



# 8-Figure Business Builder Chris Guerriero



Chris Guerriero has a long history of business success. How he does what he does, the things that drive him, and the lifestyle he leads are the topics of this SuperFastBusiness episode.



**Chris Guerriero**

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com, Episode 685. And I'm having a chat with Chris Guerriero, welcome.

**Chris:** Hey, thanks, James. I'm excited to be here. And as we were talking about before, I'm excited that you guys are out in Australia. I haven't been there for several years, but it's great to hear the accent again.

## A long way back

**James:** Let's talk about that. It was interesting when I got your name from my friends, [Matt and Joe](#), over at Hustle and Flowchart Podcast, because you were at an event I went to see at Homebush in Sydney, before I quit my job actually. It was the first internet marketing conference I ever went to. And I went along to see what was happening, and I was really surprised when I went there that, you know, the masters of the time, there was Stephen Pierce, [Ed Dale](#), Mike Filsaime, yourself. There was a guy there talking about pay per click advertising, Kurt Christiansen. You know, some really fresh stuff coming out. And I realized, actually, I knew quite a lot of this by learning it online. And then over the years, I managed to quit my job and build my own business online. But that was one of my first memories, the first online conference I ever went to in Sydney. And you were there.

And one of the things I remember about you is you, I think you had a real fitness and health aspect to what you did. You don't look any different now than you did back then. You still have a great posture and complexion. And also, I think you were walking around your house with a sort of a wireless mic doing coaching calls. I think that was my memory of what you were describing or how your business worked. And to me, when I was in an office job at the time as a general manager, that seemed quite aspirational that one day, I could be cruising around my own house, talking to people on the internet, and earning a living from it. So I did manage to achieve that. But I'm really curious to know, what changes have happened for you since I saw you in Homebush about 11 years ago, maybe 12 years ago now?

## Then and now

**Chris:** Well, great question. So you know, if I remember correctly, back then if I was talking about walking around with a head mic on, it was because of one of the many membership sites that we had. So my history dates back further than my online stuff. You know, before online, I had several brick and mortar companies; I still do have several brick and mortar companies in different industries right now. But I also am online. But my first large company was at a chain of health clubs.

And I became very good at this membership thing. And one of the things I was probably talking about at that event, because I traveled around the globe, speaking about how to build these membership sites that was honest, ethical, moral, legal, and was really giving a lot of great stuff to the audience. And we developed membership sites that were upwards of 14-plus thousand people who would literally, you'll get some content on the website, but more importantly, I would literally go into the website every Wednesday night at nine o'clock; I'd strap a head mic on after I tucked my kids into bed; I'd walk around my office, and I would literally talk to these people. I'd teach them what we were doing inside of our companies to grow for about an hour. And then I'd open it up for questions. And often those questions lasted another two hours. And I would hang up and I'd be so freaking wired because I just had so much energy from, you know, talking.

I mean, you're in business development also. So when you're talking to players and people who are literally taking what you're saying, and they're growing, and every week, you're talking and you listen that growth, it's exciting, right? So what's changed? We still have a couple of membership sites, but they're completely different models now. I sold my stock in my last health membership site beginning of this year, I think it was January we finalized the sale of that. Also since then, let's just see. We have a legal firm in California now; we have a venture capital firm, which I had back then also, we've had that firm now for 15 years. We've a consulting firm, and then we have a media buying company, which is relatively new since then, it's at eight years old. Those are all eight-figure companies now. And and they're good, right? They're good because they give me the ability to do what I love doing, the small group of things that I call my core competencies, and then surround myself with really amazing people who are our leadership team in each one of those companies, and they're doing what they do best, and they drive the company forward. So anyway, I guess that's what's changed.

Also, what's changed is my kids got old enough that they actually knew I was out of the house a lot, when I was traveling around the world back then speaking on stages. So I remember I was sitting in an airport lounge, on my way to Singapore, and I called up my house and I said, I'm done. This is the last one. I cannot stand being pulled out of the house, knowing that it's going to take a day for my kids to remember who daddy is when I get home. So once they got to that age, I decided the model is going to change. And I stopped traveling around the world speaking about business growth, and strategically chose four or five gigs a year instead of four to seven gigs a month that I was speaking at.

## The dark side of the speaking game

**James:** Wow. Four to seven gigs a month. I did speaking for a little while there, and I realized quite quickly, it's not very leveraged compared to what you can achieve online. There's a bit of wear and tear involved, isn't there?

**Chris:** Yeah. There's wear and tear. But you know what? If you have, what is that horrible thing called? Oh, an ego. If you have an ego, then definitely speaking on stage is for you. I'm cursed with that.

**James:** I was always fascinated with, there's quite a few online experts who seemed to make all of their income from pitching stuff from stage. I'm like, it was a very offline way to make an online income, if you know what I mean.

**Chris:** Yeah. Right, yeah. So definitely. And that was a scary transition back then. Because when I first started speaking, we were literally going out there and sharing. And to watch people absorb this and say, I get it; this is how it's done, that was exciting. But then we had a lot of speakers. I'm not going to name them because you know, you're in the industry so you might know several of them and I don't want to be recorded saying...

**James:** You definitely don't want to name them. I was disgusted with some of the people up on the platform and like, it frightened me that people had no conscience.

