

a branded world

PODCAST

with
Luiza Campos



011 | COLLABORATION, WHY TOGETHER IS
BETTER WITH JIM BUTTON

EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

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A BRANDED WORLD PODCAST – 011 | COLLABORATION, WHY TOGETHER IS BETTER WITH JIM BUTTON

- Luiza Campos: 00:00:00 You're listening to a branded world podcast, episode number 11.
- Announcer: 00:00:08 Welcome to a branded world podcast where we explore a great brands and give you tips, tools, hacks, and guides to create brands that captivated clients and drive growth in revenue. And now your host, Louisa Campos.
- Luiza Campos: 00:00:29 Hello everyone and welcome to another episode of a branded world podcast. It's January 2018 and I'm very excited for the new year and for all the episodes that we have planned for the podcast this year, I would also love to hear from you. So if you can go to a brand new world podcast.com. There is a spot there either through written comments or you can press a button and leave a message with some comments about the podcast, suggestions on topics that you would love to hear or guests that, uh, you would love to hear from an I will try to do as many as those as possible. So please go to a branded world podcast.com and leave your messages there. Now this episode is I think an awesome one. I am interviewing the one and only Jim Button. Now, Jim is an impressive guy, not only because he is the co-founder of Village Brewery, a strategist for Evans Hunt, one of the best, if not the best agency in in Calgary, Alberta, a co founder of Circle, which is an amazing community event and of course he is also a director for Beer Canada and does many appearances for the Dave Kelly live show, which is one of my favorite part of the show, but that doesn't even begin to explain or to express who jim is.
- Luiza Campos: 00:02:01 I've known Jim for quite a few years and he is a funny, positive guy. Super Open minded and just someone that you really love to hang out with. A really cool guy that knows a lot about strategy and branding and marketing and have an impressive show of brands that he has worked in, helped with. But more than anything, Jim has this amazing ability to connect people with each other. He's. He helps anyone and everyone. He's always collaborating, bringing people together. Even people or organizations that wouldn't even see how a collaboration with someone else could work. He has this ability to really identify the best ways people can collaborate and and as I said, even in cases where people can see for

themselves, so jim is an incredibly talented professional, the most evolved, an amazing collaborator, community builder and a connector of people and ideas. He just makes things happen that strengthened brands, strengthen the community and just makes it a much better, stronger place to be and much better, stronger organizations to work with or for. In this episode, Jim tells us many stories and examples of of how he does this and how are we collaborations make any brand better, any place better, and he just makes people stronger and happier. So enjoy this interview with the one and only the awesome Jim Button.

- Luiza Campos: 00:03:51 Hi Jim. How are you?
- Jim Button: 00:03:53 I'm doing great. How are you, Luiza?
- Luiza Campos: 00:03:55 I am great. I am so happy to talk to you today. You are a super busy guy that has amazing experience seeing branding and a true sort of connector in our community. I've, I, I really don't know anyone else that has the ability to do, to collaborate and to connect people and brands and causes. And you know, you've worked with amazing brands, you've super busy with Evans Hunt, which is an awesome company. You've, you have, of course village brewery, you're a founder of that and you're also a co-founder of circle the wagons, which I would love for you to talk to us a little bit about that as well. Not to mention your awesome appearances at Kelly show. Sorry about that. No, those are my favorite part.
- Jim Button: 00:04:52 Better recording for Dave. He's got to hear that.
- Luiza Campos: 00:04:58 So can you tell us, Jim, a little bit about your background, you know, how you started your career, you know, the path that took you to where you are today.
- Jim Button: 00:05:08 Wow, that's a big question. Um, yeah. Well, you know, I, I, I can remember a moment when I was in our kitchen when I was in high school and my dad saying, so what are you going to do for university? There was never a question of whether you're going to university from previous perspective is you're going to university. And uh, I said, well, I'd rather have the goal. I want to be a psychologist or I wouldn't be advertising. My Dad being a very linear, you know, he's an air traffic controller, a navigator, flew bombers and all that stuff, you know, so very linear guy. He said, no, no, you have to pick. And I

said, no, I did. I told you I, I just picked you. Said, no, no, you got to pick one for the same thing. It's just the understanding of human behavior.

- Jim Button: 00:05:55 So I've always been that and always gathered people. I was always the one that organizes the trips for our groups of friends. I was always the one that everybody going to say, what are we doing tonight? I've always been bringing people together. So, uh, the evolution of my understanding of brand and your marketing is really just a simple extension of myself and who I am. And that's what's happened is, is a really interesting point in our history of marketing where technology has really caught up or allowed you to take all those interactions. It was one to one engagements and really leverage them. So there's been a really interesting change that's happened tonight and I've just been fortunate to a time that it makes sense for me. So I'll know whether I've had a job in advertising in Toronto or whether it has been a, a starting my own financial planning companies and doing the marketing for that with my brother or whether it was starting an event marketing company. All those worlds were always one step removed from it just being me having a conversation with somebody and educated them on the services that the company that I was president. Yeah. So that's, you know, it's basic and it's basic group. It's just me making friends with people, whether it's for a company or for a not for profit or for somebody else. That's, that's, that's my role. I'm a bridge builder, a conduit or a connector, whatever words you want to use, that's essentially what I do.
- Luiza Campos: 00:07:38 And that's exactly what you do. I mean, we've, we first met each other when, when you were with venture and we were involved in building connections. Do you remember that?
- Jim Button: 00:07:49 I loved that project.
- Luiza Campos: 00:07:50 Yeah, it was awesome. So it was basically bringing a taste of calgary to different regions, regions of Canada. And um, you were integral in actually connecting us with all these different amazing talent in our community so we could showcase the, um, along the way and, and, and, and expose people to what Calgary has to offer. But, and since then I've been following you and you are very much that connect or you just seem to know everyone and you in a way, as you describe it, it's just you making

friends and it's, I think it's your understanding what people need and you're not trying to sell them anything that they don't want or I haven't thought about it, but it's just addressing those needs, right?

