

Episode 66

📅 Wed, Feb 21, 2024 10:00AM ● 1:00:01

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

serial entrepreneurship, Andrea Wrocklage, Bellefontaine, Logan County, retail experience, Walmart lessons, customer service, t-shirt manufacturing, leaving public service, sheriff's office dispatcher, cost of entrepreneurship, real estate investment, small town revitalization, Mad River Mountain, building relationships with customers

SPEAKERS

Jason Duff, Andrea Wrocklage, Ethan DeLeon

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:00:00

It's the connection with the customer. It's, it's building that relationship. It's that customer service. It's that follow-through. It's all of the things. It's the hiring the right person for your store. The person who's going to look up and greet the customer and give them the experience in the store.

E

Ethan DeLeon 0:00:17

Welcome to the Small Nation Podcast, brought to you by Coverlink Insurance, where people are more important than policies. On this show, we unpack lessons from entrepreneurs to break down development strategies and do deep dives on small town success. Our goal is to provide value to our listeners by hosting conversations that teach, inform, and inspire. Hey everyone, my name is Ethan DeLeon, and I'm here in the studio with the founder and CEO of Small Nation, Jason Duff. Today we are excited to be interviewing local entrepreneur Andrea Rockledge. Welcome, Andrea.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:00:47

Hi, thanks, guys.

J

Jason Duff 0:00:49

Andrea is, is definitely a local entrepreneur, but she's also a Serial entrepreneur, which let me tell you, if you're crazy enough to open up one business, that's a special person in my book. But when you get to number 2, number 3, I, I, every time I talk to her, that's like, hey, I'm working on this new project.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:01:08

Yes.

J

Jason Duff 0:01:09

And you know, I, I'm just excited to, to interview her today because, um, she is a manufacturer. She is a creator. Uh, she is a, someone that has built a company that gives back to the community in a lot of different ways. She also wears the hat as a real estate owner and investor. And for a lot of our listeners, being able to do all those things and all those things well is someone I think we want to learn from today. Absolutely. I'm always interested. There seems to be a lot of overlap between starting a business and then eventually getting into owning real estate. So excited to get to that part of your story. But you are a native to Logan County for your entire life, right? So Talk to us, growing up here, what was it like? What was your perception of Bellefontaine?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:01:53

So I'm a born and raised girl. I remember much like you do, Jason. I'm just a hair older than you are.

J

Jason Duff 0:02:01

Not much.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:02:01

I remember going clear back to Murphy's. I remember Almond's. I remember Wolfheim's. Like, you shopped there. Buck and Roth's, Peachtree, all of the old staples. Grew up here and You surrounded yourself in this town, you loved this town, and then some things happened.

J

Jason Duff 0:02:21

Well, and those kind of iconic businesses, that was where when you got new school clothes, you would go. That was when you needed a donation to support your local show choir or sports team. That was where you— those are people that would invest in your town and community. And so I think What was really sad, and we share this a lot through the podcast, is things are always changing. And I think if we don't realize that economies ebb and flow, business types and industries change, and then technology seems to be one of those things that is always evolving. But, you know, things got bad here in town. A lot of the buildings and businesses that you mentioned closed. But tell us like, how you were watching that and when you decided that— because you had a great career. I did. And to make that jump, walk us through that.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:03:19

I did. So I'll take you back to my very young days, shopping, knowing, growing in this community. I've always been a worker. First job, Mad River Mountain. I would venture to say probably—

J

Jason Duff 0:03:32

What did you do at Mad River?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:03:33

I worked in Hans Dornsky's ski shop.

J

Jason Duff 0:03:36

Oh, she was— okay, that was a fancy job to be in the retail ski shop.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:03:40

Um, so I, I hate to admit that I, I had the cushy job out there, but I really did. So I, I started there, and I would venture to say about everyone in Logan County probably worked at Mad River Mountain. Um, but that's where I started. So I had some retail, a taste of retail there. Um, graduated high school, went on to college. While I was in college, I, I worked here in town for a local attorney. Went on to work at Walmart, like you need a job. I put myself through school. Learned a lot from Walmart. And anything that I've ever done, if I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it. I'm all in. I'm yours. I'm all in. I'm going to work hard. Worked my way up at Walmart. Actually set the first store in Columbus on Morris Road. So that was fun. Did some buying with Walmart and things like that. So I learned a little more. Retail, then on to the sheriff's office. So I worked—

J

Jason Duff 0:04:36

that's a jump.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:04:37

Yeah, it really was.

J

Jason Duff 0:04:39

Well, the thing about Walmart, so I've shared this, but I'm just going to remind listeners, if you've not taken the pilgrimage to Bentonville, Arkansas— oh my, have you been yet?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:04:51

Have I been? Yeah. How many times had I been? Oh, on a bus.

J

Jason Duff 0:04:55

Oh, wow. Okay.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:04:56

Walmart's very frugal. They don't fly you into Bentonville, Arkansas. They bus you to Bentonville, Arkansas.

J

Jason Duff 0:05:02

So the experience is you go to this what was a very small town, and Sam Walton started his, you know, his 5-and-10 store. But that is now the museum today. So all of the history of his original desk, of how he and his brother, you know, end up starting Sam's Club. Like, for me, as someone that's, that's passionate about seeing retailers in small towns win and succeed, you know, you see how that company massively grew and it grew with systems and processes and people and culture. Now, it's interesting, we flip like 360 and, you know, we talk about in a lot of towns how Walmart and of course now today the Dollar Generals and Family Dollars, how they're changing the scape of a lot of our towns and in many cases, some cases, not in a good way.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:05:50

Right.

J

Jason Duff 0:05:51

But that, that experience, I guess what, what What did you take away before you went to the sheriff's office? What were some of the things that you felt were really instrumental of working for a big company?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:06:01

So you learn so much about customer service. You learn about profit and loss. And Walmart was very good about sharing those things with you. And then again, sharing with you. I earned a lot of stock when I worked at Walmart. So there's a lot of lessons to be had there. They would teach you. They just a system. They had a system in place for everything that they did. And you could watch them module on X, Y, and Z, how to merchandise this, or what the goal and how to display or merchandise something else. So they had a lot of things in place that taught you and they gave you opportunities.

J

Jason Duff 0:06:39

Yeah. And you made the jump to work in the sheriff's department. So tell us about that.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:06:45

Yeah. So a good friend came to me and said, hey, I've got— at Walmart, I ended up a lot of hours, a lot of time. I had small kids. And he said, "Hey, come work at the sheriff's office. I've got this thing, it's called a dispatcher. And it's great. You can sit there at night and you can answer the phone and you'll be with your family and your kids and it's going to be great." And wow.