**Chris:** No, exactly. And by the way, so from behind the scenes, it sucked because of the promoters. Some of the promoters that were bringing this out back then, all they wanted was a lot of sales initially. They didn't really care about how many refunds they got, because it was a numbers game. And we had one refund in all the years that I was doing that. And meanwhile, there were people that would go up there, and I know we're on video, so I'll describe what I'm doing. But they would literally just tap their finger, tap their finger, and then they'd say, if you could tap your finger too, then you can make thousands of dollars online as well. And they'd go into their whole song and dance about how to do this. And I'd stand back there watching some of the speakers saying I can't even stay in here. Like, they're trying to sell a lifestyle that doesn't exist. And that sucks, because there's people in the audience who literally pulled out multiple credit cards to be able to afford their programs.



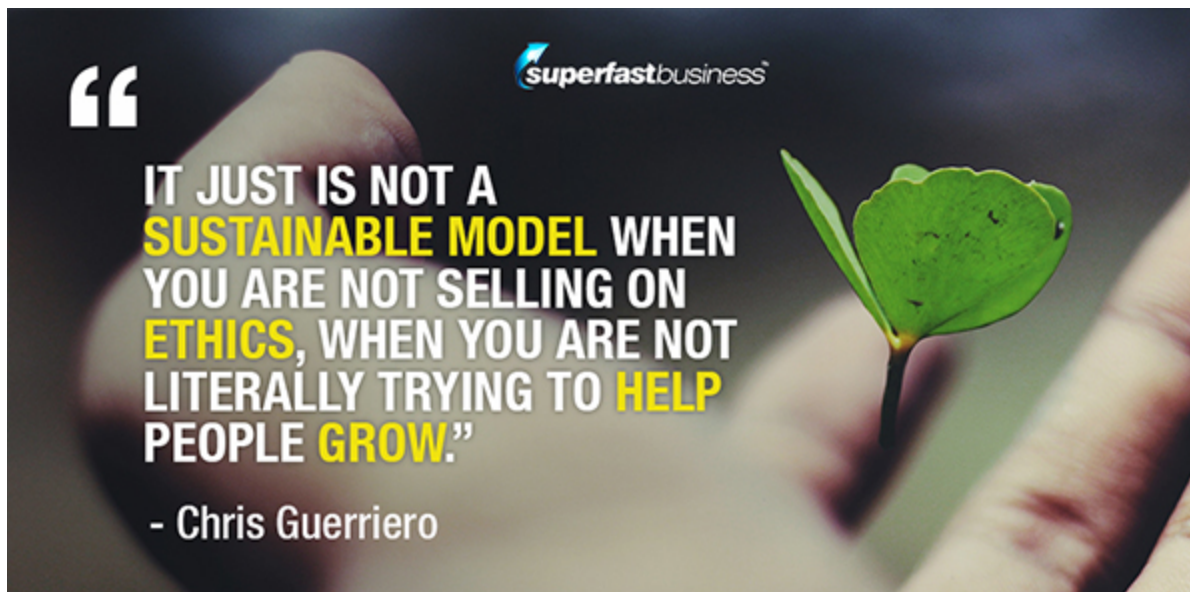
**James:** I think the last pitch event I spoke at, which was almost a decade ago, probably, the thing that did it for me was this guy coming down the aisle in his walker frame. And then he was pitched that he could just follow a green or a red signal on his computer to buy or sell stocks. And they were teaching some method of stock trading that is so risky, even the banks don't use it.

**Chris:** Oh, really?

**James:** It was like, no, this is not right. It's not good for humans. And that's a filter for me. But I'm glad I got to see you speak, and I think some of the quality back then was there. But I really think it's changed a lot. The industry's coming under a lot of pressure now, because of the advent of course of things that didn't exist back then, you know? There's a proliferation of online webinars; there's Facebook groups, that didn't exist last time I saw you speak. And, you know, there's been a whole homogenization of the way that people deliver things. I mean, YouTube blew up big.

**Chris:** Exactly. Well, all the platforms. But on the other side of the coin, it's fun to look back and just say, the people who weren't doing it right, like, they're gone.

**James:** All f them. They're all gone. Yeah, absolutely.



**Chris:** And it's not that they moved up, and they are now doing all these other great things. It's that many of them disappeared, because it just is not a sustainable model when you are not selling on ethics, when you are not literally trying to help people grow.

**James:** And a lot of them actually got in Australia. The regulators pursued plenty of them and fined them record fines, bankruptcies, which is actually really bad in Australia as opposed to other markets where it's not really a big stigma. It's not something you want in Australia. So that's good. I mean, it's good that the markets decided to regulate it. But the methodologies have changed.

## Innovating brick and mortar

But I'm really interested, in your situation of being a balance between brick and mortar and online, it sounds like you've been using the languages of the market mediums and mixing them to your advantage. I'm sure you brought some innovation to regular bricks and mortar businesses to help them stay sharp and avoid collapse. And at the same time, you can get some significant strength in bricks and mortar businesses that you might lack with a purely online business, right?

**Chris:** Yeah. Are you talking about from an ownership standpoint, in my entities, or are you talking about when I'm consulting with a company and helping them?

**James:** Well, I'm also speaking about your multiple eight-figure companies.

**Chris:** Oh, yeah, so definitely.

**James:** Like, I always look at, what is this person actually doing? Consulting is great. But I also like to see, what do they actually do? If you look at a year as a snapshot, where do you spend your time and what's your mission? And it sounds like you're involved in a few different enterprises. Did you found those businesses? Or did you come into them as a partner, or what?