Jim Button: 00:08:41 Oh, absolutely. You know, it's kind of funny. I've never, never would have thought it would be in sales. I never would have thought it was, you know, anything, you know, the, the word sales has got such an interesting stigma. And uh, so much what I do is, is, is really sales. It's not like wait salesmen of, of, of your. It's more about, um, but my lucky lucky gift that I discovered early wise when somebody is talking, I can quickly here, uh, the person that I want to connect them with or the bridge I want them to walk over and somehow I can't remember simple things, but I can remember conversations I had with somebody ten years ago that said, you know, I do this so everybody knows somebody that needs that connect to me. And so I stay in touch with all sorts of people that way.

Jim Button: 00:09:39 And all I am is I, I'm just like radar o'reilly, you know, where my job isn't just to mention one person with another person. And so whether it's by lunch or whether it's by email or whether it's by standing in front of a room of 50 executives, you know, it's, that's just been my lucky ability to discover that I have. And all that I'm really honestly doing is taking the trust that they have in me and just transferring it to the person and say, here, because I've endorsed this personal because I'm connecting with this person, you can trust that it's, it's probably going to lead somewhere and it's not a waste of time. And would have been sunk when I started there eight years ago, maybe nine.

Jim Button: 00:10:26 They were building big complex websites at the time and I had no real idea of the complexity of platforms and all that. All the conversations that you have when you're in digital marketing for. Um, and I, I, I quickly learned that that's not my job. My job was to hear what's the challenge, the business challenge was the marketing challenge. What's the strategic challenge or what's the brand challenge and is that something that I could take the trust you have in me and pass it on to Dan and bill and their company and have them actually executed. And so quite often all I was doing was just, I'm just a trust transference. I was just taking what we trust him. Jim, you, you kinda understand what our challenges and data

below where the smart guys in the room and they, they would tend to take the conversation over and solve the challenge. I would come in and out of the conversation on when they needed to connect or they're having a hard time strategically or a gap was needed to be filled. That's where I could sneak back in, but it's all I've ever done is made bridges and help people walk over them.

- Luiza Campos: 00:11:37 That's amazing. But part of what I find fascinating about you is that it's not just about transferring trust, although that is one of the things that you do, but the reason you were given that trust to begin with is because people really. They feel and they know that you're listening to them and sometimes you can identify their needs even before they can. Which is why I think you're so successful in this, in this connections that you make and in this collaborations that you build. Because a lot of times these are people that you connect that they would have never thought about doing that in the first place. So it's, it's, you really have this amazing ability to identify needs.
- Jim Button: 00:12:24 That's the same thing though, you know, to me it's the same when I'm hearing somebody talk can certainly, and they're expressing what their challenges are, where they need to get to the same connection to people is, is not unlike a connection to an idea. It just all of a sudden I can see a solution and I would say a good eighty percent of the time when I say, have you thought about desk, they'll go, are you crazy? Unless it doesn't. Well let me, let me walk you through how I. Yeah, how it can help you understand what I mean. And then we have a, we have a conversation that's usually about a ten minute, fifteen minute conversation. They go, oh my God, yeah, no I could do that, that'd be great. And then they check in with, I can't believe I didn't do that before. Why didn't I go in my mind? Yeah. It just seems so obvious to me. And we only had a ten minute conversation on it.
- Luiza Campos: 00:13:21 Talk to me a little bit about, I believe in collaborations. Um, and I think a lot of times he makes a brand or a company stronger, but in a time where we have this, you know, switching economy in all right, where people are not as loyal as they used to be and they can more easily change brands. How do you see collaboration playing a role in, in helping brands actually in, in even helping with that loyalty and trust? I guess the question really is about the power of collaboration when you talk to different companies and when you are connecting people, some

of those connections may make more, more sense, particularly if you are, uh, you know, finding a solution or selling a product to someone who may need it. But other times like circle the wagons, I think it's a good example of that. It's, there's a whole bunch of different brands coming together and collaborating to create something and some of them may even see each other as competitors in a way. So what is the power of collaboration in your mind, you know, and, and why is it beneficial for brands?

Jim Button: 00:14:34 OK. So it's a shared purpose and if you can identify a shared purpose, African adage of I'm going to go far go together, Fast Polo and a release to get activities happen if you're just out there doing stuff by yourself. But if you really want to have a solid foundation, you really want to have a long life and you really want to have a guaranteed that that foundation is easy to build upon and build upon it. The more you can take on because your whole network is getting stronger, the better set you are for success. And so I, I like for circle and by the way we call it circle now because along the way we learned that circled the wagons was a, uh, a term that wasn't a very positive term in our indigenous community. So we had actually listened through, through that challenge as well, but learned a lot from it.

Jim Button: 00:15:35 And again, it's a good lesson was learned in that the fact that we actually were doing good through circle as an event where the combination of village brewery a way see food trucks and based bus. So James Barron and I came up with the idea for circle because it was built around a purpose and it was purpose driven and we were trying to do good in community. We will give him a little bit more latitude than most people would be given if they came up with a name that was a researcher. So there's yet a small little micro example of by doing something together and doing something for good, how you can get a little bit further, um, over the long run.

Jim Button: 00:16:23 But when we put that data together for the purpose of that event, and I think that's the critical part about all of that is fun shared purpose. That or when, when, when I hit the cliché now, but it's so true. But when we put that event together, it was, it was because for twenty five years I've lived in the city and, and I, I get so frustrated by the fact that we're still seen as a backwards profits. You know, like my friends and Ontario looking at us. Like

we're a bunch of Hicks, a bunch of old white dude riding cowboys working in the oil. And gas industry and that is so far from the truth and we've got to live out here, but it's not who we are yet. Every piece of marketing that we've done for the last twenty five years has had to have some homage to those, those elements and therefore it's kept us in a spot in the past.

