**PEP 34 Edited\_Transcription**

[Speaker 3] (0:05 - 0:25)

Welcome to the official property entrepreneur podcast with myself, Daniel Hill. On this strip back podcast, we're going to be going behind the scenes with special guests to provide insight and inspiration on all things business, life, and the actual realities of high performance in practice. Success and failure are both very predictable.

We hope you enjoy.

[Adam Goff] (0:31 - 0:47)

Welcome, everyone. Welcome to the next in our series of the Hall of Fame. This is where we celebrate our property entrepreneurs for people who've really had a remarkable journey or some outstanding achievement.

Today I'm joined by my good friend, Mr. Dan Norman. Dan, say hello.

[Dan Norman] (0:48 - 0:53)

Hello, hello. How are you doing? Are you okay?

Yeah, good. Thanks. Good.

Excited to have this scenario.

[Adam Goff] (0:54 - 1:07)

Exactly right. Me too. I'm very excited because we've got some good news to share with everyone.

Dan, before we start, what's your company name? What do you do and how long have you been on Property Entrepreneur, just to give everyone a bit of background?

[Dan Norman] (1:07 - 1:40)

Sure. There are three main companies I have. One is this one, Rover Homes, that provides accommodation and pet-friendly accommodation in Longbridge, Rubri, and Rednall, which are areas of Birmingham.

New Leaf Living is a quality support accommodation provider that's been running now about seven years. And then Vogler UK, which is a nightclub promotions company, the longest-running student events company in the UK. So that's been on Property Entrepreneur now, though, for a thick end of two years.

Just coming up to two years, Mark.

[Adam Goff] (1:41 - 2:02)

That's it? Two years? It feels like you've been with us a lot longer than that.

I don't know if that's- Yeah. I mean, you've skirted over three successful businesses there. And actually, what people probably don't know is that I knew you.

I mean, you have got a very successful nightclub. I know it hasn't been the best year for nightclubs this year.

[Dan Norman] (2:02 - 2:03)

It's a little bit different, this environment.

[Adam Goff] (2:03 - 2:47)

But I- You've still got a smile on your face, which is the main thing. But yeah. So what people don't realize is, I mean, I was selling tickets for Dan, well, actually through a colleague of mine in my sports team- Sure.

I'm not going to say how many years ago, but a long time ago. And at the University of Birmingham. So I've actually known Dan for, yeah, for almost two decades, which is kind of nuts.

And that really is a very successful brand. It's been in multiple cities and, you know, it's an incredible achievement because most, I think the, you know, most events have a very short shelf life, right? Well- Somehow, you've made this event last forever.

[Dan Norman] (2:47 - 3:23)

So you've done a fantastic job. It's not just events, but it's also the venues that we work with, unfortunately. They go through, how can I put this nicely, sometimes they go through a number of evolutions.

Where Vaudeville started in Birmingham has been, if I remember correctly, five different nightclubs. Right. And it's no longer with us, owned by different people through that scenario.

Licensed trade's tricky, you know, it's hard work. We've just been very fortunate and had a great team and a good product to keep on pushing. But yeah, the last 18 months haven't been particularly the best of the 23 years, but there's been opportunities in that as well, you know, so you've got to be pragmatic about it.

[Adam Goff] (3:24 - 3:56)

Well, I think that mindset is probably, I mean, I guess what I'm trying to, you know, the point is before you even came to Property Entrepreneur, you were a very successful entrepreneur. You had multiple businesses. So you're not new to this.

But how, what would you say in terms of, in terms of how you've been on this journey now? So now you've been with us for two years, what's the two years been like? Like you're two years down the line now, what's, you know, you've already got all this success behind you, but what's changed, what's kind of changed on this journey?

[Dan Norman] (3:56 - 4:47)

Well, it's interesting you say that, looking at the community and part of the reason I came on Property Entrepreneur was because I recognised, you know, no man is an island. No person is an island. I actually came on the first year with my wife, Steph, because we were looking at, okay, what's the next step?