**Chris:** That's a good question. So in 2004, when I sold the clubs (which I was in that industry for over a decade, almost 15 years) when I sold those clubs, I had a chunk of change come in, and I went into a VC firm as a partner, right? There were only a few partners at the time. Now there's a bunch more, there's 14 total now. The legal firm, I have a partner, but we founded it together. I actually have two partners, they're both attorneys, we founded that together.

The media agency, I founded that company myself. In fact, that company was founded, like many of our companies, founded because we needed the service, or we needed to build a team in order to support one of our other companies. You just can't find the quality, or you can't find people who understand how to lead a team to do certain things. And one of our one of my core competencies is creating systems. So when you have that, when you understand how to create systems, it's not that difficult, it's not that big of a stretch, to create a team to run those systems.

And then to train people, like understanding and developing people, is a passion of mine. And when you can do that, when you when you can put a little bit of time and train one or two of those people to become a leader of those teams, then that's when the magic begins happening. At that point, you could become scalable. And you could take that, maybe, department in your company, and spread it out and actually have now two companies from it, you know? Two LLCs or two S corps or whatever you're going to do. And then it becomes fun, because every company you have, every company in my portfolio, is synergistic with the other, so they could support the others. And that's, I think, very, very important when you're thinking about business scalability.

**James:** Sounds a bit Ricardo Semler, where he creates businesses that could be sharing the same customer.

**Chris:** Yeah, so I don't know who that is.

**James:** He wrote a book called Maverick, and The Seven-Day Weekend,

**Chris:** Oh, yeah.

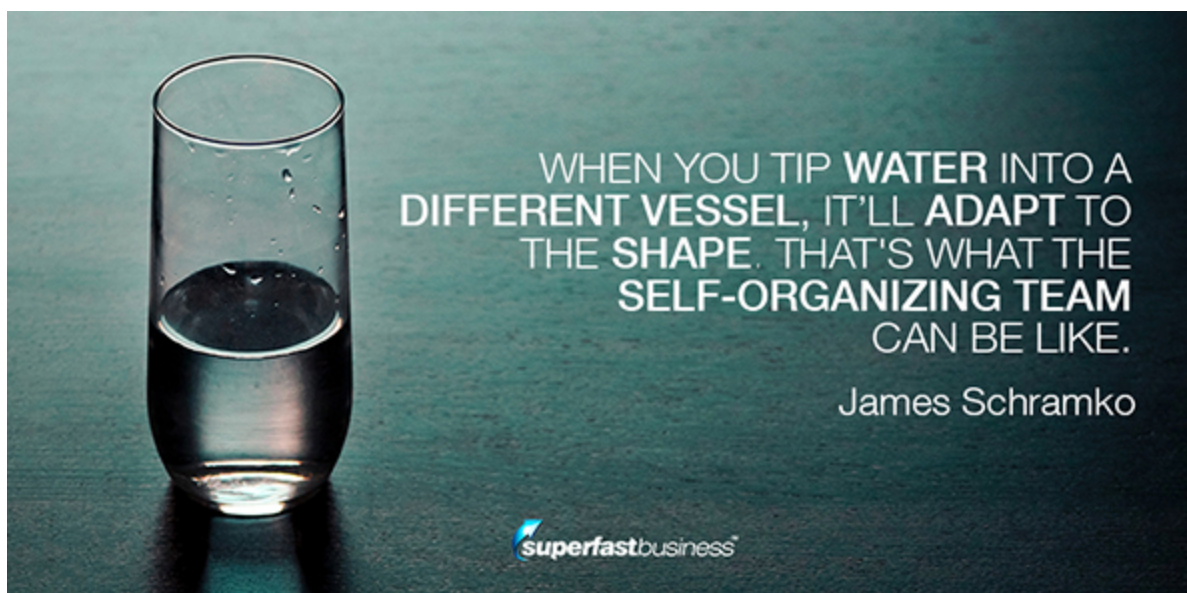
**James:** He's got really cool ideas on how leadership might work. He basically lets them run their business as a democracy. He lets them set their own hours, their own wages, and work on their own stuff. It's very sort of open.

**Chris:** A lot braver than I.

**James:** Well, he's very wealthy, too. He's a billionaire.

**Chris:** Oh, my God. So he's got a right.





**James:** Well, it's not for everyone. I've taken elements of it; we certainly have some elements of that in our own team. Like, we don't have set times or hours, and I don't tell them what to work on, or how to do it. No, micromanaging. It's like, this is our objective. Let's self-organize around this. And things just happen. I notice, you know, different people working on the projects, it's not always the same person, but it always gets done. It's kind of like a bucket of water. You know, you tip the water into a different vessel, it'll just adapt to the shape. That's what the self-organizing team can be like. But that that requires mature leadership.

Now, you talk about running a team like it's water off a duck's back. And I also feel the same way, but I know for a fact that a good chunk of people listening to this podcast struggle with leadership. So I am curious, firstly, how did you develop these skills? And secondly, what advice would you have for someone who's still in the early days? Perhaps they've only got one or two assistants at this stage and they're still yet to appoint someone to replace themselves with the high-level tasks, which I think is probably one of the hardest things to do.