- Jim Button: 00:17:16 So when we built circle, the vision was, and I'm sure a few stats here, if you go back in all the work I've done through a village or Evan turn, all the research I've gotten to see from clients like economic development or tourism or hotel or downtown or the chamber or ad nauseum. All these different agencies. All the research has shown me that we're still seeing the way we use to market ourselves. Fifty years ago, sixty years ago, one in 350 calgarians was a visible minority. So picture that we were all those old white dudes back 50, sixty years ago. Today we're one in four, soon to be 20 five. It will be visible minority, but that's not part of what people see us as people to live a similar similar research, people that live in our city or our new. I think this is an extremely vibrant, exciting city. People that lived here for a long time, for living in the suburbs, think it's boring town, so the purpose of circle is to actually take all that cool activity that we know exists in the city and slowly but surely move it around to communities and educate people on all the great, beautiful activity we have in our town.
- Jim Button: 00:18:37 So shared purpose, collaborating together, getting communities, getting other people to participate in that you can make a movement happen. Village is basically just a movement that happens to sell beer. We're trying to make a better community. We know that beer is a, a currency onto its own and the social lubricant, so why would we leverage that and build a brewery around that purpose and then everybody we can. You know, we, when we started, we had six partners, then we got 50 engaged Calgarians to be are your bearings to invest in it. It's split amongst so many people. Nobody's getting rich office, but they're off feeling very good about the purpose of the brewery at that is contagious and that's a solid foundation.
- Luiza Campos: 00:19:23 Yes, and that's exactly it the purpose is contagious and that's one of the things that I'm always trying to press upon any of my clients that you have to identify, you

have to build something based on purpose and then you have to be able to really instill that or can. It has to be contagious. You have to express that so other people can engage with it.

- Jim Button: 00:19:47 Absolutely. I often get asked this question from people that are, when I'm seeing how do I build community and and the purpose driven activity behind that, you know, things like village and having time to circle and another one, by the way that I've started dealing with Gary Davis and a few others, a couple of your scores. Best of Calgary. We had this downturn in the economy. Every was talking negatively about our city and here I was looking at all the companies I'm working with and all day they're all doing way better. So why is all this negative talk just because our foundational industries having a hard time, why are we all looking at it with glum faces? So we, we took over the festival words best in Calgary and we used it to celebrate all the great things that Calgary has and then build a forum to talk about what we need to do to make it a a better city.
- Jim Button: 00:20:42 And so I'm, I'm quite often asked by people. It's not like bragging, isn't it? Isn't it? Isn't it like bragging? If I tell them the great community work I'm doing and I stayed the obstacle, I say it's a matter of fact. We need more people to do more in the community. We need more leaders to actually talk about what they're doing and actually do what they're talking about or saying they're going to do an express that because we need to bring other people along that I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm, I believe that I, I believe it even more everyday companies in the future, we will not succeed unless they have a purpose driven concept.
- Luiza Campos: 00:21:23 I could not agree more. I could not agree more and this is something that, um, it frustrates me a bit to find companies or non-profits are based on purpose, but a lot of times they hesitate from actually tapping into that or expressing that to the full extent of what it is you know, did express this.
- Jim Button: 00:21:49 Unfortunately, small companies and not for profits get distracted by focusing on fund development and, or sales as opposed to focusing on the purpose and having the fund development and sales follow and building a network of people around a shared purpose and say, hey, collectively we need to actually solve this problem. Let's

do it together. How can we best do it? Who can I bring in to help me make this happen? And how can you benefit along the way? Or what is the benefit that you want to see? And the purpose is it blah, blah blah. But they get so focused on development and administrative work that they'd get distracted. That's our end. Understandable. But because it's hard to take a step back and actually just say we're just going to do it, and if we do it, we believe the funds will come. That's hard for people to have the confidence.

Luiza Campos: 00:22:39 Yes, exactly. And I find, uh, I wonder what your thoughts are on this because I find this well for both, for profits and non profits that they hesitate to talk about the purpose because it's usually based on emotion. It's not based on stats or facts or benefits and features and things like that. When in fact that is the way to connect with your audience, right? That is the way to really say, Hey, this is what I'm about to share the same values and that's how you get that, that true connection, right?

Jim Button: 00:23:14 And how do we solve it together and how do we make it better together. But they get myopic and you can understand why, because if they have a board the board and you're trying to answer the boards, small little tiny challenges that they have and you need a good leader that is really passionate about why you have started the company under the not for profit and what is the purpose and that person has to be to be so strong and powerful and the knowing about the need for solving this challenge and everyone else just has to follow along and believe in the purpose and follow a log and fill in the gaps to make sure that that person that's got that passion can bring in other people that have got the passion for the people that they're helping with their purpose. Those people in front, and this is where people get really uncomfortable. They say, well, isn't that. Isn't that being a Braggadocios or is it. Are we leveraging somebody bad? Fortunate by putting a picture of them up on something. If you make it real and you make an honest and genuine a, I have a hard time seeing how you can quit if you're trying to be.

Luiza Campos: 00:24:33 Yeah, exactly, and you mentioned what I think it's, it's one of the biggest challenges for any brands and you were talking about the brand perception of, of calgary changing an existing perception. I, in my mind, in my opinion is one of the hardest things any brand can do,

but you will, it will never achieve it if you can't instill that passion in and find that shared purpose on those who you want to bring along. So this is when it becomes even more important to really find what that purpose is. Right?

