of breaks down in there that our brain types, there's like 21 different assessments or personality styles that are within that. And a lot of times the friction points that we run into with our co-workers, and in your case, in my case, other family members, it's just because our brains look at things differently and we don't know how to translate it.

**B****Brad Winner** 31:16

But I— you—

**J****Jason Duff** 31:18

would you agree I learned a lot from that podcast on how he breaks it down to better be able to communicate with people. And I think it's very mature instead of just being angry and being frustrated and walking away. It's like you appreciate her, but you know that you're different, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 31:32

And, and it— I mean, I was talking to, to Ethan on the, on the Zoom call yesterday. I was like, when you have a blowout fight, which happens in, in business, um, you know, somebody makes an expensive mistake, um, you know, you're going to yell at your son a little differently than you're going to, you know, yell at somebody who's, who's not.

**J****Jason Duff** 31:53

And you've opened up and talked about how that you know, perspective from family business has, you know, bled into your leadership style. So I'm curious to pose that question to you. Do you feel like, you know, because of your growing up that way and how, you know, you were treated in the family business and the expectations of stuff, has that played out? Have you seen that?

**B****Brad Winner** 32:12

Yeah.

**J****Jason Duff** 32:12

So with employees, I'm—

**B****Brad Winner** 32:16

being that I was kind of a challenging teenager and, you know, rambunctious in my 20s, um, I got to see my dad in a different light because my dad would be like, all right, well, you're not gonna listen to what I have to tell you, so go learn your lesson, right? And then afterwards, he was really good at being like, all right, remember when I told you this? And so I've really kind of embraced that side of it, um, and I try not to move towards the I told you so's and things like that, um, because I never liked receiving it. My dad was— he was pretty good at not the I told you so, rubbing it in your face. Um, but I try to be— whenever, when, when that staff member is going through the trauma of their life, or, you know, they don't have, they don't have the, the money to pay the rent, it's, it's like, I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna beat you up over that. What I'm gonna do is say, okay, this is where we're at, how do we get to the solution? And so I, I think I've tried to not spend as much time as that as maybe my dad did in regards to like talking about the problem. It's like the problem already happened, like let's solve it. And, and I think some of it is like with my dad it was ingrained because he wanted me to see like, you know, you're running a company, when you make this mistake it costs you this much money. And, and I think I needed that for sure. Um, but being that my staff is not in that same situation. I've tried to evolve it a little bit.

**J****Jason Duff** 33:45

Yeah, that's interesting. Well, we're working on— I mean, I, I grew up in an environment that the way we loved each other was how hard we worked. And so some of the things that we've talked about with previous people too, and, and something I'm constantly working on, is that you have your co-workers and you have your family. And there's a big term that like, oh, our co-workers are our family, but sometimes they're not.

**B****Brad Winner** 34:09

Yeah. And that's— I think that is more of in, in regards to my relationship with my, my brothers, specifically my younger brother, is like sometimes we get in that, you know, pissing match where it's like, hey, I worked 15 hours yesterday. And then he's like, well, I was up at Indian Lake on Fourth of July weekend. And I'm like, touche. Yeah. And so we're, we're trying to consciously get better at not picking each other apart. Um, I— and also like the strain for my parents. I think that like is, is probably their biggest frustration with him and I, is that they hear both sides of it.

**J****Jason Duff** 34:45

How do you— and now that you're a parent thinking about your kids— managing inequalities when you've got kids that have different gifts? And you know, not thinking of the time and attendance economy, right? Like, how do you value it? I think in family business, it's one of the common things that I hear is a friction, is a challenge. Yeah.

**B****Brad Winner** 35:05

And so, and it's, it's funny you say the, the kind of different skill sets is I'm more of a creative than my brother is, whereas he's much more practical. Like, I can come up, I'll come up with some crazy solution and he's just like, there's way too many steps to that. And then vice versa is like, he'll come up with something, I'm like, it's got to be more, we got to do more. And but yeah, I think, I think the, the challenging piece with that is like, with the inequality is like You know, I do a lot of our marketing, a lot of the social media presence and stuff like that. And I manage a couple people that help with that. And since that's not like a tangible that you can't see a direct return on, and it's hard to really gauge how much time somebody's spending on it. Yep.

**J****Jason Duff** 35:50

I think that— how much mindshare it's taking from you.

