



## DANNY SLESWICK

CEO, Image Cabinets

**Industry:** Manufacturing

**Number of Employees:** 30

**Annual Revenue:** \$5 Million

## AT A GLANCE



Improved Value Builder  
Score from 42 to 65



Increased Company Value  
by 83%



Primary Key Driver:  
Customer Satisfaction



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## VALUE BUILDER BUSINESS OWNER STORY:

# Business Owner Went from Working 65 Hours a Week to 5 Hours While Increasing His Company's Value by 83%

## BACKGROUND

In 2008 Danny Sleswick decided to join his brother-in-law's company, Image Cabinets, a cabinet manufacturing company specializing in home renovations. Sleswick brought 17 years of experience managing manufacturing companies, while his brother-in-law was a tradesman, making for the perfect pair to grow the business. With Sleswick at the helm, Image Cabinets has since expanded to manufacturing cabinets for multi-story developments, diversifying their offering.

Image Cabinets had doubled from a \$2 million company in 2008 to generating \$4 million in revenue in 2015. Seven years into their partnership, Sleswick decided to buy out his brother-in-law and took over full operational responsibilities. Once on his own, Sleswick grew an additional \$1 million in revenue.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Despite experiencing success, Sleswick began noticing operational inefficiencies. It was normal for Sleswick to work 65 hours a week, leaving little time for vacations and leisure for himself. Image Cabinets had grown to become dependent on Sleswick, with his heavy involvement in decision-making and the business's day-to-day operations.

Sleswick stumbled upon a post on LinkedIn by Rohan Wood, a business advisor known as "The Exit Guy." The post discussed an essential theme for all business owners: the notion of choice and having the freedom to choose what to do with your business. Upon reflecting on this, Sleswick noted, ***"I was still working 65 hours a week. At the end of the day, I wasn't really free to choose what to do with my business."*** Despite not being interested in exiting his business quite yet, Sleswick did want the option of selling his business when the time came. Together Sleswick and Wood embarked on a journey to make improvements to Image Cabinets that would positively impact Sleswick's quality of life.

## WORKING WITH A CERTIFIED VALUE BUILDER™

Known to many Australian business owners as "The Exit Guy," Rohan Wood utilizes The Value Builder System™ and has helped hundreds of business owners make a successful exit. Specializing in exit planning and value building, Wood knew these same strategies and tactics would also apply to Sleswick and Image Cabinets. Using The Value Builder System™ methodology, Wood aimed to improve processes within Image Cabinets and reduce the company's reliance on Sleswick.

Sleswick and Wood had an instant synergy. When discussing his approach, Wood asked Sleswick, ***"Rather than improving the bottom line, what if we improve the 65 hours per week that you are working?"*** Impressed with Wood, Sleswick said, ***"Rohan (Wood) wasn't talking about dollars and cents but rather focused on giving the ability or freedom to sell if I chose to."***

As a Certified Value Builder™, Wood first leveraged the Value Builder questionnaire, a short survey that provides business owners with a report on the business's current state. Once completed, the business owner is given a Value Builder Score based on the 8 Key Drivers of Company Value. Shocked by his Value Builder Score of 42 out of a possible 100, Sleswick confessed, ***"It showed me that we still had huge room for improvement. It allowed me to see business in a new way."***

Sleswick and Wood decided the key driver to focus on first was Customer Satisfaction. Upon reflection, Sleswick said, ***"We drilled to identify where people weren't that happy with the interaction. Our time to respond to tenders was too long; clients felt abandoned as it took three weeks to submit pricing. Clients had low confidence from the start."*** Sleswick and Wood realized that at the root of the customer satisfaction problem was an inefficient sales process.

Immediately, Sleswick and Wood established sales scripts and trained other team members to learn the new and improved sales process. The new sequence included documented communication sent throughout the entire tendering process, all the way until a project was complete. This new system enabled Image Cabinets to answer any questions customers might have



**ROHAN WOOD**  
CEO, The EXITGuy



**Rather than improving the bottom line, what if we improve the 65 hours per week that you are working?**

and resolve issues instantaneously. Happy about this improvement, Sleswick said, ***“With this new data, we are able to respond, make adjustments, and avoid lumpy sales so much quicker.”*** As a result, Sleswick improved his customer satisfaction score, won more repeat business, and gained more referrals from happy customers.

With the sales operations now fully optimized, Sleswick realized he had set off a domino effect of business improvements spawning 30 new efficient processes across the organization. When discussing how these processes worked together seamlessly, Sleswick said, ***“Salespeople didn’t need constant coaching, because there was now a system to follow. Production-wise, the new systems in place were followed by installers, which took pressure off site supervisors. Because of this, operations managers were now fully aware of what was happening.”***

More importantly, Wood worked with Sleswick on delegating many parts of his job to reduce the company’s reliance on him. To create alignment, Sleswick and Wood created clear operational guidelines and detailed job descriptions for each employee to ensure everyone was held responsible. Within the first six months of implementation, Sleswick noticed these changes working and saw a net gain of free time for himself. Image Cabinets was now running smoothly even with less involvement from him.

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With the help of Rohan Wood and The Value Builder System™, I was able to achieve my goal of being free to choose what to do with Image Cabinets.



