

TruTalk Ep 6 - The Pilot

[00:00:00] You are listening to the True Talk podcast. In today's episode, we're talking to Tom Bramhall, owner of Fortified Title and Rooster Fish Media.

All right, Tom, thanks for joining us. I'm really excited to have you here today. Um, let's, let's get started. When I think of Tom Bramhall, I, there's a lot of things that come to mind. I think, uh, pilot, I think father, uh, husband licensed, realtor, publisher, connector, extreme fisherman, media and marketing entrepreneur.

Um, title company, entrepreneur. Who is Tom Bran? Paul, I guess a little bit of all those, [00:01:00] huh? Where would you like to start? Well, you tell us what, how did you get started in, in the real estate related businesses? Because my understanding is that's not how you started off your career. Right. Yeah, so how I kind of got into the real estate world, if we kind of have to take a step back.

Um, so fresh outta high school, um, I grew up in an airline family, so my. My grandfather, he was the director of operations for American Airlines. He retired in 86. He was like a big dog over there. Um, my, um, my dad was a retired Delta Airlines captain. My uncle worked for United Airlines. I got several FA family members that fly.

Wait, wait, wait. So what I'm hearing is you've never paid to fly. Yeah, pretty much. I am very unfair. Well, we had, we had buddy passes, but the joke was that you give buddy passes to people you don't like, cuz you actually never get on the airplane anyway. So we usually ended up having to pay to fly anyway.

Oh, okay. All right. So you say that's the airline family? Yeah. Yeah. Joke, you get buddy passe, the people you don't like. That's funny. [00:02:00] Yeah. But, um, no. So like, just in high school, um, I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I thought my dad had a pretty cool job, you know, he jet around, went to all these different places.

Sure. We lived in Minnesota, so it was like a, you know, we were stuck in a snow bank in Minnesota and he's calling us from sunny Honolulu, Hawaii. And uh, so when I got outta high school, I was, I wanted, you know, I told dad, I was like, you know, I think I wanna fly airplanes and love my dad. He could be a little negative sometimes, but he's like, you're too dumb to fly airplanes.

And what he meant by that was, What he meant by that, I was too immature at the time because I was just, you know, partying and doing all the things that 18 year olds do. Um, so it wasn't until about a year or so later I said, Hey, I want to do this. Um, so he took me down to the airport and we, um, he told me, he is like, Hey, you know, I'll pay for you to get your private pilot's license if you want to pursue flying after that.

You know, you can figure out a way to pay for it and, and go through it. So I actually, um, [00:03:00] you know, did what a lot of kids did. I got a big student loan, uh, went out to the airport and I just started flying. Uh, so I did my private pilot's license and then I did my instrument rating. Then I did my single commercial, and then I got my multi commercial, and then I got my, um, all my instructor ratings.

Um, so once I had all my instructor ratings, then I was able to actually teach people how to fly once I, I flight instructed for two years. And you do that to build flight time, so you're building experience so you're marketable to fly professionally, um, you know, for an airline or a corporation or something like that.

So once I got all those flight ratings, um, and I got, I had my time, um, my son. Um, I was, I was just now getting marketable to go fly for the airlines and my original plan was to go fly for the airlines when I got a phone call saying that I was, uh, gonna be a dad. Um, it was very unexpected, um, uh, from a girlfriend and, uh, anyway, I just kind of changed my course from going to the airlines to going corporate.

[00:04:00] So I started flying corporate business jets out of Concord Airport and some of the local airports around. So, Um, flying the private airplane. So, um, the guy gave me an opportunity to fly, uh, a King Air out of, uh, Charlotte, uh, Charlotte, Douglass Air Airport, or I'm sorry, outta Concord Airport. So I started flying that and then just started really kind of networking, um, with other people that had airplanes.

And I started flying as a contractor and got in the right seat of other King Airs in the area. And, um, and then, um, I did that for about a year or so, but I would, um, I had a, the Harley Davidson dealership was actually right next to the, the airport. And I, my dad and all my uncles, they all had bikes and I was too broke to have a bike.

But I would go in the, I would go in the Harley shop and I would look at motorcycles. And the guy that owned it, he got to know me and got to like me.

And he just knew I was a young kid and he knew what I was doing flying out the airport. And, um, he said, Hey, uh, I just bought a Lear 31, a business jet.[00:05:00]

Would you want to possibly throw your name in the hat to come fly it? Oh wow. Interesting. And I was like, hell yeah. Yeah. So I interviewed, um, with a guy and uh, they gave me the job and I ended up, um, flying with them for a few years. But, um, that got my feet into jet aircraft, which was super cool. Nothing cooler than fly a jet.

Yeah. Um, but, uh, did that for, um, a couple years and then flying the jet led me into, um, flying, um, aircraft for a lot of the NASCAR drivers. Oh, okay. So the NASCAR drivers at the time, a lot of 'em had L 31 a's, and I was a contract pilot, so whenever their pilot was out, I would fill in, you know, if they were sick or on vacation or something like that, I would fill in.