**B****Brad Winner** 35:53

Because it is like, if you get a bad review, you know the impact that it has on a business. So you want to follow up and make sure it's right. And sometimes it's a multi-day process. And again, you're not spending 24 hours of the day on it, but you're waiting for that correspondence, and then you've got to think up what you're going to respond back. And it just, it eats in, it eats into it. And in the social media world, it isn't a necessary evil. It is, it's a, it's the low-hanging fruit way to reach a customer, and it has to be managed. And if it's not managed, it can be very problematic.

**J****Jason Duff** 36:26

Yeah. Yeah.

**B****Brad Winner** 36:27

Um, and so I think like in my experience is that since I handle a lot of that, and my dad's like, oh, you know, you didn't— you weren't— you weren't at the restaurant as much this week as you were last week. I was like, yeah, well, I've been staring at my phone sitting on my couch for the last, you know, 3 nights because this, this, and this happened. And I, I think that's like, you know, personally, like, the, the big hang-up. And so in regards to how you manage it I'm not sure. Yeah, I think it's a work in progress, I think, for every organization, understanding about it, where it's like, okay, your, your skill set's different. And my little brother, he's, he's amazing. I mean, you met him when we came over here for the walk. He's, he's great at what he does. And, you know, sometimes you do the brother thing where it's like, oh, my job's harder than yours. He's like, no, my job's harder than yours. So yeah, just trying to stay out of that mindset. And, you know, in our industries, you know, COVID really kind of put pressure, a lot of pressure on the family dynamic. And, you know, there was a couple of those conversations where like, let's just sell everything.

**J****Jason Duff** 37:29

I don't know what business— I mean, between, um, the government regulations that were coming down, trying to care for your employees, you know, disruptions in supply chain, and we're still like coming out of all of that. But like, some incredible innovations happened there too. And I also look, you know, what's great about Brad and Mix 165 and Winners Market, it's like being in these other communities, it's nice to have other entrepreneurs that you can kind of say, how are they handling that? Like, how are they communicating something online? Or are they hiring and retaining really great talent? Like, we— there may be some crossover in some of the comp, like you may deem it competition, but actually we're growing together. Like, you're— you, if you see something good happening in Urbana, I want the people in Urbana to win, and I would think that they want that for the projects that we're doing here because it's like a rising ship.

**B****Brad Winner** 38:19

Yeah, and I think it, it, it brings the standards up for the whole industry and You know, I follow all the Small Nation restaurants. They follow— most of them follow us, you know, and I think we've, you know, shared staff at different points of time. And again, Mechanicsburg and Bellefontaine are generally far enough away where we're not directly competing, but it's those middle markets that we both pull from. Sure. And that customer is going to, you know, vary. They're not going to go to Bellefontaine every single time. They're not going to go to Urbana every time. They're not going to go Mechanicsburg every time.

**J****Jason Duff** 38:49

So our war is against the chains and franchises, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 38:52

So like the chains and franchises.

**J****Jason Duff** 38:54

Yeah, and, and that honestly, that's where I think in the local food movement businesses like ours can really shine. But it goes down to using local ingredients, sourcing from, you know, the market. I mean, in Brad's case, like literally the, the stuff that's coming in from the wholesalers to his grocery stores are ending up on restaurant menus.

**B****Brad Winner** 39:14

Exactly. And it gives us the opportunity to kind of manage quality too. Is my meat cutter sees it, my cooks see it when they prep it, the cooks see it when it goes out.

**J****Jason Duff** 39:22

Like you get their name on it.

**B****Brad Winner** 39:23

Yeah, you get 4 touch points on it before the customer consumes it. And that is, from a quality control perspective, very—

**J****Jason Duff** 39:30

a whole lot better you can do, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 39:32

Right. I mean, other than staring at it while they eat it.

**J****Jason Duff** 39:35

Yeah. What do you think is unique about your restaurant?

**B****Brad Winner** 39:38

So the funny thing— so we opened in 2018, um, restaurant's called Mix 165, if we haven't plugged that yet. Um, follow us on Instagram and Facebook. What I loved and love still about the industry is it is that creative outlet that I no longer have with music. And I've got friends that are still musicians, you know, they're touring and I live vicariously through them, but it's not my personal outlet. And so getting to help curate the cocktail menus, I dictate— I shouldn't say dictate.

**J****Jason Duff** 40:09

I love that word.

**B****Brad Winner** 40:10

Let's get it out there. That's a bad usage. No, I help dictate the special schedules and stuff like that. And I think what's special about us is that there's something changing all the time. We're always looking for not necessarily what is that new trendy thing, because we all know you could throw some microgreens on top of a steak and, you know, it's, it's gonna fit in the Columbus food scene, you know. But it's more like, especially being in a smaller market, what is your market into at that point in time? And being in Mechanicsburg, it's a village of 1,200 people, right? When I was put— when we were building that My dad's like, are they gonna support this?