J

Jason Duff 0:07:10

Well, you moved from a different type of crisis to another type of crisis, right? But I imagine it takes a high level of communication and how you handle those calls.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:07:21

Yeah, it does. So I would really say I cut my teeth. That was the point in my life when you learned importance in things. You learned how to handle crisis. You learned how to help others. And you're truly a public servant. So you have to give yourself. Yeah. Have the utmost respect for anyone in safety service, public service. So yeah.

J

Jason Duff 0:07:44

Yeah. Wow. That's incredible. And then how long were you working? In that job or a similar— I mean, I know your career goes on from there.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:07:52

So, so just shy of 20 years.

J

Jason Duff 0:07:54

Just shy of 20 years. Wow. Did you ever think anywhere along that journey you would end up opening your own? Here's what I hear with that. Let me just say, cushy, like as in you're probably at a desk. Okay. Yeah. You have really great insurance and benefits. I'm just— I'm kind of processing this in my head. And then 20 years, you're earning a lot of lot of probably wage increases and promotions. But then you said, nope, hold my beer. Hold my beer.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:08:24

That's exactly kind of how that went, Jason. So yeah, so I did. I mean, you give a lot in public service, but I've never given more than we do with our own businesses. I mean, it's just the time, the commitment, all of the things. But it's funny, on the way in tonight, I actually hit Siri on my phone and I said, text a friend of mine that I have that's still in law enforcement. And I said, hey, I used to have anxiety about driving to work daily, and I didn't even know that I did. There's another path out there, and I hope that you find that too. So doing what we do, I spend way more time, energy, effort, money. I mean, there's a price to pay to be an entrepreneur. It's all worth it.

J

Jason Duff 0:09:12

So I'll just highlight, um, one of my favorite episodes is titled The Cost of Entrepreneurship. And Matt Brown, uh, shared his story and his journey of, you know, his career path of working in insurance and then stepping out, um, doing his first real estate deal. And then if you want a very easy business model, you start a restaurant.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:09:33

Yeah, I've heard that's the one thing worse than what we're doing. That's what—

J**Jason Duff** 0:09:37

but it is, it is something that he goes into highlighting, and I highly It's one of our most popular episodes. Absolutely, yeah. Highlighting the highs and the lows of that. And you know, there is a cost to it. It's not for everyone.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:09:51

Yeah. And I've watched, obviously I follow Matt and his story and Matt and I's relationship goes back to some time spent with him with Small Nation and just watching, you can watch Matt's success and hurdles. On him. And every time I just like, my heart goes out to him just watching, because I know what he's going through. We all know what he's going through. Yeah. In those highs and lows.

J**Jason Duff** 0:10:17

It's like a brotherhood and a sisterhood for people that are putting their neck out there and stepping up to the plate. But also, you know, he, I think he used the language eating beep. I've never had to put so many. I didn't even say it. Appreciate that. But you do where you know, your employees are hurting, your customers, you know, you just can't get something right. And no matter how hard or how try you try to please, we always can't bat at a perfect average. Yeah. And so you're just consuming all of the stress, anxiety while you're also trying to be the best version of yourself for your significant other, for your family. And, you know, I guess in making that jump, can you kind of share like your first business, how you started out? And maybe some of that journey.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:11:10

Sure. So my husband and I, I'm not in this alone by any means. My husband Rodney and I met in 2015, and Rodney had this cute little side gig of making t-shirts. And so, you know, it was fun. It was exciting. I'd go down and he'd print t-shirts. And this was great after he got off work. You know, we'd do this for hours at night and You know, I'm kind of like, hmm, well, should we have a date? Like, are we just friends?

J**Jason Duff** 0:11:39

That's a special girl to say, hey, you want to come over and hang out? We'll make some shirts together. Yeah. Free labor.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:11:45

And it was so cute to begin with because he'd say, just sit there and look pretty. That didn't last long.

J**Jason Duff** 0:11:51

Get over here and help.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:11:52

All of a sudden he's like, this is an employee. So he started— he was a competitive powerlifter, selling sports. Supplements. So he's always had that entrepreneurial piece with him. So selling sports supplements, and he wanted t-shirts to go along with his business. That's your number one marketing, uh, marketing gift to give anyone, or, or touches, feels, sights, all that.

J**Jason Duff** 0:12:16

So everyone loves a free t-shirt.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:12:17

Everybody loves a t-shirt. So he couldn't source what he wanted and how he wanted it. So being Rodney, he bought his first press off of eBay and made t-shirts. So then friends came and said, hey, will you make me a t-shirt? And soon he was selling more t-shirts than he was supplements.

J**Jason Duff** 0:12:35

So, wow. Yeah, that's awesome.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:12:37

So that was in 2013.

J**Jason Duff** 0:12:38

And was that the beginning of High Point Graphics? That was. So, um, you know, the, the business with you and Rodney, and you mentioned that— who is your primary customers at that point?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:12:50

At that point, for him, it was just the friend with a softball team, like a, a side softball team, or maybe dabbled in the school just a little bit, or someone else with a very small business that needed something affordable to get out.

J**Jason Duff** 0:13:03

And, and, and I think that's very prescriptive where people think right when they start their new business, like they have to get to some big contract or, um, they're gonna have to have this huge website that's gonna bring all these leads. Where when you and Rodney began this business, it was probably through friends and family. Mm-hmm. And then referrals. So people that you had a deep relationship with, and then he created the product for the sports team. And other people probably said, oh, those look really nice.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:13:29

Yeah. Right. Yeah. So there's a funny story about, about finding that one person in that small connection. So enter 2015, he and I were a couple and we're having fun making these t-shirts. He thought I wasn't that thrilled about it. He says, hey. And so I said, you know, this, this takes a lot of time. So you're either all in or we're not. Like, what are we doing here? So we went to a trade show in June of 2015, and I don't mind sharing certain statistics and things about us, financial things. The year before, he made roughly \$25,000 gross sales. \$25,000. We're halfway through 2015. And we go to this trade show. There's this opportunity to purchase rights to a program. It's called Order My Gear that basically you set up online websites for people. So no more taking the—

J

Jason Duff 0:14:28

The catalog.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:14:29

Yes, the little form home with the hand-drawn things and you check the boxes and then you write the check to the school or the money and the kid loses it and the coach loses it and nobody can track everything down and it's just kind of a disaster. So we bought the rights to this. And I'm also a mother of 3. So I was very connected into the Boosters, ran the Boosters, the kids' school for a while. And so I saw how that could really work. Hey, that's an opportunity. We could really make something here. So that was my buy-in. That was my piece that I brought to the table. And we started business together. By the end of 2015, we did \$125,000 in sales. Wow. And we thought we had arrived. 5 times. Yeah.