And fly them. Um, and you felt like this was more flexible having a new baby too Yeah. Than being a commercial? Oh, yeah. It was way more flexible because you could choose when you wanted to do it. Yeah, I could. And I was a co I was, I was basically [00:06:00] self-employed. Right? Yeah. Yeah. Um, so I would, you know, people would just call me and say, Hey, can you fly on Thursday?

Or, Hey, can you fly Thursday to Sunday? You know, and it was like, yes or no kind of thing, you know? So I, it, it allowed me the flexibility to be a dad. Very nice. And be there for Luke. Right. And, um, that was really important to me. But, you know, like as, as glamorous as flying may sound, um, especially in the early years, you don't make shit for money.

So I was like claw and trying to find a way. Right. And, uh, airplanes were full of bugs and they were dirty after, after being, you know, flown. So I, uh, started, um, on accident. I just said, Hey, can I clean these airplanes for some extra money? And then I really learned like how to, like, how to do it. I learned how to do it the right way and because I was networked with everybody, I started Bright Jet Aviation and then that was basically, so it was contract pilot services and cleaning corporate aircraft.

Oh, I did not know about that part. Yeah, that's interesting. Yeah, so I, uh, so Bright Jet was born and um, [00:07:00] it's funny cuz on days that I would have Luke, you know, trying to balance the whole single dad thing, I would, uh, I would actually have the. Uh, the airport guys tow the airplane down to the end of the, uh, runway where the wash bay was.

And I would bring Luke down there in my truck, in the car seat, and I would wash planes while Luke would sit in the car seat. But he was big enough. He'd like to roam around and play in the water, in the bubbles and stuff like that, but it was straight up, uh, single dad in it. Oh, that's funny. That's really interesting.

Now Luke, if I'm. Not mistaken, just to give the audience some context. Recently got his driver's license, right? Yeah. He's 16 now. It's crazy. Yep. Yeah. Yep. So he's 16. He's a, he's a good, good kid. And he's, uh, he's, he's my bass fisherman. Let's talk about that because I know you and Luke are really close. Um, and you share the, the.

The, the activity of a lot of outdoorsmanship and, yeah. And, and fishing. And, and Luke's gotten into, uh, really [00:08:00] competitive bass fishing. Oh, yeah. But you've, you've gone beyond competitive bass fishing. Um, you, you have some form of caveman spear fishing, don't you? That you do. Yeah. Tell us about it. I, I, well, I, I, I spearfish, but, um, yeah, I've always been in the outdoors and, and, and, uh, you know, from a young age, my dad and my uncle, my.

Grandpa and uncles got me into it. But, um, you know, when, when Luke was born, he caught his first fish at three and then he just really loved fishing. And then as he got older, he really got into bass fishing cuz that's what you could catch on Lake Norman. And then he really started to really understand and learn like the different knots and the different tackle and the different like, Tying braided line, the mono, the line, and these different, so you're making me look like a bad father.

I'm gonna have to share something with you. So about the same age as Luke was when he caught his first, um, fish. I've got twin boys. They just turned 18. [00:09:00] We were up in the mountains and uh, we would go walk around this lake and decide when I'm gonna fish. So, I was up between the morning and I bought these, these fishing rods as seen on TV fishing rods.

It was like this contraption. Everything was boom. It did. It threw it out to, we got those. I don't think I've ever been so frustrated as the day we unwrap those things at the lake. We tried to go fishing. Nothing about it worked out. I threw them in the dumpster on the way out of the park. Never tried that again.

Yep. So it's not for everybody. Um, there's a specific moment and Luke was about nine. He experienced what you were experiencing. We were at my friend's house in Lake Murray and he was trying to learn, uh, a blood knot. And

a blood knot is a knot when you tie braided fishing line to, um, like a mo, like a mono like clear type fishing line, right?

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. And it holds it. So it's like a leader line. And, uh, he was trying and trying and trying, he was looking at YouTube and I [00:10:00] didn't know how to do it. Like he, this is where he started to like surpass like what I knew. Right. And, uh, he was just so frustrated cuz he couldn't get this knot. And I'm, and he was really getting frustrated.

I'm like, Luke, take 10 minutes, sit out and then go try it again. And he did that and he tied that knot the next time. Oh, okay. And from that moment on, I. He surpassed me in bass fishing. In my knowledge. It's like, it's like new math. Yeah. Take 10 minutes. Yeah. Go back to it. Cause I can't help you with this.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's great. Yeah. Let's go back to business for a second. Mm-hmm. So you graduated high school, um, proved your father wrong. I can fly. Taught kids to fly, flew, created this company all around aviation. But I know you from being in the real estate related business. Yep. How did that happen?

How did you go from the aviation business into real producers or anything real, real estate, um, related? Yeah, so it [00:11:00] happened January of 2012. I was a contract flying and I was called into the office cuz I was flying at the time. I was flying for nascar, but I was also doing work for Harris Teeter. And at the time there were three jobs in Charlotte that you wanted in aviation.