**J****Jason Duff** 40:48

And so your vision was up here.

**B****Brad Winner** 40:51

Yeah, coming from the short north and kind of that food scene, I was like, I don't want to just sell frozen food, like we're reheating.

**J****Jason Duff** 40:58

I mean, meatloaf special.

**B****Brad Winner** 41:00

Yeah, I mean, baked steak. I do, I do love a meatloaf though, and we've done like an upscale version of the meatloaf. So I think that is the piece is like, what are they into right now? What are they comfortable with? How do we make it better? How do we keep the price?

**J****Jason Duff** 41:14

You have elevated dining, but you're still approachable, and that in the restaurant industry is really hard to do.

**B****Brad Winner** 41:19

It is, and it's, it's hard to stay consistent with it too, because like curating an ongoing special regimen that kind of fits that mold takes a lot of brain work. And so you're communicating with the chefs on a regular basis, but like, you know, one example is Everyone loves tacos, right? And so we're like, okay, tacos are cool, but how do we make them like cooler? It's like, let's do a chicken parm taco. And so I'm the guy that like walks in really good and I throw the craziest idea at him. And I can't cook on scale to that. Like, I can cook at home, but I can't cook on scale to that. So they're like, okay, Brad wants to make a chicken parm taco. How are we gonna do this? And then you come in and they put a couple hours into it, and we sold like probably 150 in 3 days.

**J****Jason Duff** 42:09

You know, most people at their core, they want a chance to be a part of something bigger than themselves. And I think that what is struggling in corporate America is everything is so systemized and just rigid. That gives an opportunity for people to, to want to work at a different place. And I think if your organization can just like have what, what Brad's shared there, like allow people to suggest good ideas, allow people to ask for their feedback, um, to make something better, that is a company that you want to work in.

**B****Brad Winner** 42:41

Correct. And I, and I think the— in the independent industry, we're gobbling up talent over the corporations at a massive level. Some of it's pay, but when you talk about systematizing everything and it's so rigid, is that yes, it's systematized, but when you have so many systems, it's not simple anymore. And kind of like, you know, one of the— my big principles that I live by is like, don't make it more complicated than it has to be. And, you know, how I learned to cook was from my roommate in college. Um, his name's Adam Hong. He's— his parents immigrated here from Korea, so he cooks some amazing Asian dishes. And we were, you know, sitting there drinking a beer one night, and I was like, bro, teach me how to cook. And he said, what do you need me to teach you? He's like, all you're doing is taking something that's not hot and making it hot. And that just like blew my mind. I was like, why do I get— why, why do we get so much anxiety about something when we can break it down to its most simple form? And I try to do that with everything, especially when I'm getting anxiety about something. You know, with the Arts Council, we helped put on big concerts. And the first one I did, I was like, oh my goodness, there's going to be 700 or 800 people here, what are we gonna do? And I was like, it's literally just live music. Yeah, it doesn't matter if no one's out there, you're just having live music.

**J****Jason Duff** 44:03

And real quick, you— since you brought it up, you're sitting on, you know, the Arts Council, uh, board and stuff like that. So in your communities, as we're starting to kind of wrap up the end of this episode, talk to me about how you are collaborating with your community. Um, and you know, why do arts matter?

**B****Brad Winner** 44:19

Yeah, arts are— I mean, arts have been a big part of my life since I was a kid. And like, through the, the nonprofit work that I do, I'm the vice president of our, uh, County Economic Development Board, and I'm the president of our Arts Council. And I am maybe the crazy person that thinks that those things are intertwined, you know? Yeah, it's when I, when I was asked to join the Arts Council board, um, first I'd never sat on a nonprofit board before, so I was like, I don't really know what to do. Um, they were like, well, you know music, like, how— like, help foster a good community around music. Um, the first thing they asked me is like, how do we get more artists to live in Champaign County? I was like, can they make a living here?

**J****Jason Duff** 45:02

Great question, and, and great answer.

**B****Brad Winner** 45:04

Everybody's Minds just like look so confused. And I was like, you're never going to foster a community around something if they can't support themselves.

**J****Jason Duff** 45:15

The economics have to work. And talking about restaurants earlier, we think— we try to have the same approach with, you know, restaurants. If the dishwasher— if the, you know, they can't— they can't afford to find housing, you don't have a dishwasher, which means you don't have a restaurant.