And we'd had a couple of years down time, bought a lovely house and did a bunch of works on that. So I took a little sabbatical and I was keen to kind of get back into the groove where I'd taken a little bit of a step back from the businesses. It was time to find out what was going on really in the world and cranking out one more time if that was appropriate.

But what has been fantastic as part of this environment is to recognise what is necessary and what is, to be blunt, not necessary. So that's been a splendid period over the last couple of years.

[Adam Goff] (4:48 - 4:54)

Well, it's good to know that even someone with lots of experience in business has taken a lot from the programme, so that's brilliant. A hundred percent.

[Dan Norman] (4:55 - 5:12)

You learn by your own mistakes otherwise, and I think that's why I'm always a little bit surprised when people say, hey, you've been really successful. There's so much to learn. There's so much to do.

And it blows my mind when you get people who are just getting started who have a lot of success very, very quickly, because that's more testament to them.

[Adam Goff] (5:13 - 5:37)

Yeah. It's the mistakes that cost you the money, right? I mean, that's what I think.

You're right. You say, I've been successful, but it's cost, you know, you don't know how much I've lost over the journey. That's all we've got for this interview.

Exactly. So that brings me back around, actually. So obviously, this is the Hall of Fame interview, we want to welcome you to the Hall of Fame.

What is it that's been the trademark or the crowning moment, would you say, of your entrepreneur journey so far?

[Dan Norman] (5:39 - 6:20)

It's probably one of the most recent experiences with get up, get back in, honestly, because business is relatively, for want of a better word, simple. You can either do it or not. You go through a process and get it done.

But where get up, get back was a huge eye-opener, was it wasn't just about a personal action, but being part of a team and part of a committee to lead a group of 80, 90 people who all had their own requirements and aspirations within that environment. So that was a real pleasure to be, A, part of the committee and B, to have the fantastic result that I think, cumulatively, we all put together.

[Adam Goff] (6:21 - 7:01)

So absolutely. So for those people that are listening that don't know what get up and give back is, get up and give back, we founded in 2018. And the goal of get up and give back was to give, to promote mental and physical wellness in entrepreneurs, because we believe in a holistic approach to entrepreneurship and to give back to our local community.

So it's effectively like our charity organization as part of Property Entrepreneur. And Dan was on the committee for that. And the reason I want to welcome him to the Hall of Fame is because from nothing, across a 12-week campaign, which we're going to dive into now, Dan successfully, along with the committee, successfully led us to raise, how much, Dan?

[Dan Norman] (7:02 - 7:07)

It's £126,410, which was mind-blowing.

[Adam Goff] (7:09 - 7:30)

£126,410. Woohoo! Unbelievable.

And for those people that haven't seen it on Facebook, that has absolutely smashed our record by over £50,000 from previous years. And in 12 weeks, we had nothing raised, and we've gone to over £126,000. That's an incredible achievement, Dan.

Well, just very well done. Congratulations. Thank you.

[Dan Norman] (7:30 - 7:49)

It's incredibly appreciated. And as that part of the committee, being head of fundraising, but not only was it that big success, but it was the cumulative little successes from folk who... Someone commented to me, God, I haven't even fundraised since I was doing a sponsored walk when I was 10, or going and doing Bobber Job on the Scouts.

[Adam Goff] (7:49 - 7:51)

Bobber Job Week in the season on the Scouts, yeah.

[Dan Norman] (7:51 - 8:08)

And that's the crazy thing about it. So when you start throwing figures out of, we're going to try and raise £100,000, you've got to raise £1,000 yourself. That led to some challenges, I think, for folks.

And I was a bit, yeah, this is quite the ask, even for myself. So yeah.

[Adam Goff] (8:08 - 8:20)

So how much had you raised previously? So before you did this campaign, how much? Obviously, you're a seasoned charity raise, you'd raised tens of hundreds of thousands of pounds before, right?