And Harris Teeter was definitely one of them. Hmm. Well they actually, um, Merged with Kroger grocery stores. So when I walked into the office, I thought I was gonna get a full-time job. And in fact they said, Hey man, we love you, but we just merged and we're probably gonna, you know, have to split the flight department up.

So, um, at that point I was 30, I was 30 years old. Um, and I just had been flying for like 10 years and I didn't feel like I was really any further ahead. Um, I had been self-employed and I had more mon, I, I made more money and had more flexibility being self-employed. Mm-hmm. So I was just like, you know what?

I don't know what I'm gonna do, so I'm gonna, I'm gonna try something. So I call everybody that I knew that had some level of success. And, um, I talked to a buddy of mine that had a magazine in Charlotte and he was, he, [00:12:00] I called him up and I said, You know, tell me about this magazine. I was like, do you own it?

And he's like, well, I own it, but I, I, it's sort of like a franchise. Like I, you know, I work for this company. And, um, he says, you know, they've got a proven process and like, here's like, kind of I'll teach you like the sales component of it, and then they will, um, you know, essentially kind of train you and then you've, you just gotta secure enough advertising to then have the magazine to start getting paid.

And I was like, all right. So I remember at the time I had not really had a traditional sales job. Um, and uh, the key was they wanted to have 15, uh, they, they taught everybody to do 15 appointments a week and it was all cold calling. Mm-hmm. You know, over the phone setting up appointments mm-hmm. With anybody that would do business with an affluent neighborhood.

So remodelers. Mm-hmm. You know, lawn care, all these people. So ended up, um, setting, I don't know what was over 15 appointments that week, and he just started laughing and then, Cause, um, I guess that was good. So, and it just kind of went from there. [00:13:00] And, um, kind of to fast forward a little bit, I, I did, uh, uh, four magazines for Charlotte.

I did the Providence Country Club, the Life in Valentine Country Club, the Life in Quill Hollow. Um, actually I did three, that was those three. And then I ended up, uh, selling those. Um, and then the company at the time was doing a product development, um, for, uh, a new real estate platform. So it was a concept out of Indianapolis and they said, Hey, would you want to be a part of this product development thing?

And called Real producers. Ah, so you were, you were at the beginning of real producers, very beginning. And I have to tell you this, this story you told is really resonates with me because a lot of people don't know this, but before I got in a mortgage business, many people know that I sold furniture in college and, but this, this unknown position was I, I sold ads in a, a little magazine that that was set out into free racks in front of grocery stores and stuff.

Yeah. [00:14:00] And it sounds very similar, like the types of businesses you call it. And, and it was hard. That was hard cold. Oh, it's a grind. Sales. I mean it was a grind. When I describe it now to people like this is before nail nails on chalkboard. Well, you didn't have, there was no internet and there was no cell phones.

So like we literally would go to, you know, make a list of businesses driving down the street that fit the targets. Make a on a, on a little recorder. Then I go write 'em down on a pad. Yep. Then I go to a phone booth. Cuz you get two,

four eleven calls. Yep. For free and then go through 'em and get all the phone numbers.

Okay. Then trade out for a hotel room to get free phones to call it. You wanna talk about a grind? It was ridiculous. I'm so glad I did it though, because Oh, you learned so much from that. Mm-hmm. So you did that with the neighborhood magazines? Yep. With a broad base of business. Mm-hmm. Anybody that basically had a small business mm-hmm.

That wanted to support the community. Mm-hmm. Sold that. And then participated in a pilot for real [00:15:00] producers. Yep. That was very industry specific. Did that worry you, that you were narrowing your audience of potential advertisers so much, um, knowing how hard it is to make those sales? Not, not as much, I think because it was more nichey.

Mm-hmm. And I knew like, real estate was very like relationship driven. Um, and I actually, um, So a lot of my advertising partners in these affluent neighborhoods were real estate agents, and I always really liked the real estate agents because yes, they were always really outgoing. There were always, always some sort of event.

There was always some sort of party or something to go to, and that's like, I, I thrive in that world. So, um, uh, so yeah, so I, I was actually excited about it, but, um, what I was, what I wasn't excited about was, um, I didn't know how it would be received. As a industry magazine, um, because we were reporting numbers, people's [00:16:00] numbers in it.

Mm-hmm. And I just didn't know how that would go, like, you know, at like a more of a real estate political level, um, at the time, you know, but because it was an industry magazine, um, I didn't have to worry as much about that. Um, just, just, I don't, I don't to interrupt, but I, I just dawned me that. I know exactly what we're talking about with Real Producer's Magazine, where this went.

Yep. So let's just take a quick step back. Describe what Real Producer's Magazine was when it launched. You participated in the, the pilot for those that don't know. Yeah. What is Real? Producer's Magazine? Yeah. So Real Producers is a, uh, trade in social publication that goes to the top five, the mls top 500 real estate producers in the Charlotte market, and now we're in like 200 cities across the country.