- Jim Button: 00:25:07 Absolutely. And if you look at our city, uh, it was really encouraging to have, or you haven't started working on the Amazon Pittsburgh, there was a, there was a moment when the work was done and we saw it be expressed in the package and in Seattle and have all the noise around that work. And what I was most excited about was that I can't remember. I'll get this wrong. Somebody for me off and tell me what it was. But um, I remember working on a, it's Petro Canada. I can't remember who was the, we were willing to come here and the creative that we used to show that we were a very cultural and contemporary city was a cowboy drinking a Cappuccino and a ballerina in cowboy boots. We just couldn't get away from that. And then watching the creative in how we express who we are, city in the Amazon catchment was that we were not holding on to that old thought any longer and it resonated.
- Luiza Campos: 00:26:15 I remember that. Yeah.
- Jim Button: 00:26:16 Now there'll be a lot of people that give me grief. There'll be a lot of people that are getting mad at me in Calgary now. Uh, I'm sure
- Luiza Campos: 00:26:27 I recalled those, uh, those ads, but I can't put my finger on it and what that was for. But yes, I remember exactly.
- Jim Button: 00:26:35 No, but we've always done that and we've just, that's. And that's not. If you look at the majority of the city, that's not who we are, but the power, the power that rests with him, how many are still holding on to that? And they're the same people that think we're the same, that the rest of the world as a result think were the same people we were 50, sixty years ago.
- Luiza Campos: 00:26:56 Yeah. The perception doesn't match the reality
- Jim Button: 00:27:01 never, ever does. When it come to Calgary, you always, if you talk to anybody and you've taken them around, they're shocked, oh my God, this is not what I thought I was going to.

- Luiza Campos: 00:27:10 Exactly. Which is a problem in terms of a brand promise because if you are promising in whatever in the case of Calgary cowboys and horses or or whatnot, and you come and people are like, well where are they? So it's the same for any brand. If your brand promise doesn't match the experience that you actually deliver, you have a problem. You need to fix that.
- Jim Button: 00:27:37 Absolutely. But I think we're better. You know, we're not 100% there but we're way further along than we were ten years ago.
- Luiza Campos: 00:27:44 No, I would agree. I would agree with that. So tell me a little bit about, you know, in your opinion, like what have been some of the best successes you've had and I think you were the guy that invented, if that's the right word, to use those. Um, what is it? The Bale, the Hay Bales, beer cans. Talk to us about that,
- Jim Button: 00:28:09 know that, that, that started from a conversation. So sheena mcNally and I were talking, I just flown back to Calgary and as I drove, flew over a field. I thought how cool would it be if we actually could say something to Calgary too Calgary? So we were just brainstorming, getting along the way a few years maybe with barley. Barley is stocked up on a field and the field has done in the shape of a little shredded wheat looking things. If you stuck to them up, they look off a lot, like a beer can just syndicate, natural thing to do. And uh, then all of a sudden farmers wanted to see a shared it and participate in it because there were wildly proud of their product. You know, we've got sort of the best two row barley in the world. People source our materials from everywhere to make their, their beer and other products and so they were very excited to be part of the week. We had quite a few ended up having one person whose job was just to go and get enough hay bales to the farmers that I really wanted to have those types of things to me that are way more interesting in it was on the global mail. I'm in Toronto who's all sorts of fun stories that came out of that, but the person that would care about Roy first, we'd say wasted time, wasted money. A person that cares about brand goes, hey, how cool is that? That is, that is, that is our brand to a t right there. That was, uh, that was grant.
- Luiza Campos: 00:29:45 Talk to me about that idea and how did you come up with that?

- Jim Button: 00:29:48 That was an idea that came out of my head, said it was too cheap to pay for advertising. So he had people make ads for me and then he had a had an event the first year, like 50 people showed up with their commercials and imagine how hard it was to make her commercial back then yourself and a right. Remember the second or third year I took it over when I was at the bank group and we talked it up to a twenty four hundred person event that's sold out in. We used to have. Every year is always fun to see what their, their solo did six minutes or seven minutes. People buy tickets to come drink your beer and what your beer commercials and pay money and turn it into a fundraiser. So I don't know, you could actually get any better of a brand story for that.
- Luiza Campos: 00:30:34 Yeah, no that was amazing. For those of you who don't know, this is for big rock brewery where Big Ed would, do they call him, Big Ed?
- Jim Button: 00:30:45 It was big Eddie you could call him that. Whatever you want to say.
- Luiza Campos: 00:30:48 Came up with this, which was, as you said, it's genius. I mean, it's such a great way to connect with your audience,
- Jim Button: 00:30:59 you know, at the time, there was no social media, there was, none of what is around today. This was, you had to go to a spot, see it live in person and that was it. It's different than it is now. That's for sure.
- Luiza Campos: 00:31:11 That was a brilliant, brilliant thing. Genius idea and a great way to connect with audiences and fantasy as I mentioned. So what are some of your favorite brands?
- Jim Button: 00:31:24 My favorite brands? Well, I don't know, let's see. Favorite brands, you know, I went to a wiccan initiated into fetal this year and I wanted to go there for, I don't know how many years and it did not disappoint. Um, but the reason why I wanted to go was because the marketing side of my brain, you know, it was one of those, it's in the winter time, it's a pretty, it's a pretty cold, pretty cold venture to go all the way up to the, to the ocean and a stay in a hotel for staying in hotels purpose. But what they did was they, they did smart things like put microphones in there. I'm not even sure if I heard this when I was there, but the story, but I had heard before, which made me want to go. Nobody would come with the wintertime. Let's

- leverage what are challenges and say, come over for the store watching.
- Jim Button: 00:32:28 There was no better place in the world to watch storms. So doesn't the warmth of our beautiful resort. They would take microphones and put the speakers in the dining room and you could hear the waves crash know. So why in the world would you actually pay big money? It's not cheap to go to a place where the store was so abysmal, but it was a matter of. It was purely the way they built that bread. I had to go see it and it was gorgeous and I loved it and they loved the whole funeral thing. But it's the thinking behind that made me really intrigued to want to go and see it.
- Luiza Campos: 00:33:05 So you're basically paying to go see bad weather
- Jim Button: 00:33:09 you're paying the whole time I was there, it was raining and cool and I remember saying to my wife, so I don't think I've ever been more happy to be on a holiday and walking around in the rain. Like they give you this big rain jackets. You go into the rain forest, you everything's catered to. I'm just experiencing. Normally you would say what a drag read the whole holiday. Whereas here you're like, yeah, it was cold and the waves are crashing and I was walking in the rain and this funky orange raincoat, it seemed it was every other hotel would go home so sales can be down, turn it around as a result at the hotel, not necessarily to hotel.
- Luiza Campos: 00:33:59 That's awesome. They took a negative and turned it into a selling point
- Jim Button: 00:34:04 by creating a brand around it, by creating a story around it,
- Luiza Campos: 00:34:07 creating a story around it. That's awesome. What do you think Jim, are sort of essential elements for a successful brand? I mean, we've talked about a finding that the purpose and really driving with that or being honest and real, or even in this last example you gave us in sort of finding a story and turning something negative into something positive that, is there anything else that you think makes part of a successful brand?
- Jim Button: 00:34:40 I would have to say the last pillar for that would be consistency. You're, you're, you have to be consistent from the throat, the whole company in every way you