## Leadership tips for newbies

**Chris:** I'm writing a note down for to answer your question. And so listen, I think developing teams is more about becoming comfortable with yourself as a leader. What I see a lot, even in seasoned CEOs, is that I'll talk with them, and they'll be drivers, they'll be alpha, right? No matter what, it could be a guy or woman, they'll be the alpha. They'll have awards everywhere, they'll exude this great stoic presence. Yet, when they walk in front of their board of directors, or when they walk in front of their team to have a meeting, they completely change, right? They get meek, they get humble, and it sucks. Because internally, they don't believe that they are a leader, so they don't portray that.

So I think if you're just starting out, you could at least trick yourself into believing that these people respect you. And that, yeah, they're there, and they may know more than you. But they look up to you for guidance as a whole, for the umbrella, for the vision that your company should be moving towards. And our companies are all run by meetings. So you may have heard me say this in one of my podcasts, because I've said it so many times. But my day looks like this: from nine o'clock to 9:30, I look at the numbers, like, the metrics, the key metrics, the three to five key metrics for each one of my companies. I look at those, I pull out numbers and notes. I see the numbers, I write down some notes on what I need answers to, as to why these numbers are the way they are. Are they a little bit too high? Does that mean that we ran a sale that is now going to screw us for the next couple of days? Or are they a little bit low? Or are they right in the right canal, or what is it?

And then from 9:30 to 12:30, I'm in meetings with the leadership teams for each one of our entities. And those meetings could last anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes, depending on, you know, the growth phase that company is in or how many people are on that leadership team. And I'm really looking for three things from that team meeting. And by the way, every team meeting, there's an agenda, everybody knows how to come prepared. So all this is easy for me, because they were prepared. They understand how to be prepared. So there's paperwork to ensure that they know how to come prepared to these things.

But when they're there, we want to go over three things. Number one, I want to know what they've accomplished, right? So if today's Tuesday, what did you accomplish this week so far? What did you accomplish yesterday and today?

And then the second thing is, what is your top five? We run every one of our companies with a top five most important uses of our time today. So that everybody, the customer service person or the CMO, or whoever it is, in our company, their top five most important things are in alignment with the company's top five, which is getting us to our goal.

And then the third thing I want to go over is, do they have any obstacles, so that we as a team can work together? We have a very short time together on the call with me, the owner, you know, everybody's there. We as a brainstorm can push through almost any obstacle. I could say, okay, after this call, I'm going to make a call to XYZ and I will have them contact you. And they're going to take that obstacle right off your plate. Or, you know, did you try this? Or did you try that? Or somebody else in the group may say, Oh, I have a solution for that. Let's take this offline, and we'll talk about it after the meeting. Either way, when we have those meetings on a regular basis, it just makes life so much easier in the company.

And then from, you know, 12:30 to three o'clock, I work for each one of my companies. I'm an employee of each one of my companies. I have a set of core competencies that is why I have that position in the company, right? So from 12:30 to three o'clock, I work in the company doing what I'm good at; I push things forward. And then from three o'clock on, most days, I'm done. I'm with my family. Except for Wednesdays. Wednesdays are different because that's the day I consult with some other companies.

**James:** So you're mostly working nine to three?

**Chris:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday. Yeah.

## Where is enough?

**James:** Four days. And I'm guessing all these companies add up to quite a substantial income and, you know, you've been at it for a while. Like, you were already successful when I was starting out. So you're probably quite wealthy now. How do you set where enough is? Like, how do you decide what the goal is for Chris? Like, for example, why not do seven days a week or why not do two or three days a week?

**Chris:** So I don't know that I want to do seven days a week. During times of serious growth, definitely I put in more hours, like I'll be later. Like today, it's eight o'clock at night over here. So it's almost nine o'clock at night. And we have an interview.

**James:** And my audience appreciates, we send you our gratitude for that.

**Chris:** All I was saying was that there are times where, you know, life dictates that, you know, you work a little bit later.

**James:** I feel you, man, like it's 10:48 am, and those waves aren't going to surf themselves. You know, like, we've all got to make sacrifices.



**Chris:** I very much appreciate that. James, thank you so much for doing this. And, so there's an inner drive I think that we all have as entrepreneurs to grow. And I don't believe that if you are truly an entrepreneur, you could ever be happy unless you're growing something worthwhile, right? You're striving towards a worthwhile goal. And that worthwhile goal is not, you know, for me, it's growing companies. I get juiced and jazzed about that, I get really excited about it, I love seeing it inside of my companies, inside of my teams, when they're developing. One day a week where I consult with other companies, I love seeing that growth, it's exciting. That's why I choose to do all these things.

But it's also growing me personally in understanding that I want enough money in my kids' trust funds. I want things so that life is a little bit easier for me. Like, I have the money necessary to do pretty much anything that I want to do. And my kids will have enough money set aside to do what they want to do. But not without earning that money. Like, it's not like a portfolio is going to be opened up at one point in their life, and they're just not going to have to work. Like that's absurd, in my opinion. I'm sorry, I'm sure there's people who disagree with that, I'm not trying to start a fight.

## When your parent's an entrepreneur

**James:** It doesn't matter if they disagree, because, you know, they get to do what they want with their life. You know, you're entitled to do what you want. I think it's fascinating. I've got five kids, I think about this a lot. They're all at various stages. Three of them are out of home, you know, and like, one of them's 18 and he's living out of home, he has his own job and he's self-started.