Got it. Got it. But all, everything that we do in the magazine is free or. Agents, right? It's paid for by the vendors that support agents. Right? Right. So back to

the prospecting and the sales piece of it, it was, [00:17:00] I would sit down with a top agent and just say, Hey, you know, I'm gonna, you know, gonna be on the cover of the magazine or inside the magazine.

We're gonna do, you know, photos and a article and we're gonna print it and we're gonna publish it. And all I asked in return is that you just attend our event. Right? So then I would sit down with vendors and I would say, Hey, we've got this magazine that goes to the top realtors. It's completely free to them.

It's paid for by you guys. And they're like, well, how do I know that they're gonna show up to the event? And it's like, well, cuz I told 'em that we're gonna do all this stuff for 'em for free and we just want 'em to come to, we're gonna throw a party for 'em and tell 'em to come to the event. So that was the model.

And it worked. It worked. It worked. And it worked. Yeah. I've been to your parties. Yeah, they come. Yeah, they sew up. Yep. Yeah. So, um, So I remember my first, so I launched the magazine in January of 2017, and then in, uh, April of 2017, I had a, a, a big party to highlight the last four cover agents that we had. I had no idea if anybody would even show up.[00:18:00]

Like at this point I thought I probably would've already been sued by somebody. I don't know why, but it was real. I, I thought I was. And, uh, so I, I, uh, called my buddy, uh, Brett Caraway, who's an agent here in Charlotte. And, uh, he was managing some clubs and he managed Bubble in Uptown. And I said, Hey man. I was like, you know, could I host this party in this event at Bubble and Uptown?

And he's like, yeah, man, let's do it. So anyway, I had the event come, um, we put it all together. I invited everybody out, had no idea who would even show up. And, um, Um, my girl, joy Farley, she, she was there and, uh, she's like the news station's out front and they want to talk to you. And, and at that point we already had like 156 people in the door, Uhhuh, and, and we had just been open maybe like an hour uhhuh and like more people came in.

But I think we had like a little, we ended up having a little over. 250 people at that event. Wow. First event. Yeah. And I'm like terrified of public. Gave you some confidence [00:19:00] after that, isn't it? Yeah. Terrified of public speaking. Oh no. Like the kid in school, when I'd get called on, I'd turn bright red and I'd put my head down on my lap like that.

Yeah. And I gotta now address like all these people, like at this event. So, um, um, Yeah. It was, it was crazy, man. It was, it was crazy. My mom actually

came to the event and she and my mom and dad and my brothers, everybody, they came to the event. My mom's like, all that partying you used to do. Paid off.

That's crazy. Speaking of your brother, you said he came, I just saw your brother a couple days ago. He, uh, at a magazine reveal party. Yeah. He, uh, he was on in the magazine two and a half years in, yeah. Got recognized. Yep. Real estate's in your family, isn't it? I mean, so you shifted from aviation to real estate?

It is now, I guess Jim and I are starting a new wave of, uh, a new industry in the family now. That's great. But yeah, he, uh, he's a, uh, bigger bearded, more, uh, a bigger bearded version of me. Uh, uh yeah, that's not, he is a much nicer version. Yeah. That's nice much. [00:20:00] Yeah. If you could, he's probably one of the funniest people I know.

He was, he was, he was. He met a couple funny. Remarks at the events. Yeah. Uh, so, but you're added a publishing business, right? Yeah. So, so skip forward five years. During that time you started some other things. We'll cover that in a minute. Yeah. But recently you sold real producers. Yep. Yep. What happened? So, yeah, kind of through the process of, of, of real producers, you know, and just being that entrepreneurial kind of spirit mind.

Just, there were some opportunities that came up along the way, and I started two other businesses. And then, um, um, somebody had approached me about selling real producers. Uh, it was probably a year ago or so now. And, um, I was like, you know, I don't know. And then, um, and then it kind of, I kind of sat on it for a little while and then was asked again, and it just kinda, it kind of started to make sense.

Um, just being in business. I know that you can also. [00:21:00] Kind of dilute yourself a little bit. Sure. And I was starting to feel kind of a little bit that way, like I was, wasn't doing anything great. I was just kind of doing it all good. So what other businesses did you start during your tenure running? Real producers?

Yeah. So a year into Real Producers, I started Rooster Fish Media, which is a video production company focused on real estate doing video production and social media management for the real estate community. And then about a year after that I was approached, um, to make some connections in the title world and, uh, ended up, um, becoming a, um, an equity partner in some title, in, in a title venture here in Charlotte.

So that was kind what happened. And then, so really extending the REITs within real estate. Yep. Using the connections you made as a launching pad Yep. For a couple of other businesses. Yep. That's really what it was. I mean, real producers was just, you know, we, we, we provided, we provided vendors [00:22:00] access to agents that are, are busy and hard to reach.

Right. So then being able to make, you know, really good relationships with agents that are at the, at the top level of their business. And then also, Then asking those agents who their top vendors are, and then those top vendors supporting and building relations relationships with them. It was just a, I mean, it's just allowed me the opportunity to build relationships with people at a, at a high level in Charlotte and real estate and it led to everything else.