Oh, God.

[Dan Norman] (8:20 - 8:32)

I think the biggest single raise, and this is why even I was a bit, oh, I'm just looking over there, £1,750 on the firewalk, which, you know, that's a healthy fundraiser.

[Adam Goff] (8:32 - 8:33)

That's a lot of money. Yeah.

[Dan Norman] (8:34 - 8:57)

And, you know, a lot of folk do a lot, lot more than that. But it's when you've got 90 different people who all aspire to do that as well, and the leadership through that, very, very fortunate to have the committee to assist in that aspect of things. And of course, Dan Hill pushing it like crazy as well, and really giving some huge leadership there.

So I must recognise them.

[Adam Goff] (8:57 - 9:19)

So you mentioned a couple of things. I mean, like, what would you say was one of the key points to success? Like, what enabled you to actually take this huge goal that even you, you'd raised £1,700 before, personally, now you were going to try and raise £100,000 collectively.

How do you go about attacking something like that? How would someone go about ensuring success?

[Dan Norman] (9:20 - 9:44)

I think the key to how it all worked was, A, we had five specific people on the committee who were doing their job. So someone was dealing with all the branding and did a splendid job of providing that. Chris Pearce was kind of motivating people to do the steps, because it was kind of two big asks.

A, to do, you know, well, thinking of how many steps it was, each a million steps, each a million steps.

[Adam Goff] (9:44 - 9:45)

We had to defer to Rosanna.

[Dan Norman] (9:45 - 11:01)

We had to do 100 million steps as well to raise the money. The physical thing there, as well as the finance thing. Thankfully, someone else was doing the control, because I'm rubbish at admin.

And Rosanna does a splendid job of organising that. Jen was kind of heading up the whole team. And my action was to motivate the fundraising.

And I think it was fortunate that we got a good bite out of the steps, and people kind of saw that was possible. And even though the fundraising might have been a bigger challenge for some, eventually people started seeing that. And it was really just little bites of the pie to get things through.

And then some people started having success, and we started kind of promoting the success of individuals. And that led everyone else to say, hey, this is absolutely possible. And folk were doing, you know, double their fundraising pledge.

They were getting 1,000 pounds in a day, one guy raised. People who didn't think they could fundraise ended up raising. One couple, Ian and Bernadette, did 4 and 1⁄2 grand.

And that was amazing. I mean, Ian and Bernadette, you know. Unbelievable.

And, you know, very fortunate to be part of that fundraising. A little anecdote about Ian and Bernadette, actually. They managed to get some sponsorship of someone that I could have quite easily phoned up, a mutual contact of ours.

And they landed it first. So I'm coming for you guys.

[Adam Goff] (11:02 - 11:04)

You left money on the table, didn't you?

[Dan Norman] (11:04 - 11:14)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I guess the learning of it is, it's there if you ask. You just have to ask the questions and act.

[Adam Goff] (11:16 - 11:51)

That's awesome. Yeah, I mean, like, so the first thing is, I mean, it sounds like any, I mean, what people need to appreciate, and the reason why this is so important, is that all of the skills you've learned in business, you applied, and also on the Property Entrepreneurial Authority, we're applying to the fundraiser. We didn't just aimlessly start something and hope we would get there.

There was a team, we had a vision, we had a clear target, 100 million steps, £100,000. You delegated the parts you weren't particularly strong in, i.e. admin, branding, you know, we had all that. We had a team, collective.

[Dan Norman] (11:53 - 11:56)

That was delegated before I got my hands on it. It would have been awful otherwise.

[Adam Goff] (11:57 - 12:23)

That's it. And then, you know, and then it was just, right. And like, what's the best way to eat an elephant?