**Chris:** Wow.

**James:** You know, like, it's really fascinating, because this is a huge dilemma. I know a lot of the wealthiest people on the planet, you know, plan to give away their wealth, and they tell their kids, Listen, don't expect anything for you. But being a kid of an entrepreneur, they just don't grow up the same as a regular kid. You know, like for, for my newest kid, I've always been there every single day of her life. For the one before that, I've been at home for like, 11 out of his 17 years. His dad's done something very different to every other dad. So yeah, that's not an easy one to solve, I imagine. But I think what you're saying is, an entrepreneur wants to be an entrepreneur, like it's going to happen, right?

**Chris:** Yeah, definitely. As far as the kids go, that's a double-edged sword. And by the way, I'm not speaking as an expert, by any means. I'm speaking as somebody who's just living it.

**James:** Well, you've got two kids. Twelve and 16, right?

**Chris:** Twelve and 16. Yeah.

**James:** Like, you're a lot more qualified than most of the 20-something-year-olds who I see on Instagram making videos of their daily routine, which I think is just hilarious.

**Chris:** I agree. But you know, I'm sure your kids, you know, number one, they might be in school and somebody will pull up somebody famous online, and then your kid might pull you up and you know, there's 300,000, or there's 3 million instances of you online. And so in their mind, you're famous and that's one edge of the sword, right? And that might be fun, it's cool for them to say that. The other edge is, man, you are a driver, like you're an alpha, and for a child to grow up around an alpha is a heavy burden. And you can't not be an alpha, you can't slow down, you can't stop growing companies. You can't stop helping people grow companies, you can't stop being a personality, because that's in you and that's what makes you happy. Yet, you want to be the best example for your child. And unfortunately, as an entrepreneur, sometimes we believe we're being the best example for our children, when we are driving and growing companies. But it's scary, because I'm learning that I don't think that's the case, right? We have to pull back and allow our kids to be whoever they want to be, as opposed to saying, college? Why would you want to go to college? Start a company,

**James:** Again, like one of my kids is going to be a vet. She's in college. She's like, four years in. She aced her school scores. And then another one finished school, the other two didn't. Like, it's so young to know what you're going to be when you grow up at that age.

**Chris:** I know.

## Asking for the problems

But not only do we deal with challenges and problems, but you and I, we're a special breed. We actually put a shingle up and attract it. We're like, Hey, bring me your biggest problems. I want that multi-headed, out-of-control problem, and we'll just solve it. And there's huge value in that. It's a great occupation. One thing I love is seeing under the hood of all these different businesses, and then finding what works and being able to quickly get to a result for someone, I think you described it before. You still get a good vibe when you see someone get a result, right?

**Chris:** Oh, it's huge. I had a client fly down here about two or three weeks ago, maybe a little more than three weeks ago. And after sitting down for half a day, they're like, why do you do this? Like, I'm curious, like, just, why would you do this? I'm like, this was fun for me. Half a day with me is \$50,000. I got paid to do something that I love to do. Like, why would you not want to do that?



**James:** Yeah, it's awesome. I have a client who has 1.5 million followers on social media. And we just did a survey to discover the challenges her audience is having. And we had thousands of responses. And we're able to now, with precision accuracy, know exactly what to create for that audience. And I'm getting goosebumps. I mean, it's like, this is gonna be so amazing. I also like, you know, I love chatting to people like you who are already an evolved high level, and seeing how your operations run, it's really interesting to hear your daily routine, and your numbers and notes. We've got a variation on that. My team send the numbers. But I also ask them to make a commentary on the notes. And what I found is, they start to self-organize and anticipate the conversation and then they start correcting. So now I end up getting a report where they give me the numbers, they make the notes, and then they show me that their activities actually align with the corrective things that would have come about through a diagnostic chat as a meeting. It's like kind of like a self-saucing pudding.

**Chris:** So you're like, why do you even show up now? Your team is getting so well run.

**James:** Well, we only meet for 15 minutes a week, it does the trick.

**Chris:** That's awesome.

## Effective team communication

**James:** But we're only a small team. I daresay we're not the same size operation as you at this point. So you have to be realistic. When we did have a bigger operation, we had 65 people on the team. The managers were at least meeting every day. At that point, it becomes vital. I think your success is largely dictated to your ability to communicate well. But you know, one thing that fascinates me, Chris, is when I look into our usage of tools like [Slack](#), I discovered that [only a very small fraction of our communications are in a group](#). And there's like, four percent are in channels and like 90-something percent is one-to-one messaging. Like harnessing that grapevine and making a fabric of communication fluid is the secret, especially for a virtual business. But sounds like you're not driving into the office every day for all your businesses.

**Chris:** No, I'm not. By the way, to touch on something that you you were alluding to, I think, I don't want to give you the impression or any of your listeners the impression that that daily meetings or regular meetings are only essential if you have a brick and mortar company. Right? So the great majority of what I do right now is virtual. Brick and mortar companies, but I am virtually there for many of the meetings.

**James:** I was just more saying that it might be related to the size of the business and the size of the challenges you're solving.

**Chris:** Yeah, definitely could be. But it doesn't make a difference if they are an employee, a vendor, independent contractor, it doesn't make a difference. Because what we found is that, to use your word, which I think is a perfect word for it, the communication, to have that regular, smooth communication with people, to give them the ability to communicate with us, no matter what, if it's good or bad or whatever, to have that constant communication is what really keeps the momentum going in companies.

