

Unknown Speaker 00:00

Hey, this is Royce Ard and I am so excited because today we're going to talk about all of that data that's just weighing you down at work, what you can do to make it more manageable.

Shawn Hill 00:15

This episode I am excited about because I get to talk to a person that I haven't had a ton of conversation with. But I see just about everywhere highly regarded in the business community. And it was a huge help for us, Nigel in particular at a recent event so we feel indebted to him in a way because he's such a quality individual and I am beyond excited to have him on the show today. The owner of my amazing name is Royce Ard. Thank you so much for joining us here on the Nice Job Podcast.

Royce Ard 00:42

Thanks Shawn. It's good to be here.

Shawn Hill 00:45

And in particular road Taka, about a couple of different things. But for someone that may not be familiar, I always like to go back and learn a little bit about our guests and their history. But I know sometimes that history is so expensive. So to narrow it down, I always like to ask this sort of question was there a moment where you felt you got bit burnt Nouriel bug, or that you you felt like what, I think I found my calling and this is something I'm going to really start dedicating myself to learn, grow and evolve in.

Royce Ard 01:17

So my parents had their own business growing up at a very unique business opportunity I grew up in but my dad was a crop duster. So I grew up in a very agricultural world. And then he became a boat owner. So, by the time I was 18, I was a boat captain. And so sort of, I've always done sort of an entrepreneurial type gig. So when I went off to college, you got out, you looked for jobs, but I always looked for jobs that had an entrepreneurial slant to them. So I was always like, how can I help improve your business? That's really what my tagline is, sort of how I can help improve your business and started a few businesses along the way, ended up over time, being invited into a few startups or turnaround situations. And probably the biggest was when I started as a general manager and ended up being the vice president of sales and marketing of a regional broadband company that we took from bankruptcy and sold it in 2012 for a billion and a half dollars. So I've been involved in everything from catching fish all the way up to, being on Wall Street selling a large business so I've always really looked for, for that entrepreneurial type of spirit and anything I look for, and

Shawn Hill 02:39

I know the entrepreneurial lifestyle, I have a lot of almost an outside opinion of sometimes it's all hustle and grind and it's all about making it to a status or things like that. Those that are listening to this podcast or some are brand new business owners, some have been in for a while, but how would you define I guess the entrepreneurial lifestyle? Do you see it more of like, hey, it's a it's a grind don't stop, you're constantly every day or you just see it as you know what, it's almost

similar to like my background in sports of like, if you're strategic, and you're growing, can always make it something that you're going to get in you're going to get our Excuse me, what you put in? And how would you define entrepreneurial lifestyle?

Royce Ard 03:19

Yeah, I would say it's, it's whatever you want it to be so so first of all, I enjoy working in my business. So, whether it's this business, whether it was my previous job, whatever, I just enjoy this sort of game. So I don't mind putting in some hours into it. But I always look for opportunities to have time off. I mean, so I've always looked for an opportunity, that's a lifestyle type job. And I approach this the same way and it's probably how I got so involved in systems and automation. Because if you have a lot of systems and automation in your business, then that gives you the ability to be a lot more flexible in your schedule. So the way that we run our business today, and I'll just give you an example of that. We sold our house in December of 2020. And, we bought an RV. I've been living in an RV since then. So we've taken some pretty long road trips. Once everything started with the hiring, troubles and staffing issues, we ended up being a little bit closer to home. But, we were able to do that and we were able to stay in touch with our business. I mean, cloud computing changed everything and so, you can work from anywhere, so you might as well work from everywhere, right?

Shawn Hill 04:45

We had a recent episode with Megan likes, and she talked about a paperless office and one of the big things in that we talked about the cloud is you can really set up your business and have access to so much data pretty instantly. And the whole thing of the paperless offices is that you're able to keep, maybe the most important documents, keep it in a small little sort of situation. But ultimately you can build things by going to that sort of system to have everything you need instant push of a button. And he talked to a lot, maybe business consultants and coaches and things of that nature. And they always talk about even said at the top of the show about having data to make decisions, do you think that we're headed a bit towards a data overload, and not necessarily that it's not important, but just as technology advances, we're starting to get to see so much of a nuanced breakdowns of things that we ever did before that process become a little bit overwhelming.