express it every way. And that's from speeches to the leadership. Give introductions at the reception to email bouncebacks [inaudible] on your about page isn't visible to all your marketing, to all your customer experience. Everything has to fail. Every person there that's doing an expression on behalf of the brand has to understand the brand and that's the bigger you get and the more people you have, you tend to get busy and you tend to, you know, go. They joined a company, they probably understand that they wouldn't have joined it if they didn't understand it, but that's the responsibility of leadership. That's the responsibility of making sure, uh, that consistency, that under a purest understanding of the company is core and then a, which includes the, the purpose, but the expression of it and understanding of everybody along the way on how, you know, that's every reply, every, every, everything you do at village, every brand we make has to have, has to go through a filter.

Jim Button: 00:36:03 What's its purpose? How do we try and engage a local company? How do we, um, every beer has a different. A family member that works at village gets to have a chance to have, you know, my mom's to blind. My father in law or grandfather loves on the blacksmith, father was on there. Everybody, everybody gets a chance to be part of that. It's so hard. It's, it's almost impossible for us to come up with a brand that is based on the beer and the character and the character of the beer and the character of the individual that's attached to it. Or whether it's a triplet or a blonde or a father or whatever. It's a real pain in the ass to come up with it because you don't necessarily, we all sit around in a room and there's many people in the company we can assemble and we tried to determine what are the big core beers that we're going to have introduced for the year and each beers going a different responsibility, whether it's a, a, a core brand or whether it's a seasonal brand and whether it's beer for our brewers to be really experimental and, uh, make sure that we're attending to one of our key audiences, which is a, those beer enthusiasts that really loves to try something new.

Jim Button: 00:37:19 So you first have to start with the beer. Then you have to say, OK, what are we going to call it and who's going to be on it? And then whether that name comes first or whether the name which is attached to the style of beer, like a blonde or black ale in terms of blacksmith or a really silly. And he'd be like squeezed, like squeeze on a

cave because the coles parents, there's a pitcher, it's a letter Berry Helis. And so we're thinking of words that, you know, Lebron's raspberries and how, what were works best for those, and then all of a sudden, and you ask all the staff, OK, who's going to be on this one, send us your pictures. We've got this great picture from Nicole's parents. And they were squeezing each other and embrace. And it's not even really a pitcher you would put on in today's environment. It might actually looked quite sexist, um, because it's a man and a woman in the fifties and he's grabbing her butt and she's got her leg up and they're clearly a. We said, let's put it up and we'll call it squeeze.

- Jim Button: 00:38:26 Awesome. Because it comes from a pure spot and it fits our purpose driven company. That type of thing is not. I think anybody would ever look at it. If it was another brand and you did that, somebody might look at her side because our brand, they know that that's who we are. We're not actually big. I'm inconsistent. We're not being disingenuous. We are actually being. This is a beautiful, beautiful moment of love, but I didn't break a squeeze and squeezed and so it's quite. It's quite a challenge to put together the story. He said the next challenge is Trevor Mcconnell, who does our reading for us. He has to actually then write a story in 50 words or less a boat that describes the beer and the person equally. So when you look at it, you read, if you read it as a beer, you'd read a word wave, read it as a person to another way but do it.
- Luiza Campos: 00:39:24 But it's amazing. What a great story. I love the squeeze story. I mean, and it is a challenge. It is really hard to build brands like that. So why bother? As you said, it is a lot harder to build brands based on purpose and to tell the story and you know, and to do all that. So explain to us why you choose. Even though it takes you a lot longer and it's a lot harder to do it. Why does village to do this? Why peaking sort of a character almost right? To to make the beer around that
- Jim Button: 00:40:01 well at the very core of who we are, our purpose as we are gathering people around community, we're bringing people together for a shared purpose which is making the place that we live in the place that you're drinking that beer a better place and we're going to do it together and so the only way you could do that because if you include others in the conversation, so every beer has got

a character. Every beer has good ingredients and if possible mates my local copy, whether it's like the Chai would reporter called the monk were silkroad spice merchants are engaged by baking, are trying, and we put that most places wouldn't put the ingredients on a book of somebody else on their packaging. They put the ingredients but they wouldn't describe another company. That's our purpose. Our purpose is to describe the other company before it is to do anything else.

- Jim Button: 00:40:58 Our purpose is to build a better community and we make a beer called village friend. Mel mentioned listing it another industry. The PR industry is very good at collaborating and is a great. It's a great industry for others to follow the craft beer industry at least, and we make a beer called village spread where their sole purpose is to support the industry and so we'll pick a every year we'll pick a new brewery and we'll bring them into the brewery, a beer, make us learn our process to education on our lab and they'll they'll get to work on a much bigger facility and then we make the beer. We put them all over it. There are pictures on the front or names all over the beer, their logos on the beer. We sell the beer and all the profit from that beer that goes back to that small brewery hopefully to by lab equipment.
- Jim Button: 00:41:55 The purpose is to support that brewery a but b, because that's a big part of our responsibility as as what are the first few breweries. In fifteen years, our responsibility was to help build the industry, but the better their appearance, so peep by lab equipment better. Their beer is more likely. The people that would normally drink beer price, it goes well, that's really good beer. More likely the rising tide of analogy will take place, so in actual fact, I'm actually helping my old brewery by helping these other breweries. So if, if other brewery, other industries companies could understand that, uh, I remember being at a conference once and the speaker a stood up and said, my job as the leader of my company is to put other companies like my companies out of business. And so I took charge with that. I put my hand up and mentioned name.
- Jim Button: 00:42:57 We had a debate in front of a lot of people and I said, I don't, I don't agree with that philosophy. And I think that's a very old attitude and philosophy. And what it'll mean is you're going to be in trouble because if you're just putting people out of business, who's the first person

they're going after, essentially thought now the consumers got way too much choice. Now the old days, she just crushed somebody to. They didn't have choice. Now the consumers are way more engaged in Brad than we ever were. We, we, we're suckers for way back wet now. Consumers are too smart and jaded, don't trust. They don't trust brands until Brad's proved cells.