**B****Brad Winner** 45:28

Which is— and that's why I think some of the big markets are going to have a very challenging time maintaining that level of service. I agree. And we're seeing the industry really, really embrace robotics right now. I don't know how successful that will be. I mean, it's at the—

**J****Jason Duff** 45:45

it's going to change the experience drastically.

**B****Brad Winner** 45:48

My wife said she was at a Skyline the other day and a robot brought the food out, and that's interesting. Central Ohio. So I'm always trying to watch what's happening on the coasts and, and kind of the Louisville has a lot of really cool stuff going on, so I watched that market as well. But yeah, I think, I think as it all evolves, we're kind of in the Wild West still. And I think COVID blew the doors off of things, and it made everybody see that there's more than one way to go to business.

**J****Jason Duff** 46:17

What advice, like, getting involved in the arts and nourishing an arts community— like, that was really good to say, can we people live here? Um, for someone that may be listening that that aspires to see more arts in their community, any other ways or strategies that they can expand and grow that?

**B****Brad Winner** 46:35

So I think a lot of it is having the venues. And so in Champaign County, when we first opened, we were the only place that was doing live music, right? Doing live music. And the other places that were, it was still that exposure model where it's like, hey, we'll give you a bar tab, you can eat the exposure, you know. And So now we're starting to see more places that understand it. We've got the brewery in Urbana that's embracing it as well. And, you know, I know those guys, and that's— they, they come to a lot of the events, and I always reiterate that is people cannot eat exposure. They don't pay their bills with it. So you need to keep that in mind. I think a lot of it too is the community events, is you're seeing a lot of these partnerships with local business, and they're putting on these events, and you're seeing the dollars roll in for it. And so, and I think a lot of it too is like finding the artist and helping support them through the trajectory of their career. Um, one of my good friends, Leah, she was just up at Country Concert last weekend. You know, we've known each other since middle school. I try to book her as regularly as I can. She's based out of Nashville now, so whenever she's up here, I'm like, yo, you need to contact this place, this place, and this place. They'll pay you.

**J****Jason Duff** 47:47

Love that. So you build the network.

**B****Brad Winner** 47:48

Build the network. You got to build the network out. And I think that That kind of goes with a lot of what you guys are doing as well with the entrepreneurship, not just in Bellefontaine, but because it's lonely otherwise.

**J****Jason Duff** 47:58

Like when you meet, like we did, we do dinner occasionally just to catch up and, and share. And what usually turns into an hour dinner is like 3 hours because you can actually connect with someone that has a similar shared experience.

**B****Brad Winner** 48:11

Yeah, and I think, uh, everyone benefits from it. It— business benefits, the community benefits, the artists benefit. Yeah, it just needs to be done in a sustainable manner.

**J****Jason Duff** 48:23

Well, and I'm seeing the success that's happening that Brad is leading up. You see historic theater in Urbana. The Gloria is like fully restored and now there's a variety of entertainment acts and options and things that are coming. So, you know, I think, and that leads to investment. We have been watching in Urbana several buildings and new restaurants that are opening shop. Just mentioned the new brewery. People like Jaymon Selman are investing in buying more buildings. So it like, it all starts to like be a part of a much larger movement.

**B****Brad Winner** 48:57

Yeah, and ultimately, as you said, rising tide raises all ships.

**J****Jason Duff** 49:01

Yeah, that's awesome. Well, thank you so much for just like walking us through your entrepreneurial journey and perspective on, um, you know, especially the restaurant and food industry and food and drink industry. I know there's a lot of interested entrepreneurs out there wanting to get into the same thing, and so I hope some of that was beneficial to some of them. But what was one, uh, professional development resource that was impactful for you throughout the years that really affected how you view business?

**B****Brad Winner** 49:27

So one of the kind of consistents through my mid-20s and 30s is— and I don't— you may know this name, but Ryan Holiday, um, podcast is phenomenal. Um, and how I got turned on to Ryan Holiday is my favorite author is Robert Greene. Robert Greene wrote *The 48 Laws of Power*, *The 33 Strategies of War*. And these are obviously principles that you can apply to your life, whether it's family, business, you know, your, your 9-to-5 job, anything you're doing. But these books were very in-depth. So it may be *48 Laws*, but this thing's like 500 pages. And so what the cool thing about it is, is they would take the lesson and then really break it down from a historical perspective. They would look at like ancient Chinese texts, ancient Greek texts, all of the Romans. And, and so they would apply all of this, this historical backing to the principle that they were presenting. And he did so well with Robert Greene that he was like, I think I can do this. And he was at one point the director of marketing for American Apparel, um, and he's the one that kind of started their blasphemy marketing strategy because it was cheap, low-hanging fruit. So they would post a shirt on their website that would make America mad, and every single news station would talk about it, and He's the one that kind of invented the feed it up the chain strategy that's really popular in politics and stuff.