Sure. Yeah. So you said Rooster Fish? Mm-hmm. Video production company. Tell us what Rooster Fish does. The name or what, what we do? What, what does the company do? Okay, we'll get to that. All right. All right. Um, so we, we do, uh, we do, uh, high quality video production for real estate. Our tagline is, we're focused on real estate.

Um, but, um, you know, agents, lenders, [00:23:00] builders, you name it, fill, fill in the blank. Um, you know, in today's day and today's day and age, you know, being able to. Um, use video production to, to, to tell a story, to create content, and then to be able to deliver that content out on different, um, um, advertising mediums, you know, social media, um, you know, being a large one, um, you know, email campaigns mm-hmm.

And so on and so forth. Um, you know, it's just, it's just where everything is going, uh, in that content creation. And then, and then being able to follow that up with, Hey, I've got all this great video content. Now what do I do with it? We handle the social media aspect of the business too. So we'll post your social media content, we'll post your video content, uh, strategically on social media.

So kind of full service you'll handle. Yep. Well, that leads me to next question. You know, the, um, real estate, media, uh, and advertising is a fairly [00:24:00] crowded space. At an event I went to the other day, I feel like there were three vendors in a group of 50 people there representing different variations of real estate, media and marketing.

Yeah. How do you differentiate Rooster Fish? Why? Why Rooster fish over the crowded competition? Yeah. So five years ago or wasn't a whole lot of competition. And I was trying to bring my magazine to life by creating, it was like the behind the scenes look, the making of a cover. Oh, yeah. And so we

started creating this content and posting it, and then agents and people were coming to us and saying, Hey, would you do that for me?

I was like, okay. Um, so we didn't have a company, so, um, I had been utilizing, um, some freelance, um, uh, people that do video content. Um, and you know, what I found was there was a lot of inconsistencies with turnaround times, right? Um, there was inconsistencies with, uh, the creative aspect [00:25:00] to it. Um, there was inconsistencies of just availability and even wanting to do the work or even wanting to mess with realtors.

Um, you know, they're busy people. Um, so. I just decided one day I was gonna start a media company and we were gonna do video production. I really had never turned on a camera or had any experience, you know, really turning on a camera or anything like that. Just really experience and just, again, connecting and just, you know, sort of the business side of everything.

And, uh, we, um, um, my operations manager now, uh, Logan and I, we, we were sitting at my kitchen table, you know, it's like, what are we gonna name this company? And I, I looked up seven ways to name a company and. Um, she was like, well what about, what about Rooster Fish? And I, I kind of paused for a minute and I'm like, yeah, but everybody knows I like fishing and all that.

And it would just seem really cheesy if I named it Rooster Fish, you know? Oh. So, as I was like researching like [00:26:00] how to name a company, cause I'd named some companies in the past, but I really wanted this, like I wanted to do it. Right. Right. You know, I wanted to do it the right way. And I just did some research and, and it was like, well, does your, does the, does the, does the, um, does the company have a story?

And then how does that story fit into the marketplace? Hmm. So I was like, yeah, it does have a story and I think I can tie it into the marketplace. So the, the story is, is like, well my son was, was nine years old. Um, instead of giving him Christmas presents that year, I was gonna give him a trip. Mm-hmm. And we had fishing in Commons, so I had.

Done did a little research and I'd come across this fish that I'd never seen before. It was called a Rooster Fish. There's a real fish called Rooster Fish. Oh yeah. Oh, I didn't know that. Yes. Yeah. And he's got like these black, does it wake you up in the morning wake? Why is it called a rooster fish? I'll, I'll, I'll get to that.

Okay. So he's got these black ninja stripes over his eyes. He's got, uh, this mohawk on his back. It's called a comb. He's got these really iridescent colors. Oh, they're [00:27:00] big and they're, it's a beautiful fish. And I'm like, that fish is sick. I was like, we gotta go catch that. So, I got Luke, uh, so I was googling like the least sketchy country to take a nine year old, you know, on a fishing trip or whatever.

So the least sketchy, kinda like that. Yeah, that's good. So it turns out you could catch a rooster fish between Baja, California, Uhhuh and Panama, south America or Central America and, um, on the Pacific side. So anyway, we ended up going to Costa Rica. We went down there for a week, had an awesome trip. Love Costa Rica.

Yep. Uh, we ended up catching two rooster fish. Really? Yep. And, uh, you, you actually heard about a fish. Looked it up. Where do I go? Where is least likely my son's gonna get kicked After Killed. Yeah. To catch his And you went and didn't caught two of fish and we, and we got two of them. Yep. That's amazing.

Yeah. I love it. We fished hard. It was actually the worst time of year to go. We went during the rainy season and it was the worst time of year to catch Yeah. A fish. Yeah. Our rooster fish. Yeah. And we ended up getting lucky and we caught two fish within [00:28:00] like 20 minutes, but we fished for like four days for this fish.