Royce Ard 05:41

There are a few things that have happened, I think over the years, when I first started in business, if someone needed something from you, they would send it to you in the mail. So you have plenty of time to think about it, you have plenty of time to react to it. And then let me know. So now things just became overnight, and then let me fax it to you. Let me email it to you, I'm just going to text you. So we've gone from in business from making having, four or five days to make decisions on things to not only having to make them immediately, but also and people expecting an immediate response, to also it's so easy to do, what I was, when someone is sending you a FedEx that cost money, so you weren't just getting overwhelmed. But the text is basically free. And so there's a lot of information going back and forth now that its people are expecting a quick reply. And they're judging you based on that, you know, how, how quickly and

how thorough you're able to reply. So there is a lot of information flying back and forth Now then, you know, just 20 years ago.

Shawn Hill 06:57

So with that, do you feel like being able to almost triage and attend to things in the proper order has become even more of a valuable skill, because it's not like you can check the mailbox once a week, like you're going get things instantly and come on through, is that evolved over time? Or is that just always been there now it just kind of just amplified?

Royce Ard 07:17

Well, it's definitely amplified, because just the amount of information is just so much more. But the other piece to that is you have to, you have to have a system in place to prioritize how you're going to get, how you're going to react to things. So, for instance, it's just take like, if you're in a service business, and you deal a lot with property managers, but you also deal with individuals, and someone who has 100 properties contacts you, you probably are going to want to respond to any issues that they have quicker than if someone who you do work for every five years responds to you. So you have to have systems in place so that you're able to prioritize, and you can't really think about it. I mean, it's you know, it's like I said, it's really everything's moving at the speed of light here. So you have to be able to have those systems that will just prompt you to reply for things I mean, a lot of people you'll talk to them and they've got you know, six different windows open because they're looking for Facebook messages and they're looking for your text, they're looking for emails and they don't want to drop the ball on any of them which is the right thing to do. But that does become overwhelming.

Shawn Hill 08:35

And I guess that's where automation really plays a part as well because if there's anything that could be a simple reply, I think the first thing that comes to my head is when you send the messages that initial response back like, we've received your message, confirmation that this has come through, we talked back about the the fedexing the mail like the time before you interacting with that like not a single the fact that I would send a package generally trusted would get there and I had no ability to find out seem so so far and just just to me, but even going further, but I think it's setting up some some automations you can maybe I'll say by yourself some time for a lack of better phrasing but it still comes down to you prioritizing what eventually Your time's gonna need correct?

Royce Ard 09:19

Yeah, so there's a couple things. So typically, in a home services business, there's only one or two people that are interacting with customers and prospects, right? And you could get overwhelmed very quickly. So I have seen where we had three or four or five calls at one time requesting information about the business. We can only handle one of them at a time. So we created a tool where when someone called you and didn't, they abandon the call or they left a voicemail, it gave it a little bit of time and then like 15 seconds later it sent them a text and said, Hey, I saw that you call I'm on another call right now, I will call you as soon as I can, or you feel free to text me. Okay? And that used to be somebody's got a program that it's going to cost

money. But most people are using a digital phone system now an IP phone system. And it was literally just setting up a little script that ran in Zapier so that if you had a, if something went to voicemail, it just prompted a text to go out and send that message. I've seen this take five calls at one time, and close four of them. So we were able to stop the client from shopping, and wait on us until we got back to them. You know, it could have been 10- 15 minutes later.

Shawn Hill 10:44

I love that example. Because a lot of the times we hear when people talk about it of embracing technology is sometimes they we talked about, oh, it's a simple script and Zapier, things like that, then they're like, Well, I'm not tech savvy, so the time to learn that is actually going to take away so I know that this manual process seems like it's arbitrary, but it's that sort of deal. How do you respond when someone pitches that to you? Like, I just feel like I'm so not tech savvy, that I feel like letting or leasing my business to these automations and those sort of processes? I feel I'm going to be super disconnected. How do you respond when someone brings that to you?