J

Jason Duff 0:15:12

\$100,000. Well, I mean, but just seeing— so a few things that you mentioned, uh, you know, stepping out and learning from a trade show. So by attending your industry or attending an event where you can be surrounded with other vendors, suppliers, and then also meet other entrepreneurs around the country that you'll never compete with but could get ideas and best practices on how they're achieving success, that sounds like that was a big key breakthrough.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:15:38

That was huge. And Also to note that Order My Gear was also a very small company at the time. We were one of their earlier customers. Once we brought that back here, it doesn't take long for people to follow suit and jump on that same train. But we were clear back in the beginning with them too.

J

Jason Duff 0:15:57

Yeah, no, that's awesome. And you started in a very small— it sounds like, was this at Rodney's home where you started?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:16:04

No, this was— we were at a tiny little place on South Detroit. And I laugh now. If it rained, there was a river that ran through.

J

Jason Duff 0:16:13

Ooh, you had a water feature.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:16:14

Ran through production. We did. That's a nice way to put it. We didn't have air conditioning. We barely had heat. We'd plug in a little heater and things like that. So that was kind of how we got started. And we stayed there for a few years.

J

Jason Duff 0:16:32

And then at what point did you go from actually leaving your job to making this you're saying.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:16:38

So I kept cutting back a little bit more.

J

Jason Duff 0:16:41

Okay.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:16:41

And, you know, I have a very good relationship with our sheriff here. And I said, hey, I need a little more time over here. And he was gracious to give me that. Enter COVID. That pushed things in a different direction for everyone, for public safety, for obviously business and things like that. And It was at that point I was able to step away and be full-time in your business.

J

Jason Duff 0:17:09

Wow, that's incredible. And then tell us about how did your next business venture come about?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:17:16

Which one was next, Jason? Which was 4 Acre?

J

Jason Duff 0:17:19

You want to go to 4 Acre now? Let's do it.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:17:20

All right, let's do it. So I want to jump back and just talk about that relationship and that small customer first, because that's huge. That's a really big part of our story and it speaks to communities too. We're down on South Detroit and it's funny in our industry, we, you always have a customer who might be late getting something in and they still want that. And you smile and you say yes and you go back behind the scenes and you're like, no, why did we say yes? Do you know what time and effort and all that it's going to take to make this one shirt? Multiple screens, like you're losing money doing one shirt. But you do it. Yeah. And so we had that one customer and she— they were on vacation and she missed getting a shirt for her child. And please, can we make this shirt? And Rod gets off the phone and I'm like, you did it, didn't you? He's like, yeah, I did. Like, so he makes this shirt. And a few months later, we get a call from Honda of America and they said, hey, we got your name. From someone that works here that you made a nice t-shirt for. Wow. We're looking to have t-shirts made for our family festival for their 5K. We'd like to come out and do a site visit. And I cringed. Instant panic. I mean, it's instant excitement and instant panic because we're—

J

Jason Duff 0:18:44

There's an outside lens now looking at everything that you do.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:18:46

There's an outside lens, and we are still in the place that had the water feature.

J

Jason Duff 0:18:50

So— Wow.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:18:51

We have a river running through. Like if it's gonna rain this day, I'm really nervous. It wasn't a pretty space. Rodney's background is manufacturing, so he went in and did all of the things that we thought Honda would want to see. We made borders and boundaries and implemented safety measures really quick and things like that. And they came out to do a site visit and we're talking through the things and we had, one press and it's a manual press. So if you know what that is, you're pushing ink and it takes a lot to push ink and a forehead. So we could do 4 colors at the most. We had this little tiny dryer and we're sitting there and the gentleman's talking and walking us through and he said, well, you know, could you handle 3,000 shirts? And I said, yep. The answer is always yes. And then you figure out how to do it.

J

Jason Duff 0:19:44

Yeah. So good advice.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:19:45

Sure we can. You know, I didn't bat an eye. He leaves and Rod's like, we can't do that. And I said, we'll figure it out. Like, this is life-changing for us. And it really was. So at that point, we got the job and we went, oh gosh, how do we do this?

J**Jason Duff** 0:20:03

Yeah. So that was probably a really big paradigm shift for you guys. Absolutely. And you could have easily said no. You could have easily, you know, just kind of defaulted back to staying in the same industry. But you did say yes. And then it was like, I think that's good advice is like, okay, once we get the contract, now we have to deliver. So what did it require? Yeah, what did it require that you had to do to really scale and grow?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:20:33

We had to lean, we had to lean into the people that we had made contacts with. We have a great supplier that we use and we knew he had an automatic press. And we said, hey, we're a customer of yours, would you let us rent time on your machine? Can you help us make—

J**Jason Duff** 0:20:51

partnering up, right? Yeah, partnering up.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:20:53

Okay. Um, very gracious, he said, yeah, absolutely, what do you need? So we worked with them, we worked with a supplier because we didn't have terms or credit or anything like that with, with any of our vendors. We did everything very small scale, and, and this required a lot of money up front. This requires time to get invoiced and paid for this job. So you're in it for a lot. So we partnered again with our supplier and we just knocked it out of the park. So that was the beginning of a very good relationship with Honda. And we're very, very fortunate for that. Huge. It was a game changer. They know that. We've had that conversation. With them of what they were able to do. I mean, they do great things here in our community, but great things with a small business and how that affected—

J**Jason Duff** 0:21:46

It's kind of a win-win story for both because I do think a lot of these larger corporations are looking for a way to be more local and they don't yet know who the people or resources are that they can connect with. And they want to work with vendors that have a good track record. And can share the success with them. So I appreciate you sharing how Honda has been that. And I know in our region there isn't a business that hasn't been touched by— Yeah, that investment. And even here in Ohio, as more manufacturing gets reshored from around the world, you know, listening, if you're a small town or a small community that's been struggling for some time, you know, and seeing now these larger companies play an interest of wanting to be in your community, reach out and, you know, ask them, what can I do to solve a problem? And it could be, well, we don't have really great food service on our corporate campus. Well, do you know anyone that's got a food truck? I mean, it's that kind of small things that maybe in your life or your business you're not thinking about it right now, but listening to Andrea's example, um, I think there's a lot of nuggets that partner up and make it happen.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:22:53

Yeah, absolutely. And that's We've relied on that so many times in our business.