- Luiza Campos: 00:43:40 Yes, and as you mentioned before, consumers are interested in purpose driven brands and brands that are doing good, so destroying competitors is too good brand, not likely to survive
- Jim Button: 00:43:55 and it's not what? It's not what the consumer actually wants. The consumer actually wants a choice. Right? Exactly. That's not the. That's not, that's not the adage that people are paying attention to right now.
- Luiza Campos: 00:44:11 So you just gave us some great examples of how village is living their purpose and one of the things that I often tell people is be careful with the purpose you pick because you then have to live it. You have to commit to it. Meaning you have to come up with, you know, in your case you're describing all the process for each beer, how you need to really create this character and create the story and find who's going to be the character, the, the real person in your lives that are going to sort of embodied that beer and create this whole thing behind it, which is a lot more complicated, a lot more time consuming. But are you doing that because that is how you honor and you live your purpose. So those are great examples of, you know, it's not just about stating what your purpose is, you actually have to live by that. You actually have to, as you were saying, be consistent in every way and everything to say and in everything you do,
- Jim Button: 00:45:20 You have to, every time you make a decision that has to go through that filter and you have to challenge each staff member in each step to challenge each other to say, this doesn't feel right. If we added this element to it, it still does what I think you're trying to accomplish but doesn't actually fit our purpose. But it's, it's, it, it ranges from, um, you know, brand which you don't just style guidelines to what types of imagery you use. Images always have. We tried to always have people in gathering people, so always have to have a person in it and, or things that you do will make a beer. A real big believer in

getting people together. Also, a big believer that we don't understand where food comes from anymore because generations of us that are just not paying attention to that.

Jim Button: 00:46:16 So how do we educate for that? So somewhere along the way we came up with, by half a chance, we created a, uh, we picked a bunch of hops, grown out at our partner, my partner, Tim's a place, uh, we picked those ops, put it up on social media saying, Hey, we've got subs, which we do it. And Bab. Everybody went crazy. We should make a beer together or somebody suggestions to the point where we just said, well, if you have hops and you want to be part of making this beer, bring your hops down. People brought hubs five years later. Purpose is education. So right away what we did was, once we saw that, we started helping support with atb, um, and we started financially supporting community associations with their community gardens and we give them to somebody to help build the garden. They would give some hops, we would give them some operational to grow, educate them on how to grow it, and it would grow hops back.

Jim Button: 00:47:17 We would make a beer together, we'd give them a whole bunch of beer that they could have a gathering of people, but a lot the way what was happening was people were getting out of their houses, they were coming down to the community gardens because it was beer which makes the difference and they were learning about where things came from. Kids were understanding the power of darkness and so the more you can actually have a purpose behind why you do it, the stronger it is for more long lasting. It will be in the more engaged people will be with it. It is. I mean, I spent so I do not make any money on that beer whatsoever. I lose buddy because it's so costly. Time consuming and a connecting to so many people giving away so much beer, but that's not. That's. That's irrelevant. It's, it's it's purposes to say, this is our belief system.

Jim Button: 00:48:08 We've already said ten percent of our bottom line has to go back into the community. It makes doing things like that so easy to do. If you make decisions financially, Ag at the end you said, kill whatever's left over, we're going to get. You'll never give anything. But if you go with the beginning of your company and say temperature to the Bud, light has to go back into your community. Your

decision making is, it's matter of fact. You Go, I hope we spend enough this year that we've never, not, we've, we've always overspent by hundreds of percents, many years. And we've done silly things. Like when the floods happened, I remember having one meeting, uh, with my partner. So we said, uh, we started off describing who we gave [inaudible] to help, you know, we're, we're taking beer, put it out on the street corners for those people that were stuck in neighborhoods.

- Jim Button: 00:49:01 I was down in a basement and I said, God, I could use a beer. And then I phoned Thomas or Tom, can you bring down a whole bunch of beer and just put them in blue buckets and we'll just put around their quarters and leave a note saying thanks to those people that came and helped me with my house. And we put those everywhere. Like in a normal situation, the mirror and I talked about it afterwards and in a normal situation where we would not be allowed to do that, but if you don't, Calgary Friday, do you know how everybody got together to help you know that that was the right thing to do? So we're all sitting in a meeting, I'm kind of just after about six days after it really hit and the problem was we'd given away all of our beer and beer left to actually give to are to sell to our suppliers because we'd all just gotten so excited. Was trying to help, uh, help people that we had a little error. We learned,
- Luiza Campos: 00:49:58 well, yes, but you also have people everywhere around town that were helping out with the floods. And for those, for those of you who were not here when the floods happen or not suddenly, or what happened is this was a devastating floods that happened in Calgary. And it was amazing to see what it felt like the whole city taking action and helping their neighbors, you know, going out of their way to help each other. And so this was very much a, it was such a calgarian gesture for, for village to do this and you may not have had any laughed, but you, you did, you did have a place in a lot of people's hearts.
- Jim Button: 00:50:45 It was actually super fun. Like that was so far. And I remember having a conversation with Darcy were fully aware that we're doing this. I said, you guys have no problem with this. They said that was fine but don't do it again.
- Jim Button: 00:51:13 Totally fine. Absolutely. And that's what he was saying. That's all they were. They were saying they were