Oh, that's great. Yeah. So we put our time in and we, um, so we released the fish, took a picture of it, we released it. And, um, I had a graphite mount made of the fish for Luke for his birthday, which was like the following month. Mm-hmm. So we took a measurement of the fish mm-hmm. And the girth of the fish and had like a replica of the actual fish made.

And it hangs in our, uh, kitchen to this day, uh, up on the wall. So when people come to our house, You're like, that fish is sick. Like, what is that? And I was like, that's a Rooster Fish. That's a rooster Fish. Yeah. So when we were trying to name the company and kind of how it fits in, you know, I, I had thought about like, maybe it needs to have like a real estate name, you know, if I'm gonna do real estate video, like, and just real estate, it ties in or whatever.

But actually we took the approach that Apple took, which let's Apple have anything to do with computers, right? Or does Rooster Fish have anything with real estate video marketing? Right. Um, so, um, anyway, we named it Rooster Fish and, um, [00:29:00] and, uh, you know, how it ties into the market was at

the time, um, I felt like real estate video marketing was non-existent outside of maybe just some listings, uh, some listing videos, right, right.

And typically real estate marketing was always pretty boring. So I was like, you know, yes, I wanna, I want Rooster Fish to be. Like I want it to be a kick ass, just like the Rooster Fish, and I want it to, right? I want people to stand out in their business. How do you make it kick ass stand out different from all the others?

What is it? The Rooster Fish does differently. That helps agents with their marketing? Yeah, that's a great question. We, I tell everybody, we are, we are grassroots, we are entrepreneurs, like in the flesh. We throw shit at the wall to see if it sticks or not, and we're not willing to fail. And we, we, we've, we've tried real hard over the last five years, but I think what we do the best is, is that we have a proven process and a system [00:30:00] that we have.

Uh, that we use in our company, um, that all everybody, uh, fo it's, you know, it's kind of followed by all and we've got really good, um, we've got core values, um, you know, um, that we are dead set on, um, our company culture. Um, we know the core values, um, you know, we hire 'em, we hire by core values. We fire by core values and we evaluate by core values.

Knock on wood. We have had, um, little to no turnover. Um, you know, in our company in the last five years, we've just grown. So it's been, it's like, it's really like a family. What would, what would you say the most important of your core values is? The one that's a a must has to be, has to exist or else nothing else works?

Yeah, I think thriving together, um, is one that, that stands out. Um, We've got six, um, thriving together, I think is cuz it's, it's, [00:31:00] it's so much a team effort, you know? Um, I mean to, to just be the business owner and like a visionary and, you know, all those things. Like, there's so many more pieces of the puzzle, um, that it takes to execute a business well.

What does it mean to thrive together? Do you have an example? Um, Really just the, the, the team aspect of, of the business. Um, like we don't, I, you know, cuz I didn't go to college, I kind of work a little bit with a chip on my shoulder. Like if you show up on time, you look people in the eye, you shake their hand and you say, what?

You, you and you do the right thing. I can teach you all the rest. Right, right. I don't care if you went to film school, you know, out in California and you're

some big shot, like we have no room for like brilliant jerks at our company. You know, so if like, I can't coach you or train you or teach you, or you can't coach me, teach me or train me.

Mm-hmm. You know, on the other side. Right. Learning from each other. Yeah. Like then there's really no place, you know, [00:32:00] there's really no place for somebody in our company if they're not kind of aligned in that. In that regard. Yeah. That's great. So I just think the power of team is, is huge. Yeah, that's, that's really important.

I, I've experienced it, I've worked with your team, um, with Rooster Fish and everyone's terrific to work with. Everyone's friendly and Yeah. And you know, you talked about innovating. Mm-hmm. You know, um, as a differentiator, always trying new things. Yep. Uh, and I've experienced that myself and we've, we've done some different approaches and sometimes I've had a video we were gonna do and your team will say, why don't we try it like this?

And we do. And usually they're right. It works well. So you gotta be able, I think we do a lot with the planning phase, like upfront. Yes. Because we work with really. Busy real estate professionals. Yep. So if you don't get a lot of that on the front end when you show up to shoot and it just takes so much more time and it's not planned appropriately.

Right. But you gotta be able to course correct too. You gotta be able to think on your toes if something doesn't go exactly [00:33:00] as planned or right. Or there's like, oh, there's something there. To be able to pivot a little bit and and be able to think on your toes. That's important too. Sure it is. So what do you think is one of the biggest hesitations among the real estate community in, in utilizing video these days?

Yeah. So, um, uh, the biggest hesitation that we see is it's usually people they don't know where to start. Mm-hmm. They don't know who to call. They're worried about how their, their appearance is gonna look. Uh, like, Hey, can, can you make me lose 10 pounds? Can you make me look 10 years younger? Um, you know, those kinds of things.

I've asked all those questions. Seen. Yeah. They have failed to make me look lighter or younger. Yep. But, They have brought in my personality really well. Right. And I think that's one of the key things they do a great job of. Right. Well, cuz real estate, you know, much like other businesses, I mean, it's very relationship based and it's like, hey, you know what?