J**Jason Duff** 0:22:59

Well, I just happen to know because I have some really cool stuff that I'm excited to show for those of you that are watching the video, but I'm going to, I'm going to also describe it. But there's this new brand that came out of you and I manufacturing t-shirts. You moved to a new facility. But I think these— the ideas are blossoming of different products and ways to leverage the shirts. Tell us about Four Acre Clothing Company.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:23:26

Now we're going to talk about my love. So that one's my baby. Um, so again, Rod, Rod's the manufacturing guy, and he, he kind of birthed, uh, the idea of High Point Graphics, and then we grew and grew that together. Um, and then the Four Acre Clothing Company. So, um, talking about those, those small connections and things like that, we're sitting at a turkey raffle in Zanesfield, Ohio, thriving metropolis, not one top light down there.

J**Jason Duff** 0:23:54

Okay, I have to ask, the turkey raffle?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:23:55

Turkey raffle?

J**Jason Duff** 0:23:56

What's a turkey raffle?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:23:57

You're gonna go with me next year.

J**Jason Duff** 0:23:59

So I don't think I've been to a lot of things. We're gonna do a podcast there next year.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:24:04

I've been to the turkey raffle, which is a prize. They have t-shirts, everything. Yes. So you, you go down and you support the fire department. And so when you support the fire department, you're like top on the list if anything happens at your house.

J**Jason Duff** 0:24:15

That's a joke.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:24:18

We joke that that's how that works from the dispatcher. Yeah, exactly. It's got to be true. So it's the local fundraiser for the fire department, the volunteer fire department down there. So you— and it's a community event. Like, it's— you go and catch up with, you know, your Sunday school teacher who's now 85 years old, down to, you know, the kid you babysat and their kids. So it's a community event. It's fun. So we're sitting at the turkey raffle, and the girls that own Peachtree that purchased Peachtree down the road said, hey, we've got— and now mind you, a turkey raffle is the Monday before Thanksgiving. Okay, so let's— this is important. The Monday before Thanksgiving, they said, hey, we've got this back room in Peachtree. And I don't know, I'm guessing it to be 12 by 12-ish. I don't know. A vendor's leaving as of December 1st. We've got to have something to go in there. And we had made t-shirts for them, peachy t-shirts and a couple of cute things that they would sell in there. In their store, and they said, do you have something we can put in there? What, you know, what can we do? And I was like, yes, because the answer is always yes.

J**Jason Duff** 0:25:29

So, like, that thing—

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:25:30

we go home that night and Rod's like, what, what are we gonna put in there? What are we gonna do? Like, what are you— I'm like, we're gonna make a clothing brand. Like, we're gonna do something creative now. So everything that we had done up to that point, although there's creativity involved in the graphics.

J**Jason Duff** 0:25:47

You're taking someone else's design, putting it on a shirt and then delivering it.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:25:50

Even if we're creating a design for them, it's still for them. It's not for us. Sure. So this allowed us creativity. This allowed me to love on what we did at a different level, to pick the good products, to source things differently, just take things up, bump it up into a different standard. So we sat down and I said, We can do this. Let's do it. You know? Okay, well, what's it called? What's it going to be? Enter the Four Acre Clothing Company. So there's a backstory on the name of our brand there. But we birthed the Four Acre Clothing Company and we thought, how are we going to do this? Like, how are we going to pull this off? So again, it takes a lot of money, that 12 by 12 area, whatever that was at the time. It still takes a lot of money. That's a lot of shirts.

J**Jason Duff** 0:26:38

So it's overhead. I mean, you have the cost for your rent. Yeah, the next step is, is that you've got an inventory. And I think some businesses don't factor in the idea of how much capital you have to put out to create inventory. And particularly in the t-shirt business, you need to have all, all the sizes. Yeah, you may sell out more mediums and larges, but you're also not going to want to disenfranchise a customer that's a double X or an extra small. And so I imagine like getting that inventory and then to be able to have backstock You're talking tens of thousands of dollars and at some point maybe even to \$100,000.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:27:15

Yep. So again, part of the raw part of our story, we didn't know relationships with banks. We didn't know small business loans. What we knew is we had a credit card and we used it.

J**Jason Duff** 0:27:28

And can I tell you, don't, you know, some people judge that. I will tell you a lot of the entrepreneurs that we have interviewed and even in my own origin story, I have used credit cards. Revolving credit sometimes is the only thing that you can get when you're untested or untried. Now, you don't want to lean on them any longer than you have to, especially with the kind of interest rates they are. But it's actually pretty normal. And it does make you, as you're paying those credit card bills and paying that high interest, it motivates you, I think, to work harder.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:27:58

Oh, 100%. That's just hanging over your head.

J**Jason Duff** 0:28:01

Yeah.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:28:02

That's that constant in your ear. You make it work. Work hard, do this, do that.

J**Jason Duff** 0:28:08

So the other thing, just to complement, you know, I think this ties back. So I've wore a lot of t-shirts, but one of the secret sauces that I think that Four Acre does better than anyone else is they have this special fabric. It's like a secret sauce, whatever it is, like a tri—

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:28:24

is it tri?

J**Jason Duff** 0:28:25

Tri-blend.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:28:26

Guys. Poly cotton rayon. Okay. But a certain blend of poly cotton rayon.

J**Jason Duff** 0:28:29

Well, I'm just saying, I don't know how they source the secret cotton blend recipe. But when you go into their now today retail store, um, and the first one opened up here in Main Street in downtown Bellefontaine, and they have since expanded to Troy, Ohio. Um, I'm a feeler, like, I like— and again, my mom always chastised me when I was really young because I would like feel and touch everything. But like, you know, she's like, you know, you, you will put your hands in your pocket as you walk in the store. But like, that tri-blend in particular for people that, that spend a lot of time in their clothes. Like, you care about how something feels today.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:29:08

Yeah, absolutely. So that's one of the things we're known for. We're known for— it's funny you touched on the sizing. We get more compliments when we go out because we carry larger sizes as well. We go up to a 4X. Um, so that's huge for us. And then that sensory experience, like, people want that soft— yeah, soft t-shirt. Yeah.

J**Jason Duff** 0:29:26

You, you mentioned it. I'm curious what the story behind the name Four Acre.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:29:30

Yeah. So we live outside of Bellefontaine, just outside of town on 100 acres.