**James:** Yeah, absolutely. And I think you said something earlier that's really worth highlighting. And when you're talking about the top five things, like you're helping your team align with what is important for the company to succeed. I've talked about this in a different way, but it's the same sort of thing. I don't think, in the average organization, that most people actually know what the priority is, they're just treating everything equally. Like, we know about 80/20. Does your team? So I often ask my team to list what they're working on, and then ask them to put it in order of priority. Like what's important. Like, the most important to the least important. If we're always stacked to the most important activities, there are little things you can do as a leader that would help your team, like put a tag next to an instruction. So if I ask my team to do something, then I will just put a note next to it, like urgent or not urgent, right? Instantly, they can decide if it goes to the top of the chart or the bottom of the chart. And if non-urgent, it means it may not get done for a while and that's okay. But urgent is like, it's mission critical and it has to be done immediately. Just those little tiny subtleties are where the big gains can come if someone's not already doing that, right?

**Chris:** Yeah, absolutely.

## The stuff that surprises

**James:** So what is the thing that surprises you the most when you're consulting? Someone pays you a tidy sum, it's a bargain for them, obviously, as an investment, because they'll get a big return on investment. You spend time with them. What things constantly fascinate you that you uncover over and over again, or that you have discussions around, and then certain things do or don't happen?

**Chris:** So I think what fascinates me, that comes up constantly, is how people can be great at certain things, and that greatness allows them to develop whatever – a million-dollar company, 10-million-dollar company, whatever. Yet they suck at some other stuff, some basics. Like, for example, somebody may be phenomenal at just pay per click marketing, and be able to drive lots and lots and lots and lots of traffic, so much traffic and so many sales and initially, but suck at being able to retain those people and get lifetime value from those people and get referrals from them and actually do things to scale a company.



Or somebody may be really, really good at growing revenue, but not putting systems in place to support that revenue. So their growth curve looks like this – it goes up and then it comes back down a little bit and then it goes up and it comes back down a little bit. So instead of a steady growth curve, they're looking at ups and downs throughout the entire year. And it kind of sucks. But it happens every single time. And we've got companies inside of the consulting firm which make a few million dollars a year to companies who make billions of dollars a month. I mean, big brands. And it doesn't make a difference, the size. Every single company is run by individuals. And those individuals are the ones that are really dictating where the focus is going. So it's going towards what they're good at. It's not necessarily going towards hiring people or putting systems in place to support all the things around what they're good at. Does that make sense?

**James:** It does. Do you think it's sometimes a case where the founder has gone a little bit too deep compared to where they should have gone? Like there's always that Jobs, Sculley kind of thing, You know? Like, how much do you need the genius founder in there? And how strong is their reality distortion device?

**Chris:** Yeah, of course, I think it has a lot to do with it. I don't know.

**James:** I see it too, by the way. Like the peaky ups and downs that I encounter fascinate me. People, they're like, all in. They're like a gambler in the casino. They slide all the chips on, they win big and then they lose everything. And then they win big. And as someone who would be more rounded, I guess you'd say, because I came from a general management background, I'm able to counterbalance. I wouldn't say I was especially talented at any one particular thing. But I'm a good all-rounder. Maybe you're similar like that. Maybe you're that rare person who can be visionary and an integrator all in one package.

**Chris:** Yeah, well, I wouldn't give myself that much credit, I believe that I have a lot of cuts and bruises, and have gotten up more often than some people after I fall down. I think what causes a lot of what we're talking about in companies is that CEOs, or the upper level management, or the owners or whatever we're talking about, they know how to do certain things, but they're lacking the experience of having scaled companies or having brought companies to sale, or having acquired companies or whatever the case is. They're lacking this experience that rounds everything out.

And you know, my stupid human trick, I guess, is that I've just been in so many companies before, whether that's as an owner or a partner, an investor or an advisor. I've been in and around so many of them, and I've been able to kind of like, say, wait a second, why are we not doing this? Here, just take this paperwork. Those are your systems. Or here, let me make a phone call. We'll bring this manager over and they'll work with you for a year. Or, why don't you just, you know, tweak these things. And it rounds things out. And people are like, Oh my God, you know, this made life so much easier for us. And again, it's not me who has any kind of magic wand or anything like this. It's just that they're moving so well, and if you just fix one little thing, they get a chance to move so much better, faster, stronger. And then maybe you throw one more thing in there, and again, better, faster and stronger for a while longer.

## Chris's bag of tricks

**James:** It's a great trick, to [cross pollinate best practice](#). I love that one. Do you have some favorite ones that you find you're implementing over and over again?

**Chris:** Some favorite what, systems?

**James:** Yeah, like what's Chris's bag of tricks? What's in your tool kit? When you pick up a new consulting client or you acquire a business, what do you go looking for?

**Chris:** Let's look at, if I'm starting a company or if I'm acquiring a company. I want to streamline stuff. I want to think outside the box. So if I can streamline stuff, that means I'm not wasting money. If I can think outside the box, that means I can make a quantum jump and leave most competitors behind.

Let me give you a couple of examples. In one of the health companies that we used to have, the majority of health companies – and this was a health membership site, primarily – most companies in that field, they would do a lot of pay per click marketing, they would do a lot of affiliate marketing, and they would just try to push as many people into this as possible. And I don't know how many health lists you're on, but oh my God, I'm in the health industry, right? So everybody promotes everybody. So all these people, like, the lists are incestuous. You know, like 40, 50 percent of our lists are also on John's list and Mary's list and James's list, right? So it sucks. Everybody's promoting the same kind of service, but under different brands.