Well, it's one bite at a time, and showing people success day by day, week by week, slowly people believe they can actually, because I don't think any, it's funny, because there's probably some people who believe we were going to do it, but I was thinking this is a very, we always set targets that scare us, they're out of reach, and I didn't think we were going to do it, I'll be honest, but we did. We always do.

[Dan Norman] (12:23 - 13:32)

You highlighted something there as well that was critical, was it, it was a programme. So, we weren't going in saying, oh, you could raise £100,000 or £1,000 straight away. It was that little drip feed, and thankfully the entire programme meshed together, and I guess from a business viewpoint, it's a matter of, you're absolutely right, there's a certified process to this, and it's a matter of taking those baby steps, breaking down the big goal into smaller goals, and then into smaller goals again, and smaller targets.

That's the only way that you're ever going to get the traction you need, you know, you're never going to pull a mountain along in one go, you move the boulder or a stone at a time. So, yeah, that was a huge experience as part and parcel, but the business aspect of it, the principles are absolutely business related, and I think that's been very useful for everyone to see how much can be achieved in a team. That was one of the big learnings, I guess, before I came on PE, I was looking to develop additional joint activities, because it can be awfully lonely doing stuff on your own, can you imagine doing 100 million steps on your own?

Yeah, it's no fun, it's all about who's on the journey with you. Yeah, the connection's the important bit.

[Adam Goff] (13:33 - 13:58)

So I think, yeah, so we, you know, we set the target, we timetabled it out over the weeks, we had, that's how you achieve a goal, you set a target, you timetable it out. Then we raised the stakes, right, because you told everyone this was the target, and we put it out there, we talk about putting our head on a block, and obviously we plastered, you plastered the walls of that, you didn't shy away from the £100,000, did you? That was everywhere.

[Dan Norman] (13:58 - 14:41)

In fact, the last week was the most nervous, because we got up to, I remember the figures strangely quite directly, it was £79,404 we were at with a week to go. Yeah, so we rallied the troops, we had a mantra, which was three grand a day, three grand a day just to get that £21,000 in the bag. But what was interesting was that that amplified, and with a few little tricks and a few little twists, and people were, only a week ago we had someone who got another £500 in donations, and just because they put themselves out forward.

So it doesn't always come at once. But with enough effort and enough momentum, then yeah, you can land your targets, no trouble.

[Adam Goff] (14:42 - 15:27)

That's amazing, a week out you were £20,000 down, and then you ended up £26,000 over, which is just amazing. Nothing's linear, is it? It's always like this.

And you put in all this effort, and you think, I'm not getting anywhere. And all of a sudden, the deadline, the magic happens, doesn't it? The magic always seems to happen.

So in terms of probably another learning from this, you're sat there, you've got Rover Home behind you, you're branding, you're a student events promoter, marketing is a skill. How did you market this? What was the plan, really?

And how did you get the message out? How did everyone tell everyone about this?

[Dan Norman] (15:27 - 17:36)

Oh, sorry, for Get Up and Give Back? Yeah, for Get Up and Give Back, yeah. I think the process was, again, an escalation of promoting results.

So the first few weeks was very much about, the first four weeks, to be precise, was very much about building knowledge, if I want to paraphrase, both amongst the people who were involved, and amongst the wider membership of people who were going to donate. Because it doesn't all come at once, you don't all get it on day one. And then there was a bit of a management process of the people who had been out there, and had been advertising what they were doing, and advertising the cause, most importantly, and their steps, and so forth.

There was a bit of a consolidation period of, well, why aren't people donating? And that was the next four weeks to ramp up and excite people about it, and pull in the funds. And then the last four weeks were really a matter of, okay, here are the people who've got the early results.

This is absolutely achievable, do this, this, this, this, this, and this. And that's how we landed in the last week. The best description I've heard from Dan, funnily enough, is he calls it the hockey stick.

Yeah. Because it goes, da-da-da-da-da-da, and then right the way to the top. So it's those little bits, those foundations, really, that you put in to begin with that escalate it.