J**Jason Duff** 0:29:36

Okay.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:29:37

It's a century farm passed down through the generations. We currently live there and there's a little hidden gem in the middle of our woods. It's 4 acres. It's a cleared spot and it has one little tree in it. And that is the tree that's in our logo. Wow. And we've always just referred to it from the time I grew up. You refer Go back to the 4-acre. Okay, everything refers back to the 4-acre. It's east of the 4 acres. It's west of the 4 acres. Okay, it's right behind or— Yeah, very important spot. That's where we hunt. That's where we do all, I got engaged there. We got married there.

J**Jason Duff** 0:30:08

Wow. Well, and knowing that story, what I think Rodney and Andrea have done really well, that when you go in to buy a shirt, the imprint above the neck is their brand and their logo. It's a very attractive logo. And then each one of their, their labels, they actually add a label where the price goes on with the brand too. And the staff, one of the first things, and this is like customer service 101, when you walk in, there's too many small businesses that don't look up or don't, don't greet you when you walk in. We're the training, and this, this is also, I think, part of the culture that, um, has been built, is someone smiles at you and say, hey, welcome to Four Acre. Yeah. And, you know, from that point on, you're walking through their store, their gallery. You're— what I notice about it, there's obviously sports is a big theme. And I think tying back to the days when they're printing shirts for the sports teams in the schools, that pride, I see it. And it's got to be hard because you really do. You've got Bengals and Browns. And I think this was a big year for Fouracre because it was usually always Ohio State.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:31:19

Uh-huh. He's paying attention.

J**Jason Duff** 0:31:21

No, he's listening. But you got some Michigan in there. Now it's just a very small amount. It's— But I'll tell you, it is being inclusive to a lot of the Ohio teams. Yeah. And I think that's super cool about your brand.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:31:35

Thanks. Thanks. We do too.

J**Jason Duff** 0:31:37

All right. At this time, we're going to take a quick break to hear a word from our sponsors. Big city dining in a small town. Now that's The Syndicate. Join them for fresh steaks, pasta, or seafood for dinner, or stop in for Sunday brunch to experience one of their signature dishes such as chicken and waffles and maybe even and pair it with a mimosa flight. Located at 213 South Main Street in downtown Bellefontaine. Tired of gyms not being open when you want to work out? Then check out the region's best 24-hour fitness center, Anytime Fitness, in downtown Bellefontaine. They have all the equipment you need and the best trainers and coaches to help you get in the best shape of your life. It's truly your one-stop shop for fitness. Anytime Fitness is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I want to keep getting the plug because, um, The other thing that is very distinctive to why listeners need to go is you can represent those sports teams, but there's licensing to be concerned about in some cases. And then also in how things have evolved to everyone putting letters on anything or Live Laugh Love. I mean, it— and this is where I want to give a big props. Instead of copying someone else, The originality of 4acre is a cornerstone for why their brand, clothing brand, is really getting traction and why others don't work. Can you speak a little bit to that?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:33:00

Sure. Yeah. So everything we do is a custom design, and there, there are stipulations with copyright infringement and trademarking and things like that. Um, but there's a balance and there's a workaround in some of those. So we We give a nod to what people see as an official shirt or logo when it's actually not that. It's just our take on that. And it's huge. People love it. And we try to give, instead of just a simple trademark, we give an experience with it. So it's like maybe Cleveland Browns colors, the state of Ohio, and it just gives you that whole feel and the whole perspective of that. And kind of community. It's really funny. So we have a series of shirts that, that are Saturdays Hit Different Columbus. That's what started it. Saturdays Hit Different in Columbus. And that I think last year that was our number one selling shirt. So people love that. Like they just get behind it. It's referencing football, Ohio State football for sure. And they're like all in with it because it's more than just, oh, that's another Ohio State football shirt, which is great. Yeah, but this tells a little story and this has a little fun and a little pizzazz to it.

J**Jason Duff** 0:34:15

So the other thing is I'm walking through the store, it's not just t-shirts anymore. And the other thing behind, and I think, think about your small town, your small business community. It is people, if they're proud or they visited somewhere, they want to wear it. They want to put it, you know, not only on a shirt, they want a hat, you know, give me a piece of jewelry or coasters. It is, and I think this is something that I, when I do tours here in town, we go into Four Acre and I say, this is the de facto— if you've not looked at Bellefontaine as a tourism destination, this is what I would call our local tourism office, which just happens to be right next to the Chamber of Commerce, the tourism bureau. But it has local stuff that you would feel really proud to buy something to take home to, to memorialize the experience. And I don't know if that's been intentionally part of your business model, but I think that's one thing that in coaching other entrepreneurs that may be listening, their town needs a place like that.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:35:19

They do. They absolutely do. And if you get behind what you do and even things for our local people that mean something here locally, we talk about the first concrete street. We have a cute shirt for that.

J**Jason Duff** 0:35:32

Of course. Of course we do. So can you— I have a challenge when we leave. I always say before anyone can leave the town, I want you to walk away to remember that we are the highest, the shortest, and the first. So I hope— I give you full permission to steal that because I think that again, it's what's funny and quirky and it gets people like, if you read that, what do you mean by that?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:35:54

Like, right. All right, Jason, look at this. Let's do this. It's a collab right here.

J**Jason Duff** 0:35:58

New business just got started. But no, and the other thing, can we just— this is the other thing I love about the brand. So we have some, some, some swag here, a really awesome cup. And we've got my favorite Fouracre shirt. And I shared this on Facebook wearing it is a shirt that says Corporate Dropout. Some people ask me like, what do you do? Like, who are you? And for the longest time I couldn't describe it. Yeah, but this is one statement when I saw it, when I was walking through Fouracre Clothing, had this really nice charcoal gray that, that, that tri-mesh perfect fabric.. And it had something that I could embody. So my favorite shirt, when I go to the gym, when I'm out and about, I get this because I get lots of people saying like, oh, like what's a corporate dropout? Well, I'm an entrepreneur. Yeah. I couldn't really work for anyone else because I'm constitutionally unemployable. But she's wearing the shirt today. And I just will say the snarkiness, what I think you kind of push the envelope a little bit because, you know, we have a lot of kids here in town. I'm sure you've got the hate messages.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:37:00

Every now and again.