We went out there and said, Oh, well, you know what? We happen to have access to a NASCAR. And what we ended up doing was saying, well, NASCAR fans are not healthy people. However, we got access to this NASCAR, how do we think outside the box? And we had this big ass meeting, we went through all these different ways of how can we leverage this massive asset that we have for exposure, but it's exposure to the wrong audience. And what we ended up doing was going to several of my friends who had huge lists – Bob Proctor, Mark Victor Hansen. Not in the health field, they're in the personal development field. But a lot of those people still want to be healthy, right? I went to a bunch of these people, five to be exact. And I said, Hey, here's what I want you to do. I want you to mail your list for my membership site. I want you to mail three times. And all those three times, I want you to mail it with a naked link, which means there's no affiliate link, you're not going to get any commission for it. I want you to drive as many people into my membership site as you possibly can. And I promise I will over deliver to them and I will take care of them like you wouldn't believe. You know me, I will always over deliver to our customers. And in exchange for them... By the way, everybody laughed every single time I presented this to them. But out of everybody that I gave this to, only one company said no. Everybody else said yes. Because I said, what I'll do is we have a NASCAR and it's going to be in the Daytona 500 qualification race, one of the biggest races of a NASCAR. And what we will do is paint your picture on the side of a NASCAR. You will go into parties for the rest of your life. And you'll be the only one on the party who will be able to say, I had my picture painted on a NASCAR. Right? You'll never be able to do this ever again. I promise you I will get this done. In fact, I delivered on that promise before they mailed out to their lists. And it was amazing, right? So we we think outside the box. We brought all of those new people in, thousands and thousands of new members in, no commissions paid whatsoever. We kept 100 percent of the profits, and everybody was a win for everybody.

**James:** Well, that's creative.

**Chris:** And by the way, every single company that we ever go into, again, as an owner, partner, investor, advisor, anything, everybody's got several multi-million-dollar potentials right there if they think outside the box. Everybody's got a sister's brother's cousin who happens to be an actor who will be glad to be their spokesperson for a day, or somebody, you know, an employee's father, who happens to own a bank and is looking to invest in a company or whatever it is. There's so many different things. When we sit down with everybody, and we brainstorm and we allow them to be stupid and think outside the box, amazing things happen.



## The built-to-grow review

**James:** Well, you and I have a similar process, where, you know, one of my favorite things to do is a diagnostic. I want to see what I'm working with. Because often there's hidden stuff right there under their nose, because they're so deep in it. You've got a diagnostic of some sorts, I think you were telling me about before. It's a built-to-grow review?

**Chris:** Built-to-grow review.

**James:** You want to plug that? This is the advertising section of the show. Where do we get that?

**Chris:** So the built-to-grow review is, so here's what we have found. When I look at a company, and we're watching them grow, things break. So it is a challenge that as we're growing as entrepreneurs, we get so mono-focused on what we're good at that we're missing that something's breaking. One of the systems, or we got people on the team who are no longer good to get us to the next level, and they're holding us back. Or the culture is starting to degrade, or whatever it is, there's so many little things. Or maybe it's our leadership style that's breaking, it's no longer good for where we're growing to. And that's is going to be what clogs us up. But most entrepreneurs, they don't realize that. So two to three years down the road, they look back and and they're saying Oh sh\*t, I didn't know that this stuff was breaking. Now I'm starting to lose momentum. Now we are struggling. Right now we're in a survival mode.

So we have a whole diagnostic when I go into a company. And by the way, we do this on our companies on an annual basis. But if I go into a company as an investor, prior to investing, we go through this whole model also. We created a smaller version of that, and we give it away for free online. It's [builttogrowreview.com](https://builttogrowreview.com). And people could go through that. And my suggestion – because we've got, you know, thousands of companies that just use this online tool every every four to six months – my suggestion is that they go in on a regular basis, and they take this. It's free. I don't earn anything by sending you there. You go there and say, okay, this is how much revenue we're at right now. And then you answer a whole bunch of questions. And at the end, you get a built-to-grow review score, and then you get all the solutions. We'll say, Okay, this was the problem, these are the problems that we saw after you went through all this. Here are the solutions. We give you all the solutions right there. And you could just print out that page and have all the solutions or whatever you want to do with it, or just ignore it and continue to be in squalor.

**James:** No, I like that. One of my favorite questions is what breaks first when you start scaling. And this tool sounds like it would help you do that. Probably one of our most popular opt ins on my website is [Episode 627 – I went through a can you make \\$100,000 per month diagnostic](#). And it was a sample from what I'm doing in [my high-level coaching program](#). But I found that even my SuperFastBusiness members, they go and download it and self assess, and they know exactly what to work on. And I love the fact that people can get a result from listening to a free podcast without investing a cent. It only reflects well on either of us. So I'm glad we were able to share those resources.

**Chris:** Yeah, we do the exact same thing. I don't mean to interrupt you. But with the Built to Grow podcast that we have, every one of the episodes, every single one, has pure content, which is, I mean, you are a value-driven person, right? Nothing in what you do is, hey, here's a little tip, now buy something and I'll give you the big juice, right? Which, you know, that kind of sh\*t makes my eye twitch, when I see that stuff happening. So every single one of our shows on YouTube, or wherever they find it, is pure content. This is how we acquire a company. This is how we sell a company. This is how we build a leadership team, whatever it is, which I think is important. And it's a struggle. I'm sure you have the same struggle with your social team. They want to come up with things that are just going to get clicks. And I'm like, if it's got content, great. If they're not getting what they're promised in the headline, I don't want to have anything to do with it. That's bad for our brand.