And there are a number of little mechanics we put in play. I very much love the videos of the early achievers. There were a few folk on the program who did really, really well quite quickly.

And those videos were gold dust, because people were sharing, hey, here's the challenge I had, here's how I overcame it. I just went and took action. Here's a text I used specifically to communicate to people.

Here's a number of people that I communicated with. You know, there's some great achievements on there by individuals. Even one chap, he went out and did some help with a homeless shelter.

He fed homeless people for an evening. And that created that. And shared it on Facebook and social.

Wonderful, wonderful connection for everyone in the group, because you can't really fault that, can you? It's huge. Absolutely not, no.

[Adam Goff] (17:36 - 18:10)

I mean, I think, honestly, the whole thing was textbook. And the way I'd summarize it, it was a marketing campaign executed to perfection. Because that's what the fundraising is ultimately, isn't it?

You're trying to get a message out there. You're trying to bring people along with you. And you're trying to, you know, just like in business, actually, they are having to part with their money.

Yeah, absolutely. You've got to sell them on this journey. So if you had to give three tips for anyone who was thinking of running a successful marketing campaign, whether it's for charity or otherwise, could you share those with us?

[Dan Norman] (18:10 - 19:14)

Yeah, I think the first thing is to place yourself in the position of what the viewer is looking at. So if you're trying to share a major message, that absolutely has to be the prominence. You know, that evocative, I get the word out right in the moment, that evocative message.

And ours was obviously, you know, we're helping people who don't have their own homes. So the first key point was to enable that. The second point, I think, was to keep aware that not everyone sees what you're saying the first time.

You can be in a position where you may get a bit kind of bored with your message, maybe. But people have a very low amount of time when, I don't know, Facebook scrolling or even, you know, you look at TV adverts. Most people go off and put the kettle on or nip out for a little whatever.

So you've got to be aware there's a certain breach point. And also, I think the third tip is really the escalation of it. You kind of build a story because people buy into stories and people buy into people.

[Adam Goff] (19:16 - 19:29)

Absolutely. So in terms of, so there's people sat there now thinking, I'm scared of social media. I don't want to use it.

No one cares what I'm thinking about. I mean, I never get any likes on my posts. What would you say to them?

[Dan Norman] (19:32 - 20:05)

I think it's easy to be scared of socials. It's easy to kind of back away from that. I think it's worth just taking action and also taking decent advice.

We were very fortunate to have someone who's a specialist in the social area, Chris Moss, who kind of led me through it because I certainly haven't got all the answers. And it was just a matter of implementation and then adding to a process and a program because it is a bit of a process and a program. Really, you've just got to start somewhere to put yourself out into that arena, I think.

[Adam Goff] (20:06 - 20:38)

Yeah. So Chris Moss runs a company called Oversubscribed and they actually, their service is they help entrepreneurs raise their profile on social media. So he really knew what he was doing.

But at the end of the day, I think your tips are really important. You need to be very, very clear about what your message is. You need to keep, you need to plaster the walls with it.

Just because you've said it once doesn't mean they've heard it. You need to say it and say it and say it and say it again and again and again. You don't just send one flyer out for your vaudeville in Birmingham and hope 2,000 people are going to come.

[Dan Norman] (20:39 - 20:41)

Yeah. Yeah, it's not 1998 anymore.

[Adam Goff] (20:43 - 20:55)

Yeah, don't remind me. But no, it's a flyering campaign. There's this, there's that.

People are talking. There's special offers. There's only so many tickets.

There's, you know, it's very strategic, isn't it?

[Dan Norman] (20:55 - 21:42)

That's the key word. I think it's a campaign. It's not a I'm doing one post.

You've got to look at it from a long point of view. Now, that could be a week. That could be a month.

It could be a quarter. But what is that campaign about? Because if you're just putting, oh, I like, I like cheese.

Lovely. That's great. Or here's my dinner.