- agreeing. We're not giving me. They're just saying, yeah, that's. I'm glad you did it. You were a big part of the community and because a lot of people were able to thank a lot of people,
- Luiza Campos: 00:51:30 that was exactly what happened. And I also think you did a similar thing with the fires in Fort McMurray.
- Jim Button: 00:51:38 Yup. We participate in a lot of things. A lot of people did actually the whole beard street, and this is. This is another example of where the brewing industry is a leader in terms of how much they give you. No, you cannot go to a charity without a charity events without having had beer sponsored. It's super unlikely. Do you think you see the same thing in wine? Just you don't see the spirits either. Right? Beer is beer is and that's just the expectation to call it the beer company saying, Hey, we're a company, how can you help? And so um, and beer companies do. That's just who they are. That's the personality of a burger. A personality of their brand is about getting people together and that is not the same in other industries. And so when it came to Fort Mac, there were so many breweries. We had a such sort of sets for flights was the Bergens forget Kevin with the name was for. But we had, there was probably about six different events that we did with other breweries up in a format. That's just the way it is. That's just, that's the brand of beer.
- Luiza Campos: 00:52:53 That's awesome. Like you were talking about how in a really everyone within the company has to not only understand what the purpose of the of the company or organization is to really help bring it to life, right? And how it's, it's part of the responsibility of every staff member to challenge decisions and making sure that the company is, you know, is living that brand purpose. But how do you go about, and maybe you can talk to us and give us some examples about what you do in village in particular. How do you talk about, um, you know, sort of training for lack of a better word or, or really in stealing that brand into, you know, within different staff,
- Jim Button: 00:53:39 flat hierarchy, leadership team that is engaged to understands the importance of it. The best example I have a vat is a, have a great leadership team and we have our monthly meetings and culture is one of the top three conversations at our meetings are already real computer equipment without a doubt. Our biggest cost in terms of

an industry average turnover of staff, our client turnover is next to nothing. And uh, that's all one hundred percent based, purely on culture and so we know the importance of it. So we spend a lot of time, whether it's a town hall or whether it's giving the leadership team through responsibility to check in and have meetings with their groups to make sure they're taken care of things. But it's an ongoing dialogue and the bigger you get, the harder that is.

Luiza Campos: 00:54:47

Yes, I agree. And I think I want to make sure that we emphasize that on purpose or that ongoing effort because a lot of companies, they sort of reveal their brand and as you said, they think OK, now everybody should get it and go and do it. But don't, don't make it part of their conversation. Don't make it part of their priorities. So I think that was a very important.

Jim Button: 00:55:16

How many companies have leaders that say this is what our purpose is, but don't actually follow through on it. They know that it's a mission statement that we have to have on our wall when you walk into a board room. And that's about as far as they care about the personality and the activity, the actions that they actually take, but what's the real brand, not what's written on the wall. It's what they do, and that's the part that people forget. And so they think that by us saying that everybody will execute on it and they're surprised when people don't follow through on it, but at the leadership team isn't actually executing on it every day, um, and talk to you about it every day. Then of course, it's going to fall through the cracks. If people don't have a, an environment where there are free to challenge the leadership team or fellow peers based on decisions that they're making regarding the purpose or the mission or the stories that the company is, is, is sharing, then it'll never get fixed. And these big companies have a, have a hard time actually catching up to that, that philosophy, if they've been around for a long time, dave, Dave really have a hard time because for so many years they probably didn't actually execute on it. And therefore they got cornered into try and really explain it. Now. Nobody's living it, and so they got to really step back and buy in from everybody on it and then executed in everything they do,

Luiza Campos: 00:56:41

so that's why it's important. If you are going to start, if you have a small business, or you're thinking about starting one or for nonprofits, it's important to start right

from the beginning, right? To really focus on that purpose and make sure you have those habits in place in, in terms of making the culture priority, making your brand the priority and ensuring that everything you do and say is consistent with that

- Jim Button: 00:57:10 and if you're starting a company, make sure that everybody that's in the company at that point buys into it. If you have one person that doesn't buy into it, it kind of goes. You have the space to say, but do we really mean it? If you do not have full buy in and that's an insidious little cancer that will take over that company, so you have to actually get buy in from the beginning and consistently anybody. You hire all of your clients like you can't tired. You can't have suppliers that don't agree with your philosophy. You can't have clients that don't agree with your philosophy. They're all little weak spots though. I always say to our team and we have to be bulletproof like I do not ever want to have to worry about anything. Whatever we say, whatever we do, I never have to worry. I don't. I don't ever want to be called for to the table for anything bulletproof on everything you do. Everything has to be aligned with who we are, our belief systems, and if you don't agree with what our belief systems, I say let's have a call or check because I need you to be one hundred percent engaged on what we believe in.
- Luiza Campos: 00:58:16 Yes, and that's important because then every little decisions here and there who are not in alignment with your brand will just eat away at it as, as you were mentioning, and then before you know it, you've lost track of what that brand purpose is or you not leaving it anymore. Absolutely. And it's even harder when it is a difficult decision that it would be so much easier, right? Or, or more cost effective to go the other way. But staying true can be a lot harder. So having that true buy in is what? It's pretty much the only way to ensure that you will, you will continue down that path. You will remain focused on your brand purpose.
- Jim Button: 00:58:59 No, absolutely. And you know when it's tough, when, when the going is tough and you have to make that tough decision, that's honestly when you really understand the brand, that's, you know, it's easy to have nice platitudes and stories and so I'll tell you all the nice things that we're doing or when stuff starts going sideways, you find out the real honest brand, right? It's like, it's like that old play-doh quote, learn more about a

man in an hour of exercise in our sport. And I do a lifetime of conversation because when somebody plays sports, the real personality comes out, you know, they'll be very aggressive or they'll just be, you know, having fun or are they, you know, they'll break the rules to win. You know, the oldest personality traits come out right away. The same thing happens when a company doesn't, is up against a tough scenario.