People do business with you the way that you are. Right. So our job is to bring out [00:34:00] the, the things that you're great at and why people love you and what makes you unique and be able to get that to, uh, Be able to get that to come out on, on camera. Yeah. And I think that shines through on the videos that I see from your clients.

It's not about living rooms and kitchens, it's about personalities and experiences. Right. And, and I think that definitely shines through when, and I, I think that comes from that, that core value that you have with your team. Yeah. It, it comes through in the work product, right? Yeah. I mean, just being able to.

Kind of create unique content tailored to you. I mean, it's like we, we all are in real estate. We all, you know, sell houses or we do loans, or we build houses or Right. Or fill in the blank. Right? But it's like, no, what, what makes you, you? And that's what people really want, is that authenticity. So, so you talked earlier about one of the reasons that.

You, you revisited the offer to sell [00:35:00] Charlotte real producers was because you kind of had started doing a lot of different things and you wanted to have more focus. Mm-hmm. And you wanted to like be really good at a couple things or one thing versus doing a lot of things just Okay. About two years ago.

I understand you, uh, you read a book that I've read and I've. Been able to see the author speak, uh, traction by Gina Wickman. Oh yeah. And, um, that's a good one. You reorganized your, your meeting structure and how you ran your companies. Tell us about that. Yeah. Um, so what's funny is I was a horrible student, but, um, in, in my adult life, like I'm a big reader.

I love, uh, reading books, um, about, you know, business or, you know, Moti. Things that motivate me kind of thing are things that I'm interested in. Um, and, uh, I'd read traction and when I read the book, [00:36:00] I told my wife, I was like, I need to do everything that's in this book. Like right now. Right? All of it, yeah.

Yesterday. Yeah. Yeah. And she was actually a really good student and I was like, will you help me take notes? So we let poor her. She, we, she actually sat down and we took notes for. A couple hours, then I was like, all right, you're off the hook. But, um, but no, I implemented a lot of those things like right away, um, in the business.

But, um, so real quick, what, what is, what's the main message of traction for our audience? What did you, what is the key message you got from it? Yeah, it's, it's creating a, uh, system in your business and the e s system, which is the entrepreneurial operating system. Yeah. Right. So, You know what I learned though is there's visionaries in a company, right?

Which I'm totally that guy, right? Mm-hmm. And then there's the integrator, which is the person that actually does a lot of the work. Logan. Logan, yes. Yes. So what was really, and part of the frustration [00:37:00] that I was having, Was Logan and I were butting heads a lot because I'm on the gas, like hard charging with a sword.

Right? Right. Yes. And she's pumping the brakes saying, Hey, slow down, big guy. Like, we can't do that, or we can't. She was calling me saying, Tom Seber doing this and next week I need to get it organized. Let's have a planning meeting. I've been on both sides of this with you. I know. Yeah. So, but what I realized was, is that through the book was.

Actually had the right people and it was the, we were in the right seat, right? Yeah. Like Jim Collins, good to great Right. People on the, on the bus. Mm-hmm. And we just didn't know how to communicate or how to like put it all together. Right. And once we started like implementing some of these things, it started to make it better.

And then Traction actually has coaches associated with it. And I was like, we gotta do that. And again, the [00:38:00] gas versus the break. I'm like, we gotta do that. Logan's like, we're not spending that money, you know? But if you asked her today, it was the best money we've ever spent. Sure. You know, so, and in fact, our, our, um, implementer, implementer, uh, Tim O'Neill, I mean, he's like one of my very dear friends now.

Like, I love that guy. Like I have a lot to be thankful for, for his That's right. Friendship and leadership. That's really good. What's a day in the life? Tell us. What's wake up time? What do you do in a day of life? Tom Bra? Uh, well, uh, wake up is typically early. Um, I feel like there's different seasons, um, but typically, uh, you know, a 6:00 AM wake up, 5:36 AM wake up.

Mm-hmm. Uh, here recently I've been getting up at four 30. Um, what's up with this four 30 business? Well, I want to work out and it's like, it's super challenging. Like I've got a 16 year old and a two year old. Yeah. And then I gotta, I'm always in Charlotte [00:39:00] and in two businesses and it's like, I hate working out in the afternoon.

Mm-hmm. So I don't do it first thing in the morning. It's not happening. Right. So I think that's my biggest challenge right now because I. Just to be clear, like, I like getting up early. I don't like getting up at four 30 though. Yes. I, I can appreciate not liking that. So it's just like this mental like demonn that you fight.

Yeah. You know, that we all kind of fight. Um, but yeah. So get up early. So get up at four 30 or five 30 or some other time early. Yeah. Wake up. What's next? Go to the gym. Uh, come home, get Luke off to school. Mm-hmm. Get Finley. You know, a bottle and breakfast with Finley, you know, kiss my wife, make, uh, some breakfast and then it's off to the salt mines.