But that's not very strategic and it's not a campaign. So yeah, that's it. That's the key angle of it.

It's a matter of really, it's a bit like in building or project management. You have to do things twice. You design them on paper once and then you, well, you build them on paper once and then you build them in real life.

It takes off a lot of the edges and having that foresight as to where you're actually looking to looking to go with the campaign or the reason for it is absolutely essential. That goal and that target.

[Adam Goff] (21:42 - 22:02)

And you need that campaign to keep you, you know, because there must have been times on that journey where, you know, it's all very well now saying we've done it, you know, pat on the back. But you must have had moments where you thought, you know what? And you've maybe looked at Steph and said, I don't, we can't do it.

I'm not sure we're going to do this. You know, I don't want to do it anymore. I'm throwing in the towel.

Maybe you didn't say that out loud, but. Wonderful.

[Dan Norman] (22:03 - 22:19)

Terrifying. It's the best way I can put it because it's a whole chunk of money, right? Or whether it's a business campaign and you're waiting for those sales to land through, it's just having that, having that foresight, having that planning and working things through bit by bit.

So the successes will come.

[Adam Goff] (22:20 - 22:24)

Did you visualize it? Did you have it on the wall anywhere? How did you keep focus?

[Dan Norman] (22:24 - 23:34)

I must admit I didn't on this one. And I think purely because it was so prominent in the community. And that's the other important thing I think is when people are maybe a bit concerned about social media, they might be operating as an individual.

And I'm a great believer in business. I've named the three companies I'm fortunate enough to have at least a part in or be the owner of. But interestingly, New Leaf, New Leaf Living is a partnership.

It's a partnership between three of us who all have individual skills and we support each other. And that was the quickest business to go from kind of zero to where we needed to be. And that's specifically because of the skill sets and the people involved.

Get up, give back worked so well because over 12 weeks, there were five of us. Well, there's a lot more than five, but there's five people on the committee and there's all the people involved pushing forward, forward, forward, forward, forward. So I'm a great believer in the phrase, you know, better together.

Now that only might be two people or it might be you and your cat or whatever, but having that support, I think is very, very essential. And that can be professional support, entrepreneurial support, partner support, whichever it might be.

[Adam Goff] (23:35 - 23:42)

I love that better together. I can see it is. We have a saying on the board, which is it's not the journey.

It's who you share it with.

[Dan Norman] (23:43 - 23:43)

Yeah, 100%.

[Adam Goff] (23:43 - 24:51)

It's not where we're going. It's who we share it with. That's what's most important.

And it sounds like that's something you've learned in all your years of business. And now you're applying it to this, to your new leaf living and everything that you do. So, Dan, thank you so much for sharing your experience.

Honestly, I just want to say congratulations. £126,000 raise. I'll never forget Dan Atkins, the founder of Buses for Homeless, reaction when we told him how much we'd raised.

The guy almost fell over because for them, their dream of building a purpose built, another purpose built site in West Acton is just going to come true. It's a game changer for that charity. They've never had anywhere near that amount of money raised.

So yeah, congratulations. Textbook execution on the campaign, unwavering confidence that you showed to everyone and just fantastic leadership, Dan. So I know it was a group effort between you and the committee and I know you'd like to highlight that.

But yeah, I just want to say like, congratulations. Welcome to the Hall of Fame. It's a pleasure working with you and I can't wait to see what you achieve next year, to be honest.

[Dan Norman] (24:52 - 25:01)

It's a pleasure to be on the programme and also part of the Hall of Fame. And thank you very much, Adam, for everything you've done to support the activity this year. It's been absolutely splendid.

[Adam Goff] (25:02 - 25:04)

Absolutely. Well, thanks, Dan. Thanks for joining us.

I'll talk to you soon.

[Dan Norman] (25:05 - 25:06)

Pleasure. Take care.

[Speaker 3] (25:12 - 25:37)

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