Royce Ard 11:21

First of all, you have to understand that I didn't touch a computer until I was in college, and we only play games on them. I mean, that was it. So anything that I have learned since I was out of school. So I believe it's easier learning today than it was then. I mea, that's the basics. So you do have to have some type of embracing, it's not fair to say, I'm just not going to deal with technology anymore. I mean, books, for one thing, you're carrying a computer around in your pocket all day long that can do, you could run your whole business on it. Matter of fact, I have a short term rental. And that's how I run the whole thing is through an app on that. So you can run your entire business on your phone, you're already doing it properly, you probably are, so I guess the answer to your question there to start with is you're going to have to have some type of embracing. The second thing is tools are going to continue to get easier and easier and easier. There's a whole movement right now on low code and no code programming. Let's just take an example, as a lot of people understand websites, at least a little bit, if for no other reason, because they had my space growing up, right? So my space taught everybody how to do HTML code, for the certain era, the certain generation out there, but no one does HTML anymore. You can literally sign up for Wix or one of those types of website programs, and go on there and create a beautiful website. Now. Is it the same website that a professional can create for you? No, it's probably not. Because you don't have some of that skill set that they have. But you can do it, it'll look nice, it'll get you started. And, and it's just we're going to see more and more tools like that, that allow people to, to do programming and run their business without really having a lot of that deep technology. background. I don't. I'm not a programmer, I call myself a good user of programs.

Shawn Hill 13:26

Yeah, I like that. On the other side of that coin, someone that's embraced technology, they're finding out that more and more as technology evolves, that they're able to get some more from it, right. And I wonder, as I talked a little bit towards top of the show about like the data overload, do you think it's important when trying to kind of build your tech stack and things like that to

understand, obviously, understand what data you're getting from what but how you're going to use the data at each point of that, because I think as you embrace more, and you build a deeper stack, that's potentially can start looking at that data overload, or perhaps there's data that doesn't really need to be acted on immediately. But it's really important, long term. So you kind of active on Twitter, talking about your tech stack in particular, and things like that. Is that a consideration you put in when you look at what you're going to add to that of what data Am I getting? How am I going to use it?

Royce Ard 14:17

Yeah, so first of all, I will not add any new software that does not communicate to the other software. Because we're at that point now. And if you can't, if you can't communicate with this APR, which is for people who don't know what that is, it's sort of a middle piece of software that enables everybody else to talk to each other. Matter of fact, I had a great texting product that I love to use, and I had to drop it because they weren't integrated with another piece of software that I use. And, this one I'm using is not as good, but it's integrated and integration is much, you know, much more valuable to me. So that's the first thing is I look for software first but it's going to do the job. But also it's going to be integrated. Now, part of the reason for that is I need like, let's just say get an example of databases. There, we probably have a database in our CRM, we have a database with responsibility, we have a database, with our texting software, we have another database with another CRM that we're running. And then we're running MailChimp, there's five databases, you cannot possibly keep those all five synced up together, manual just won't happen. So we created a few links to make that happen. So that when it when somebody in the beauty is it, I don't add any new customers into my databases, they add themselves into responsibility, responsibility talks to Java, Java talks to MailChimp, somebody I think responsibilities talking to you guys, nice job, I and your responsibility talks to are actually Java is talking to my texting software. It's updating everything, right? Now that sounds super complicated. But it's really just going into a sapient state. And saying, I need these two pieces to talk. And this is how to make it work. Now let's just say you don't know how to do that, right? I mean, so I'm a good Excel user. But I don't know how to do Excel macros, and anybody who's ever used a macro, they're really powerful. But there's a guy overseas that I found on Fiverr, and he's a pro. He charges me \$15 to create a spreadsheet. So and then all I have to do is use it, and I'll go back, I'm a good user, I'm not a great creator. There's a lot of ways to handle stuff like that.

Shawn Hill 16:45

And also goes, you talked about them talking to one another and from your experience with nice job is we actively try to keep in contact with your job, or is it your responsibility to make sure that we do the integration. So a lot of people will say, if you're not sure how to connect these two, that we can help you do that. And there's a lot of others, not just specific, a lot of other softwares that they understand how important that is. If you're the one who likes, for example, just responding to the job, or something that both of those could trigger Nice job and depending on what makes sense for your business, or how you want this leads in my next question is, you did map out where you thought the data flow should go? So for example, responses, we can easily import that to Nice job, that customer information, and they go on from there. But then

you can also have it come directly from the job being triggered by that you all could have it triggered. There's a beer and a couple of other instances, knowing what's going to trigger what. When did you map out okay, this is the data point this is the trail through? Or is it this customer journey? And these are the interactions? How, if you mapped it out, how did you do it?

Royce Ard 17:50

So both the answers are both things there. So first of all, I think you need to start at the customer journey, you need to say, what am I trying to accomplish? Okay, so with Nice job, you know, obviously, I want to get a review out to them after the job closes, and pretty soon after the job closes. Right? Right. So then after you've decided how you want that to work, then you need to decide, what is the best trigger to make that happen? Okay, because in Java, for instance, that's going to happen immediately. Okay, and respond to a bid, I can actually go in and put a delay in there. So let's just say for instance that we do a lot of one time type work, and it could be anything, I watched windows, I'm terrible at watching windows. Matter of fact, I just said washing windows, and I've been corrected, that I should say, cleaning windows? Yes. by Megan likes.