J**Jason Duff** 0:37:01

Occasionally you do. But here's the thing. You walk in there, the people, you get the chuckle. Yeah, you get the people that will smile, the grandmother that's, you know, in her 90s, or even the teenagers like finding something that appeals for them. That's what I love. And I think that goes down to your merchandising and having a shop in the downtown next to a busy restaurant. Brittany Saxton, the owner of 600 Downtown, she has been a podcast guest before and We have had Brittany and I've had many conversations. The synergy between having 4 Acre and 600 is a perfect marriage. Can we talk to—

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:37:36

why? Absolutely. So we were excited about this space and one of the first things I did was, you know, get a hold of Brittany and say, hey, sit down with me. Let's, let's talk through this. So we sat down and discussed what we're doing, what she's doing. And I said, hey, you know, can you— what can you do to help me and what can I do to help you?

J**Jason Duff** 0:37:55

Yeah.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:37:56

When your people are on a wait, send them my way. Yeah. You know, like, and we're recommending the whole time we're going to take care of them. We're going to take care of them well while they're waiting. So their experience, if they had to wait, is good when they come in. We also do some music outside. So her patio, here's, here's the music that we play too. Yeah.

J**Jason Duff** 0:38:13

And the other thing, Brittany, when it comes to employee uniforms, you either have to wear a 600 shirt or a shirt from 4 Acre. Yeah. And again, but this is, this is the kind of examples of these partnerships Andrea has also many times gifted the employees at 600 shirts. I know kind of through COVID everyone was hurting. Staff was working long hours and burnout, and she even created a special shirt that she donated and gave to all the staff. And those are just ideas. We don't call it marketing or advertising. Sometimes it's just the right thing to do, but it all comes full circle.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:38:49

It does. It comes full circle. And I always say whenever we're talking to anybody down, it's an ecosystem. Ecosystem. Like, and you have to feed things in your ecosystem, and, and everyone's looking out for everyone else, and, and the end goal and the end game is all the same for everyone. Yeah. Um, and sometimes things just happen organically, and, and it might be attributed to marketing, but, but some of it's just feel-good, and it's loving on your community and loving your neighbor and, yeah, and partnering in those, in those hard times and And it comes full circle.

J**Jason Duff** 0:39:21

Yeah. Wow. That's super cool. I mean, you guys kind of brushed over this transition, but how did you go from Peachtree into your current space? My understanding, that's kind of where you kind of met with Small Nation and things like that.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:39:32

Yes. So we were looking for places and spaces, and I think you guys actually had more confidence in us than we had in ourselves. So that's kind of how that works when you're a new entrepreneur also. Is someone else will kind of see more in you than you see in yourself. And Small Nation did that with us and they said, hey, you've got a good thing going here. You might want to explore doing something differently with it.

J**Jason Duff** 0:40:01

Yeah, super cool. Wow. And where she's taken it to a whole different level is having the success of the shop here. Another really great historic downtown is Troy, Ohio. And now Four Acre has a location that's there in Troy. But the other thing, if you follow Four Acre social media, which I believe their channels have more followers than any other pages in our area. So that's another — that's not easy to do and accomplish. But the, the events, the shows. So like, tell us, because there's a lot of people that are listening that maybe have a business in their town and they've never done a show or an event. Walk us through what that's like.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:40:41

Sure. So that— we didn't understand exactly what that was. We knew a couple of people that went to these shows and these events, and they took their— whatever they made, their wares there, and they sold to customers that came there for that reason. So we toured a couple. I say toured, I guess we shopped a couple, just kind of a recon mission. Like, is this for us? Like, what does this actually mean? How does this work? And so then it's a whole juried system. Most shows are, markets, festivals are a juried system. And so you submit an application and photos and say, here's who we are, this is what we do.

J**Jason Duff** 0:41:18

And then you sit back and cross your fingers and hope they let you come.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:41:21

Yeah. So we got into a few of those. Some of the bigger ones didn't take us at first, rightfully so. Like they, we hadn't arrived yet. Yeah. We started in that series of events and we found that people loved us and loved us hard. So like, we would walk away from there going, what did we just do? Like, we don't have any t-shirts left, how did that happen? Yeah. Um, and just grew. And that's a huge piece of our business. Yeah. And I, I can't imagine not doing shows.

J**Jason Duff** 0:41:56

Well, and this is why those events really matter, is, um, I love of the postcard that she's created that tells the story of Four Acre. And then the flip side of it highlights where they're, they're manufacturing, their gallery store is. So you're probably seeing hundreds, thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of people. And those people, when they buy something, they're learning, they're tying the Four Acre brand back to their original town and story at Bellefontaine, Ohio. So that is a tourism lead in itself. And I'll just share, we were in Dresden, Ohio this last week with the team, and Dresden's home to Longenberger Baskets, which has this incredible legacy of makers. And, you know, when Longenberger closed, the makers, the culture, the people is all still there, but they're looking for ideas on how to reconstitute this. And I have highlighted Andrea and Rodney and Four Acres' story as being the next iteration of makers and then marketing their products, utilizing partners, websites, and not only their, their retail at their, their gallery location, but doing these events. And I think for a lot of people listening, the neat thing about us as entrepreneurs, we're like, look at our websites, look at our model, hear the story, you know, find your own version of that. Yeah, but, but go out and use that because that's how we— that's honestly we did not come up with all these ideas on our own. And a lot of my story has been traveling and learning and listening and then ripping, duplicating and making it better. Yeah. And that's the thing. I don't think you may get close on that tribe blend. You may think you can create some, some, some, some worded statements, but you're not going to— we're going to keep— we're going to keep fighting to innovate and grow. And I don't look at it as competition. I like I want other entrepreneurs that are just as hardworking, as successful to be in the ecosystem, even if— and we have some of these, don't we, Andrea, that don't like us? Okay.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:43:58

And here are just a couple.

J**Jason Duff** 0:44:00

Very few. I look in the mirror every night. Everyone loves me. No, but, but that, but that can I, can I say, thank goodness for those people because we're actually cheering them on too. We want everyone to be successful. But I think that's me just looking from the outside and just a huge high five. Like, you're doing so many great things. And, and it's tying back to financial success. That's the other thing she said. She doesn't share— she doesn't mind sharing numbers. I just want to shout out, you know, she has grown her manufacturing to 2 locations. I mean, large. The one building you have on the north side of town is what, 8,000, 10,000 square feet?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:44:38

8,500.