**J****Jason Duff** 50:50

Now that's kind of our new political world, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 50:52

And so, and he was Tucker Max's publicist for a while. And, and if anybody knows Tucker Max, he wrote *I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell* and *Assholes Finish First*. Um, so he was a very controversial figure. So what he would do is he would go take billboards out when Tucker Max was going to speak and like announce that Tucker Max was going to be at North Carolina University. And he would go and vandalize the billboards himself to get the media attention, to get the media attention. He even went further. He took the picture, fed it to a blog, then fed it up the chain from one blog to a bigger blog to a local news source to a regional news source to a national news source. And so his first book I read was, uh, like *Confessions of a Media Manipulator*. And after that, he was so frustrated because he wrote the book with the intention as it being a lesson, like, don't fall for this, this is a problem. But then it started being taught in marketing classes at universities.

**J****Jason Duff** 51:51

Guerrilla marketing, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 51:52

Right. And so then he kind of shifted his, his, his focus onto more like self-development. So he uses a lot of, you know, characters that were popular with Stoicism and, and ancient Roman and Greek philosophy. And, um, The two books I really want to plug are *Ego Is the Enemy* and *Discipline Is Destiny*. I'm on my second round of *Discipline Is Destiny* right now, and it's just, you know, it talks about Lou Gehrig and how consistent he was with baseball. Dude played like 2,500 games without missing one, which is mind-boggling. So Ryan Holiday, yeah, read it all.

**J****Jason Duff** 52:28

That's great. You had a, you had a couple there for us. Appreciate that. And then the last thing, question I have for you is, uh, you know where can people find you? What— I mean, we briefly— Winners Market, Mix 165, all days, all night, right?

**B****Brad Winner** 52:42

Yeah. So we've got Winners Lakeview Market, north side of Indian Lake, Market at the Ridge in Northridge, Clark County, Winners One Stop in Mechanicsburg. Uh, I'm regularly at Mix 165, so I try to spend Friday nights there and, you know, just kind of hang out with everybody. Um, so yeah, if you're looking for us on social media, we're there. If you want listen, see more of my nonsense, uh, you can find me on Instagram, just Brad Winter.

**J****Jason Duff** 53:08

I'll link some of those below. But Jason, you have a kind of a recap? Yeah, well, in a world that we're seeing Dollar Generals and Family Dollars kind of pop up and, you know, really change the face of America, and I think not in a good way, um, I think listening to the stories that about the Winter family and, um, how, you know, Brad's— Brad Senior and, and your mom and you and your brother Um, you know, just a whole family, like what you have done to impact the community and how you're still impacting the community. And I, I just, I'm really inspired by it. And I think a lot of people can take nuggets around that it's not easy, but like the gift that keeps on giving in terms of the impact for the community. And there is, it's authentic, it's real. You hear, if you, if you, you cannot not hear the heart and the passion in everything that they do, and that equates to success. It's not something that just happens overnight, a business in a box. It's bringing the people with you along the journey that, that are your customers, that are your employees, and that impacts community. So I, I just think, uh, and I, I also think, listen, how well with the resources that you just shared, you are also studied and also want to be better every day.

**B****Brad Winner** 54:23

Every day. If you're not, if you're not getting better, you're getting worse. That is, that is for sure.

**J****Jason Duff** 54:27

Yeah. Well, thanks, Brett, for being on the show.

**B****Brad Winner** 54:28

Thank you guys for having me.

**J****Jason Duff** 54:29

Yeah, I appreciate it. All right. Well,

E

**Ethan DeLeon** 54:31

thank you everyone for tuning in and checking out the Small Nation podcast. You can find us anywhere that you listen to your podcasts, including Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and even the Small Nation YouTube channel. I hope you were able to pull some value from that conversation, and we hope to see you in the next one. If you enjoyed it, be sure to leave a like, comment, or a 5-star review to help more people to discover this podcast. Stay tuned to Small Nation on social media to keep up with all the cool projects that are happening here. And until next time, this is Ethan with A Small Nation Podcast signing off.

B

**Brad Winner** 54:57

Thanks everyone.