Shawn Hill 18:53

I've gotten a crusher before to like we're cleaning them like,

Royce Ard 18:56

So let's say that I know that if I'm going to get a complaint that it's going to come within the first day. So I could go in and I could say, which of the software's will allow me to not send my review out until after 24 hours? And then I will then I have time, if a complaint comes into it, handles that complaint, and then the review goes out. They don't have any complaints. Perfect went out 24 hours later. So I look for triggers that will help people understand that there's, there's two things that can happen in Zapier either, something has to trigger a reaction, and then it's the action that's being taken. And I didn't intend to get like a super technical thing here, but that's sort of where we're going. But um, but so I look at the triggers and say what triggers are available because every software has different triggers. And then you know what action can be taken based on that. So that's sort of so but you always start at the top. You start at the top and it's you know, what's the The business problem I'm trying to solve, and they figure out how to solve it. And because Zapier is such a ubiquitous type of software, I mean, there's so many people who interact with it that even if the software that I want to interact with does it, chances are, it's talking to another piece of software. And I can make the same thing happen, you buy another piece of software's reaction.

Shawn Hill 20:26

And you talked about getting technical, but for me, it's looping back to where we started. What am I doing with this data? Do I need to be looking at all of it all the time, and throughout each software it's probably not important. I'll just use ourselves to be safer, like with a nice job, to look at your people list because that is being populated by a previous trigger, right? So within Java, that's where you're seeing your workers, your invoices, things like that. So by knowing this data is going to go through the pathway be used and important steps automatically, that then can

allow you to look at the actionable data, right? So what becomes the ticket that I'm responding to? Right? Is it calling this person back? Is it making sure that you know they've left the review, but do we get the full invoice or something like that? It allows you to almost manage the actionable data while still having all the other data completely collected. So if you're diving back into nice job to look at your topic insights, right, you think about redoing some of your ads, you want to go in to see exactly what your reviews are saying, that might not be something to check into every sort of day. Now that data is there, you can see it every single day, if you want. But now when it comes to action times, the action is I'm refreshing my ad copy, I want to find new reviews, or I want to throw out what we should be doing. Look at that data point. Or perhaps I'm looking to change my pricing. So I'm going to go to use this particular software and figure out where my problem was, or I want to see if my staff is a bit too busy. I'm going to use this software and see how many you know, how many jobs are able to work per day and things like that. And so it's almost to prevent that, that data overload has what your functional data is, and perhaps now you can start picking out and really determine the actionable data. I mean, that that's my interpretation of that.

Royce Ard 22:09

And I would say the next step to this, which we haven't really seen in our industries yet is, is how do you take that actionable data now and present it to you in a way that it's formatted in a way that you that you can take action on it, and that it's been the action has been taken, and that there's a paper trail, so to speak of the action? So and also, how can it be collegial so that if you're working with two or three people in the office that you can make sure that they did what they said they were going to do, or if it's a customer that you know, they know more about to take that data and makes you send it to them so that they were they're the one taking the action or not you there's a lot of different pieces to that. The other piece to it is dashboards. So dashboards have been out for a long time. Everybody knows dashboards are really useful, too. We don't really have a good dashboard software in our industry that everybody's talking to. But we really, I mean, really what we should have and we run the business is I should have two screens, one of the screens, and then one of the screens, I really prefer just to be my phone. But one of the screens is showing me a dashboard of my business. It's showing me what's going on. And the other dashboard on my phone is showing me all the transactions that are happening right now. So I can see all the customer interactions, who's calling, who's texting, who's emailing and watching what's going on. If I have that, I mean you can run these things so easily and never drop the ball on anything.

Shawn Hill 23:46

Yeah, that's very interesting. I really thought about that before the dashboard for action, or kind of being able to have that ticket task list or whatever you go in that does seem like a next step that really would probably elevate everything to the next level. I think that it could almost be an episode on its own there. I like to keep the episodes here pretty digestible, and things like that. So I know there's so many other topics that could really dive in with you. But I love it before I let you go to ask the question. I've been asking all of my guests. In Season Three, we're compiling the answers and we're going to put them all together in one big thing. But the question for

season three that I pose to you Royce's, what do you embrace more challenges or opportunities?