Jim Button: 00:59:46 A good example from our perspective at at village and again, another example where we had accumulated some goodwill. Let's see how many years ago, probably about three or four years ago, we got these growlers from Mexico that had, at the way the way growlers are made, it's basically three separate pieces of molten glass, liquid glass that come together and it that is forever vacuuming air out. So it keeps those three pieces together. So you get the bottom in two sites. Well the lubrication they put on one of the vacuums wasn't the rate a lubrication, so that's part became weak and so what happened was we got a phone call from a customer saying and the way we made our beer dinner growlers way back then, which is nobody else was doing this. We, we have a really fancy bottling line that we bought that allows us to fill our all sorts of different shapes of bottles and so we could fill growlers and we could fill growlers on there to have them sold a retailers to stay on shelves in the collapsed.

Jim Button: 01:00:55 The same length of time is the beer nobody else does that. Feel the, uh, at the bar and the growler gets filled and the carbonation lot of carbonation, that's why if you have a growler, you need to in 24, forty eight hours, but our school last upwards of five months. But what was happening is we had these weak growlers and then we had an educated retailers putting like our wheat beer, which is unfiltered, which still has used or could be, um, we're growing and carbonating um, and living in the ones that we had one explode. We got on the phone call. I was actually with my family down to California and we got on the phone call with the partners and said, OK, this has happened in the obvious questions come work. It's only one are we concerned? And they said it's only one, but imagine if you will, if you read a dinner party and you brought a growler and that growler were sitting at the table and exploded and it cut a child.

- Jim Button: 01:01:51 I said, what do you think? They all let your pull thousand dollars off in two days while our shelves. And I got emails from industry members around the world saying, you're doing damage because I did a growler, I did a press release, I did all sorts of stuff. And they say, you're doing damage. You obviously had something wrong. And they didn't want to throw the a glass manufacturer under the bus. So I just said I didn't respond. I didn't deal with the industry, but the industry was very mad at us. As it turns out, I started doing googling. It was exploding all over the place and nobody had done anything about it. I had one brewery called me up and say, so, uh, growers phone. I told him, he says, when I told him, I said, do you know what happened to have some growlers at the market?
- Jim Button: 01:02:36 Three? He said, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. They, uh, I just got some shipped to me and I just wanted to know whether I was going to fill them the way he responded. I knew full well he had growlers out in the market and he was trying to determine where he was going to do with them. Fortunately, nothing happened to him, but tough decision took a lot of heat, but our brand actually I don't sure measurement but word on the street anecdotal. Our brand actually was stronger because we took a lot of heat. We asked you that did a a growlers for good. We said in a. It was the same time that a finance minister got rid of pennies when we said if you fill it up with pennies
- Luiza Campos: 01:02:36 I remember that
- Jim Button: 01:03:19 bring your growler in and we'll give you a free growler, and then we donated all those pennies to three arts groups. Very small arts groups. Three, I think we raised like six thousand dollars, so we just. They were. They were buying it so the consumer is buying it and I was just taking their donation, matching it, essentially get off to a church, but it was the example of dollars can be bad, sometimes goes, couldn't do good and to make sure people understood that we do growlers now and we fill them our tabs like everybody else. We just don't do it.
- Luiza Campos: 01:03:50 That's a great example of of that hard decision making that we were talking about, but it's also a great example of how following your brand purpose, you really build trust and trust is one of the best currencies. You can have brand trust out there with your, with your audiences.

- Jim Button: 01:04:09 There's no better. There's no better currency. That is the currency. The currency is trust.
- Luiza Campos: 01:04:14 That is the currency.
- Jim Button: 01:04:16 It's trust. That's the same thing I was saying earlier about, I don't know, I didn't know an awful lot about big complex websites, you know, whether or not platforms, but I knew marketing challenges and new brands and I knew that actually. So all I did was take the trust in me and helped guide them through a process with people that I trust myself to actually make something really great to happen. That's the whole. Yes,
- Luiza Campos: 01:04:43 that's all it is. That's, it's hard to build it and you can lose it in, in a second that if you did a great job, because there's so many out there. So many good examples of how to lose your trust very fast. But um, but you are giving us a very good example of how to build and keep that trust and you do that every day. Jim, I could tell, I could talk to you for hours, but I know you're a busy guy so I, I, I let you go, but any final thoughts that you want to share with us?
- Jim Button: 01:05:22 I think, you know, just just be passionate about it, enjoy it, have fun, you know, sites or short, always trying to make stuff happen. Be and genuine device have for last and the rest will follow up in a big race to a chase. The money, the money will follow. If you do everything else right,
- Luiza Campos: 01:05:44 you always say it's kind of like your mantra.
- Jim Button: 01:05:49 If you want to go fast, go alone.
- Luiza Campos: 01:05:53 But if you want to go far, go together.
- Luiza Campos: 01:05:54 I love it. I love it. And it's so you. Thank you so much.
- Jim Button: 01:05:54 It's thousands and thousands of years old. I just happen to be the latest one saying it.
- Luiza Campos: 01:06:03 I believe it's an African proverb.
- Jim Button: 01:06:10 Thank you so much tim for this and thank you for everything you do. And we just touched in a few of the many, many things that you do for, for our community. Thank you so much.

Jim Button:	01:06:22	Absolutely. My pleasure. Thanks for, uh, thanks for listening to an old bag.
Luiza Campos:	01:06:29	Thanks. Bye. Have a great day.
Luiza Campos:	01:06:33	And there you have it. The one and only Jim Button. I hope you enjoyed this episode and for all the details and links to what Jim talked about and some photos of those hay bales, please go to a branded world podcast.com. And you can find all of these details there in the show notes. Thank you everyone. And until next time.
Announcer:	01:07:00	Thank you for listening to a branded world podcast at a branded world podcast dot com.