J**Jason Duff** 0:44:39

I mean, that's, that's big. Okay, guys, that's big. And like, there's like 20 overhead doors on it. It's like a massive operation. Yeah. And then like a lot of towns, the newspaper that we had does not need all the manufacturing space that they had. So she acquired another building here in the downtown. She and Rodney building their empire for them, growing their business, hiring more employees, and then acquired a business. And you now are manufacturing and customizing products. So let's talk a little about that business. And then Ethan's got some rapid-fire questions that he wants to do.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:45:11

So, so I, I, we have High Point Graphics, um, we have the Four Acre Clothing Company, we have acquired a, a business that was a long-standing business here in town over 25 years, All Around Awards, um, that again ties back into our business model, just another branch of that. And then most recently, uh, Bell Printing, which is, will now be High Point Business Solutions.

J**Jason Duff** 0:45:35

Yeah, that's incredible.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:45:37

And there is not anything that we cannot print for you.

J**Jason Duff** 0:45:39

Yeah, I love that. And I will tell you, my My team gifted me a really awesome gift this year that I use every time I open up a bottle of wine. Is these beautiful Riedel glasses that have our company's logo on it. And another last minute situation, I think one of, I'm not gonna put anyone on the, I think someone was a little late of getting the order together. And I literally think like last minute they're stopping everything on their line. I didn't hear all the backstory, but like I just knew it came in. Person saw was we were at our Christmas party and then said person comes running in with—

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:46:13

with glasses. Yes, that was another yes.

J**Jason Duff** 0:46:19

And it ties back to that— that is pure customer service there. But again, why you've got to come to Downtown Bellefontaine is you get to check out these stores, um, the iteration of the newest thing. And we're kind of, I think, a little bit breaking the news. I know you've not really, you know, highlighted this, but, but, you know, Rodney and Andrea have acquired the Bell Printing business, which again, 30+ years of printing experience and the building. And it's another really key important building in the downtown that they're excited to bring their perspective, their dollars, their renovations to improve that. So just thank you. Thank you for making those investments because again, it's not easy.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:46:56

Yeah. I mean, we're following people here. You know, you see the good that you've done and the things that can happen. And and just being able to, to be part of that too.

J**Jason Duff** 0:47:05

So yeah, that's awesome. I really appreciate about your story. You're not just like just a humble little like t-shirt shop, a side business, maybe. Yeah. How it started, like the proof is in the pudding. Like you guys are making big moves now. You can still be. And I think she can be— they can be big. Yeah. Humility is still there, right? And again, that's what I love about when you see her and Rodney out and about. They are doing brunch in the restaurants. They're shopping other businesses. And this is the other thing that I appreciate other leaders. Andrea stepped into being the director and the president, I should say, not the director, the president of the Downtown Bellefontaine Partnership and leading a local nonprofit with a board with a lot of different, our town, and I've said this other, I'm proud of this fact. There is more leading personalities in this town than I think anywhere on the planet.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:47:57

I'm telling you, I wasn't quite sure what I bit off there. But I mean, it's challenging and it's fun, and that's what drives me. And we've been in some ebb and flow with that. But to do what we do and to be that entrepreneur, you have one type of personality. And although there's little spinoffs of that personality, it's all a type A. It's a doer. It's an in charge. It's a leader.

J**Jason Duff** 0:48:23

Make things happen no matter what.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:48:25

So bringing all of those leaders, kind of wrangling them all together and just making them see the long-term goal and vision versus the short-term right here. And I think also thinking back to touching on, it's not competition. And I think there's a shift when you shift as a business owner, as an entrepreneur and say, I'm not in competition with you. We can both win. I think that's when you realize you've taken your business to the next level, what you're really able to do to let go of that competition and take and just kind of put your blinders on and be able to go and grow your business.

J**Jason Duff** 0:49:11

It is a shift, but I also say it's a seasoning that has to happen because your business, when you first started, it's like your child. Oh, it is. And anyone that you feel is threatening it or, you know, contrary to it. It is a shift. And that's why I love how you said that, because I try to help people now. My really focus is how can we bring more people that have never experienced this here to here? And we need our local economy. There's that— that's really important. Shopping local, all that's great. But my lenses is how can we bring more outside dollars, tourism experience to do this? Because then we're not competing with each other, we're bringing more in. Now, that's a fine balance. Like, it is, it just depends on where you're at in that journey. But yeah, I mean, I think that is, that's really good to help people see the bigger picture.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:50:03

Yeah. And once you realize that you can do it and so can your neighbor and so can your neighbor, even if you're doing similar things, it's just a real epiphany.

J**Jason Duff** 0:50:16

And I share this analogy a lot. Greenville, Ohio, Darke County, 46,000 people in the Dayton region. When I first went to Main Street Greenville, this has been 15 years ago, I was blown away because there was 4 coffee shops within 2 blocks. Yeah. And I was talking to one of the owners, she happened to be the Main Street director, and I said, oh my gosh, you must be so frustrated that there's so much coffee around you. She said, actually, it's the exact opposite. She's like, we all are known as Greenville, Ohio being a destination for coffee. And I have found that has repeated itself with hair salons, with boutiques, with restaurants. The more that we are known as that's a place to go get those things, the better. So is there going to be crossover? Do many of our restaurants carry the same craft beer? Yep. Do some of our boutiques carry some of the same lines? Yep. But it really gives you where you shine. And this is, this is, these are part of the secrets. Create a better guest experience. Expand your hours. Offer free gift wrapping. Be different. And so anytime I get— and I get it, we get a lot, but you do too. It's like that person's stealing my idea. Well, I'm sorry, folks, that idea is not yours. There's a billion other people making t-shirts. Yeah, but let's go ahead and innovate and try to be something that of our brand that cannot be replicated because it's the way we make you feel.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:51:41

It's the connection with the customer. It's, it's building that relationship. It's that customer service. It's that follow through. It's all of the things. It's the hiring the right person for your store, the person who's going to look up and greet the customer and give them the experience in the store.

J

Jason Duff 0:51:55

Yeah. Yeah, that's super cool. Well, I thank you for the wisdom that both of you are kind of sharing on this podcast. There's lots to be learned here, and I feel like we could, we could keep going. So we might have to have you come back for another episode sometime. She's going to have— we get to business number 11. Yeah, yeah, that'd be a good round. You teach a course at that point.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:52:11

All right.

J

Jason Duff 0:52:13

No, I'm going to kind of transition us here. I know you, you know, part of your, you know, as we talked about in the beginning of the episode, was that you've begun to purchase your real estate that you're operating out of. So I kind of want to do a real estate deep dive. It's our show segment, the hot tub. Yeah. No, I just want to kind of ask if you would be willing to share some of the details about what was it like acquiring— I'm specifically thinking about the, you know, High Point Graphics building here in town, the old newspaper building. What was that like for you? You know, can you talk us through some of the details? And maybe as a first-time commercial real estate buyer, like, what were those secrets that you unlocked?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:52:52

So we, like I said, we had our little manufacturing space where we had the water feature.