Royce Ard 24:34

I tend to be a glass half full guy. So I probably looked for the opportunities but I will tell you that probably one of the things that you learn most about in business as you get experience is there are always opportunities and the challenges that you face. You do not have the opportunity to show the difference between your company and the next company until there's a problem. I mean, we all get it because we clean houses, right? The next company, cleans houses, the next company, cleans houses. But if we were to break a \$2,000 mirror, how we edit how we act is going to be different than the other companies probably. So if you've decided to go with the low cost leader, instead of the value company, chances are they don't have the money to replace your mirror. That happened to me, because I'm using a real example that cost 2000. But I think it was about 600. We replaced the mirror at the cost of doing business, but I have the margin to do it. So that's probably a terrible answer, because I use both levels, but your opportunities are in the challenges that you face?

Shawn Hill 25:49

Yeah, you know, I actually think it's a great answer. It's probably because I'm really excited to ask this question. Some people say a little bit of both, but I usually like a glass half full type of person. Like, that's what I like about that answer in particular, because of course, it's going to be a little bit both when it comes to embracing it's like, Alright, well, I know within opportunities, there might be some challenges, not all difficult challenges, but it's going to be things in order to maximize the opportunity. But if I'm embracing challenges, I should be embracing challenges to have opportunity, right? I shouldn't just be looking just to take risks to take risks or anything like that. So I think one always gets the other. It's a little bit of almost, I'm hoping to be the business chicken in the egg sort of question. I want to go that far. Royce of anyone who's listened, this podcast wants to even learn more about you, connect with you or to see what you have going on. Where should we direct them towards?

Royce Ard 26:36

There's a couple of great places where I can interact with folks. I'm doing a lot of things on Twitter, and my Twitter handle is the @ Royce Ard. Then the other would be I have a Facebook group called the high tech house cleaner. You don't have to be a maid service to use it. It's just a resource. So if you come there, and you have a question about some software, we'll find somebody who can answer the question for you. Not necessarily the technical stuff. I mean the software vendors can be a better opportunity to answer that. But if it's like, I'm looking at purchasing this software, is anyone using it? And how's it going to improve my business? I bet we have somebody there who's doing that.

Shawn Hill 27:20

And all those things that Royce mentioned, we'll have if you're watching on YouTube, down the description below, if you're listening to the audio only version, we'll have it in the show notes. So

be sure to connect with Royce. An absolute pleasure, thank you so much for taking time out of your day to join us here on the nice job podcast.

Royce Ard 27:35

I appreciate it. Thank you for the Nice job. You know, one thing I would like to say is that we have over 200 Reviews on Google and it's a huge differentiator and that's because of Nice job.

Shawn Hill 27:49

Awesome. I appreciate that Royce river thankful for you know, you're you're part of our community here. And so we really do appreciate it there. And we'll be talking soon. Thanks. Hope you enjoyed my conversation with Royce ARD, who is always knowledgeable, always friendly, and gets the opportunity to connect with REITs. I highly recommend that you do so. My three key takeaways from this episode but the given right to you. If there's something that you got from this episode that I don't mention, drop us an email podcast at nice job.com. Who knows, I'd be a special discount on nice jobs review platform for you. If you do once again as podcasts at nice job.com. My first key takeaway is always talking about how cloud computing kind of changed everything. He talked about being able to kind of take his business on the road, doing it out of the RV. But even if you're not ready to go to that extent, you really need to start integrating every element of your business to communicate with other parts of your business. I second key takeaway as you talk about that exchange of information from the customer side of things, the expectation how quickly you respond to queries quickly you pass along information is always getting faster. I think it's good every couple of months to really take a good stock of what your process looks like from an outside perspective. How quickly Are you getting back to voicemails? How efficiently? Are you giving estimates or quotes? Information going faster and faster means your business has to be able to keep up. And the final takeaway really was the crux of the whole episode was voice breaking down how you're gonna start building these automations and how you really want to have your software start to talk, the business that you're in, and all about starting the customer journey and finding out what are you trying to accomplish. From there, you can figure out the appropriate triggers and actions between your software's and come up with an incredible tech stack that's going to take you to the next level. Once again, if there's something you took away from this episode that I didn't mention, please send us an email at podcast at nice job.com As I mentioned, have some special offers for those that give us some feedback. I'm your host, Sean Hill. We'll see you for episode 62. Until then, happy being healthy, recover being safe, and don't forget a little fun out there as well. Take care.