I mean, we're, uh, we're grinding in Charlotte usually. Usually I'm in, in an either an attorney's office or I'm meeting with a agent, a lender or builder. Uh, fill in the blank. How do you, do you, do you [00:40:00] segment, um, do you kind of time block for Rooster Fish versus the title, or are they so intertwined that.

You can basically, um, work on both at the same time, same audience? Yeah. So there is, I can kind of have the same conversation, like if I'm doing, I call 'em elevate meetings, I sit down and have coffee with agents or whatever, and like I can kind of talk about both things. But I, I do have to be careful though, because I feel like sometimes when you talk about both things, like.

Sometimes it gets convoluted, right? So I feel like I'm ver a lot more intentional about like where, where the need is with that specific, so go back to the whole idea of being focused, right? Yeah. So, so you focus on one, one business, one conversation at a time, depending on the need. Yeah. Yeah. And it, and it's very relationship driven, so I'm like, ultimately I wanna figure out where the need is first.

Mm-hmm. Like, I, I feel like in my sales career, like I, I. Try to take [00:41:00] more of a consultative approach versus like a hard sell. Mm-hmm. Like very like relationship driven, like add value, and then it's more like nonchalant like, oh, by the way, what I'm hearing is this. Like, did you know that this could be a possible solution or this could maybe be a benefit?

Or it's like, oh, that actually makes sense. Like yeah, we should do that, or collaborate or whatever, you know? True. So, That's kind of what I've always done, but as far, I'm really religious with my calendar. Um, you know, so, you know, Mondays I'm typically on a lot of, uh, zoom calls. Um, it's kind of like an office day.

Um, and then, uh, a lot of title stuff on Mondays. And then Tuesdays I do most of my media stuff in office. And then Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, I'm out in the field, you know, shaking hands, kissing baby's face, business development. Yep. Yep. Gotcha. So that, so would you say you're the [00:42:00] main face of business development of Rooster Fish and the title company?

Um, yeah. I mean, you know, for now, um, I've got, uh, Taylor on our team, uh, who kind of grooming into that, uh, that role, um, of like, uh, sales, uh, point of contact. She's our client concierge. Yep. But again, like, just really having like, our whole team kind of rallied around like what we're doing and why we're doing it and um, and just getting everybody on the boat rowing together.

Yeah. Um, so I feel like this year we've got, like our entire team is sort of in sales. You could say, you know, know. Sure. So, yeah. Um, but that's, that was a huge moment. Um, I feel like, uh, going into this year we were felt more aligned than we ever, ever had been, so it was awesome. Hmm. That's great. Mm-hmm. If we talk a year from now, um, and we are reflecting on 2023, um, and you're reflecting on the success, I'm curious, what is the definition of [00:43:00] success for 2023?

What are your goals? What do you want to do personally, professionally, whatever it may be? Um, um, personally, I, I want to, um, learn how to sail. Um, so I, I'm actually going in March. Um, buddy of mine sailed around the world, so we're actually entering a, a sailing regatta in the British Virgin Islands. And, uh, he invited me to come along.

I was like, you do know. I know. Don't know how to sail. And he is like, I know you wanna learn, so that's where you're gonna learn. So I was like, all right, game on. Let's do this. Wow. So doing that, um, he's actually a builder here in town. Um, And then, um, I've got a bunch of goals. Uh, and then, um, uh, you know, professionally, um, I'd like to put together um, four title, uh, joint ventures.

Um, so I'm, I only have this, my own title company here in Charlotte, but I'm able to structure and put together JVs for lenders builders, you know, yeah. So on. Very [00:44:00] interesting. So, uh, I just recently put one together, so I'm excited about that. I'd like to do a few of those this year. That's fantastic. Yep.

And always growing. Yeah. Yeah. So, uh, those are, those are two that, uh, that stand out. Oh. Speaking of growing, if, uh, if you were to give advice to realtors of three things, the three easy, most important things they can do to market

themselves and grow their business, what advice do you have for them? Well, first and foremost, I feel like most people.

Never start. So, so start, start, yeah. Move from the planning phase to execution. Yeah. Yep. Um, I think paralysis by analysis is a real thing. Yep. Right. Um, and then the last one is just know that it's a journey. You're not gonna have all the right answers. You're not gonna do it exactly right [00:45:00] or exactly perfect.

Mm-hmm. You just have to start and, you know, And, and fail, but fail forward. Yeah. Don't be afraid. Yeah. To jump in and do it. Mm-hmm. I love it. So, Tom, at the beginning I said, when I think of you, uh, pilot, father, husband, realtor, publisher, connector, media, marketing, entrepreneur, extreme fisherman, talent company entrepreneur, I now have to list sailor to my list.

Thanks for joining us today. I really appreciate it. Thanks, man. How can people find you if we don't wanna reach you? They could find me at, uh, my name at Tom Bramhall on uh, Instagram. Um, also our media company is at Rooster Fish Media. All's the best ways to find us. I'll see you on the internet. All right, man.

Thank you. Thanks for having me.[00:46:00]