**James:** My little team in the Philippines, they're pretty conservative and value-driven. So I'd say our content team is, I'd say, we under-do the click-driven copywriting stuff, compared to your average agency who's, you know, only got I guess, copywriters. They really want to make the sale, and then you have to try and water them down to what you can actually deliver.

**Chris:** So you don't go to jail, also.

**James:** Yeah, because that's important. You know, like, I think this is an underlying theme of this episode, is the long haul. We're talking about, you know, the first time I saw you was more than a decade ago, to now. So it's really interesting to see what's happened in that time for you, for me. But what we have identified is things like value-driven content is a long-term play. Being values-driven is nice. You can sleep well. You know, you're raising kids, you want to be a great example. You want their Google search for you to be positive and not negative.

**Chris:** Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**James:** You know, so actually, right on my whiteboard, right moves only. You know, I won't compromise a bad move for a quick buck. I'm probably not as rich as I could have been. But I'll be around for a long time. I'm persistent.

**Chris:** Oh, yeah. long term, you'll be healthier, and you will be a lot happier. And your employees will be proud of working with you. It's a good move.

**James:** Well, that's an interesting one. My team member's about to clock 10 years, which is more than twice as long as I ever stayed at a single business I worked for. The only business I've worked for that long is my own. So that's hilarious.

**Chris:** That's something to say. That's nice.

## Some super secret health tips

**James:** Let's just finish out on one of your passion topics, which is health. Clearly, you're doing something right. You've got a lot on your plate, but you're not the blown-out, old entrepreneur that you could be. You look very healthy. You come from a fitness background, so clearly the discipline of that and the knowledge behind that is filtering through into what you do as an owner. Do you think it's important in terms of business? Is there a place for it in a business format? And what's your super secret tips on, you know, what's the 80/20 of it?

**Chris:** Yeah, you know, I don't think there is a way around it.

**James:** Yeah. Singularity.

**Chris:** Yeah, right.

**James:** If you can upload to the mind frame, we'll probably be right, but we're not quite there yet.

**Chris:** Right. It's unfortunate. When I look at the guys on our board of directors, not all of them have the same focus on health. And there's too much downtime, I think, in their lives. It's not just downtime when it's necessary. It's also too many vacations needed in order to continue to thrive. So I look at forced relaxation techniques; I look at things that force my body and my brain to recuperate faster. Right? And the word "force" is a bad word, but I don't know of any other word to use.

I want to wake up and I want to hydrate immediately. First thing I do, I want to hydrate. Every single day, I want to get some water in my body, I want to have a little bit of, you know, I use Celtic sea salt in there a little bit. I want to work out every single day. And that doesn't always happen seven days a week. It doesn't always happen five days a week, but it's going to happen as often as I possibly can. Sometimes seven, sometimes five, sometimes four on a bad week, but it's going to happen. And I want to be active even when I'm not working out. We have standup desks. Unless I'm on video like I am right now, I know that we're not doing the podcast via video, but you and I are on video right now. I'm sitting down now. That's pretty much the only time I'm sitting down.

I believe wholeheartedly in ice cold showers. I believe in cryo tanks, and ice cold showers more than once a day. If I have a drop in energy for any reason, if I have an important meeting at nighttime, if I have anything going up, if I have, you know, a talent show for my kids or anything, I'm going to take another shower right before that. It's going to be 10, 15 minutes of just dancing around in an ice cold shower. It stimulates your mitochondrial health. Like, you can't be less healthy when you walk out of that. I'm sorry, I shouldn't say that. I guess if you have heart problems, maybe we should have a health disclaimer before anybody listens to this part. I'm sorry, I don't want to take responsibility for that part.

But so, I want to fast a little bit every single day. We do intermittent fasting. Once a month, I'll do a full-day fast, which is usually 36 hours. It's from the time I wake up to all the way through to go into bed again. But not just that day, it's the next day as well. There's a lot of things that I really believe in that help me to perform mentally better and physically be on tune every single day.

**James:** I think what you're saying is linked, and it's my observation that a lot of people who are overtired, overwhelmed, hustling and grinding end up making poor decisions and get into a vicious cycle of woe.

**Chris:** Yeah, exactly.

**James:** Gosh, I still want to talk to you about business acquisitions and stuff. But I would suggest we slate that for a future podcast, if you're up for it.

**Chris:** Absolutely. I'd love to.

**James:** I know it's late there, and I want to let you get to your family, Chris. So I really appreciate this. My biggest challenge now is going to be what the hell to call this episode, because I feel like we've covered a lot of ground. But I can't resist the opportunity, when I get someone as seasoned as yourself and so capable, to cover broad ground, because not many people have the same catchment of skills as you. So thank you for sharing so generously and for linking those tools. I also recommend listeners get over to [ChrisGuerriero.com](https://ChrisGuerriero.com).

Thank you so much, Chris.

**Chris:** Thanks, James. I appreciate it. Have a great night.



Build a business aligned  
with the lifestyle you want -  
James will show you how

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