J

Jason Duff 0:52:59

Yeah.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:52:59

Yeah. And we needed a larger space. We weren't ready to purchase yet.. And we hooked up with the examiner who used to print the papers here. They used to print, now they outsource that, but they used to print in the back. So it was perfect. And he said, hey, you know, you can rent here. So we were a tenant of the paper until, like Jason said, there was a shift there. So the paper is downsizing a little bit and we're expanding. And so there was an opportunity to purchase. That. And so we jumped on that. Yeah, I'm very grateful. We've just kind of swapped spots. They still are housed with us. Yeah. And again, that building, it's a beautiful building. I love that building. That one will always have my heart. But it needs a lot of work. So currently, as we speak, we're redoing the roof there. We did a facelift on the outside of that building, renovated the front into having a retail space there. And looking a little nicer.

J**Jason Duff** 0:53:59

And just out of curiosity, what makes you want to purchase these buildings rather than maintain, you know, leasing them?

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:54:04

I suppose for us, the initial reason we did that was to know we had a home. Like, I was always fearful of — like, we purchased \$100,000 worth of equipment, which is huge for us. So we've made this huge investment on equipment that to tear out and move somewhere else, it requires a a lot of electric. It requires balancing and things like that. And just the thought of, oh gosh, what if we have to go somewhere else?

J**Jason Duff** 0:54:33

Yeah, interrupting your workflow and all those things.

A**Andrea Wrocklage** 0:54:35

And so that would be very costly for us. And then what if we had to do it again? And what if we had to do it again? And what that looked like. And so we just needed a home, something that we knew was ours and we had—

J**Jason Duff** 0:54:45

remove those variables. You know, some of the financial metrics of that too, of pursuing ownership can make a lot of sense from a tax perspective, because if you have an operating business that's profitable, instead of sending all the money to the IRS to misspend, which we know they will, you know, is there are incentives and depreciation, there are incentives as you're, you know, making leasehold improvements. Now, what you got to be very careful in analyzing this, and there are pros and cons of owning a building versus leasing, is that you are also on the hook when you buy. The real estate taxes, the insurance, the maintenance and upkeep, the management. And just like, you know, the roof, I imagine that's probably at least \$50,000, if not \$100,000. It keeps going. But again, and then that's something in the equation that you have to— you got to balance that. But where I'm thankful that, you know, they're making massive investments and there are other great building owners and investors doing the same thing. Is if you let these buildings run down and you're not maintaining them and you're not making them attractive, it hurts your whole community. Yeah. And this is two investors in the same community, you know, just thankful that, you know, you're maintaining these old buildings and knowing someone's at the helm who's actually going to care for these buildings. Well, and let's just be honest that the Bell Printing building probably has the greatest potential for its facade. And, and that's the kind of thing where I mean, it's— there's big dollars, but when and if they're able to make those improvements, I will tell you the community will be elated because, you know, paint can do a lot. But just, you know, fixing things up. And that's a big coaching thing that I do with a lot of our entrepreneurs, just making sure your windows can be wiped down or, you know, because if you can't see in your windows, yeah, you can't sell your business.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:56:38

And that's so, again, this is why we haven't made a huge formal announcement because it's not eye-catching right now.

J

Jason Duff 0:56:48

So it's not up to par with what people may expect with your business.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:56:51

So that's the next, the roof is also going on there. So we have to do some structural, some hardscape things that need to take care of first and then we'll move on to making it really cool. But that stuff will happen spring, summertime. And this is the, the time frame that we purchased isn't great for renovating. Sure. And stuff.

J

Jason Duff 0:57:10

So yeah, yeah, cool. Yeah. All right, I got a few closing questions here. I cannot believe we're already at our time, but, uh, either—

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:57:17

that was really fast.

J

Jason Duff 0:57:18

They always go fast. Yeah. So first is, what is, uh, one professional development resource that was impactful for you along your professional journey?

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:57:25

So I'm a podcast girl, um, How I Built This. Oh yeah, this is, this is like my equivalent to that. And I always told Rodney, you know we've arrived if, you know, we're on How I Built This. So there you go. I feel like we're one step— we're right there, right there.

J

Jason Duff 0:57:40

Should try to, try to tag them in this, see if we can get you on there.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:57:43

It'd be sweet.

J

Jason Duff 0:57:44

Um, and then where can people follow you in your businesses? I mean, I know there's a lot here.

A

Andrea Wrocklage 0:57:49

So there are— so, um, our social media really drives our business. And so Four Acre Clothing Company, um, Facebook, Instagram, all of that. High Point Graphics, the same. All Around Awards, the same. And soon to be High Point Business Solutions.

J**Jason Duff** 0:58:03

Let's go. All right. I love it. Those links will be down in the show notes or the description if you're on YouTube. So Jason, why don't you hit us with a recap for our show? Well, I want to say one other thing we're going to put in here is, is this shirt available on your website? It is. Okay. We're going to put in the show notes also. If you resonate with this corporate dropout and you like the description I have of my tri-blend pitch, get the corporate dropout shirts. Thanks for putting that in the show notes. Mm-hmm. I love how you mentioned today of starting out small. The whole reason why we built Small Nation is that we recognize that small can be mighty, but it's also maintaining that humility along the way. And, um, I, I learned a ton today. I, I think for those retailers that are listening, you have nuggets about partnering up, you have nuggets about, you know, how to always say yes and finding ways to provide that surprise level of customer service that I think you've built your business on. I know we have tried to build our business on, but most people today don't realize how that is your core strength and secret asset. So thanks again for sharing today. Thank you for these. I am so excited about the new swag that I've got. But I hope all of you have the opportunity to come to downtown Bellefontaine and meet the team at Four Acre Clothing. All Around— or no, All Around Awards. High Point Graphics and soon to be High Point Business Solutions. Yay! We got it. All right. Thank you.

E**Ethan DeLeon** 0:59:34

Thanks for tuning in on this episode of the Small Nation Podcast. We hope that conversation proved valuable to you. And if you enjoyed it, be sure to share the episode and follow the show on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or your favorite podcasting platform. You can also subscribe to the Small Nation YouTube channel if you prefer to watch your episodes. Follow Small Nation on social media and we'll see you in the next episode.