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## RESULTS

A few short years prior, Sleswick was close to burning out, tirelessly working 65-hour weeks and being involved in every aspect of Image Cabinets. Sleswick has since transitioned to only working five hours per week while relying on trusted managers and proven processes. Two years after leveraging The Value Builder System™ and retaking the Value Builder questionnaire, Sleswick was able to increase his Value Builder Score from 42 to 65. He also increased his business’s value by a staggering 83%.

When the COVID-19 pandemic escalated in early 2020, Sleswick found himself extremely prepared. With a reduced role in Image Cabinets’ day-to-day processes, Sleswick was able to turn his attention to applying new government regulations and quickly implementing mandatory health and safety precautions for his team. Sleswick was able to play the critical role of messenger, relaying important announcements to his staff while ensuring that Image Cabinets remained operational and, more importantly, safe for all employees. Sleswick acknowledged that had the pandemic occurred years prior, he would not have been as well positioned to handle the situation effectively.

With the help of Wood and The Value Builder System™, Sleswick was able to achieve his goal of being free to choose what to do with Image Cabinets. With a Certified Value Builder™ leading the way, Sleswick successfully pinpointed a weakness within the business and made the necessary changes to improve it. Most importantly, Sleswick and Wood were able to reorganize roles and responsibilities among the staff, which allowed Sleswick to take a less active part in the day-to-day operations. Image Cabinets is now a well-oiled machine and continues to be a thriving business. Most importantly, it provided Sleswick with a healthy and much deserved work-life balance.

**DAVID & NOELA TSCHERNIG***Owners, All About Bakery Equipment***Industry:** Equipment Supplier & Service**Number of Employees:** 9

## AT A GLANCE



Increased Value Builder Score™ from 51 to 73



Increased Company Value by 28% and Annual Revenue by 275%



Primary Key Driver: Financial Performance



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## VALUE BUILDER BUSINESS OWNER STORY:

# The Owners of All About Bakery Equipment Increased Company Value by 28% While Improving Work-Life Balance

## BACKGROUND

In 1996 David and Noela Tscheinig started All About Bakery Equipment, selling refurbished equipment to bakeries. The Tscheinigs targeted independent bakeries and grew by providing additional maintenance to existing customers while acquiring new business through word-of-mouth referrals. In a few years, the company carved out a niche and began providing a full concept-to-completion service for bakeries. They expanded their service to include helping bakeries negotiate leases and handling all the installation of their refurbished equipment.

In addition, the Tscheinigs also formed a new business. International Bakery Equipment managed the importing of all bakery equipment from various manufacturers and vendors around the world. David and Noela now owned two successful companies and continued to expand their operations throughout Australia.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGES

By 2010 the Tscheinigs found themselves at a crossroads. Operating two businesses stretched them too thin. They worked long hours and needed to offload some of their responsibilities. When assessing their two companies, the Tscheinigs decided to sell All About Bakery Equipment, their original refurbishing and maintenance business, and to keep International Bakery Equipment, the newer importing company. Their thought process was to eliminate the demanding service-based business and focus simply on selling products to bakeries. As such, they sold All About Bakery Equipment and retained International Bakery Equipment.

A few months later, the Tscheinigs noticed that the new owner of All About Bakery Equipment was completely mishandling and mismanaging the business they had worked so hard to build. Their once-thriving business was on the verge of going belly up. They couldn't stand the thought of letting their long-time loyal customers down and made the tough decision to repurchase the company from the new owner. Already overworked, the Tscheinigs now had to revive their previous business while continuing to oversee International Bakery Equipment. To turn this around, they knew they needed a business coach who had a history of successfully rebuilding businesses and was backed by a proven methodology and system.

## WORKING WITH A CERTIFIED VALUE BUILDER™

Known to many Australian business owners as "The Exit Guy," Rohan Wood utilizes The Value Builder System™ to help hundreds of business owners make a successful exit. Specializing in exit planning and value building, Wood knew these same strategies and tactics would also apply to the Tscheinigs. When discussing what they wanted to achieve from this partnership, David and Noela acknowledged, ***"Having run the business together for 20 years, we wanted the business to run on its own without us having to work so hard in it. We wanted to have processes in place if we wanted to sell it."***

Using The Value Builder System™ methodology, Wood aimed to improve processes within All About Bakery Equipment and to reduce its reliance on Noela and David. As a Certified Value Builder™, Wood first leveraged the Value Builder questionnaire, a short quiz that provides business owners with a report on the business's current state. Once completed, the business owner is given a Value Builder Score based on the 8 Key Drivers of Company Value. After completing the assessment, All About Bakery Equipment scored 51 out of a possible 100. With this realization, both the Tscheinigs and Wood knew there was much work to be done to improve the business's value.

Together they identified that the Financial Performance key driver needed the most improvement and focused on the sales process as a critical starting point. With Noela and David balancing time between sales and their other responsibilities, there wasn't an established sales process to follow. To address this, Wood helped develop a team of three dedicated salespeople, implemented an efficient follow-up process, and improved communication with potential leads. When discussing how this impacted the business, Noela said, ***"With the help of The Value Builder System™, we went from a 50% conversion rate to 75%."*** With this new process, it took fewer leads and less work to win more new customers.

Wood also uncovered a cashflow issue through the Valuation Teeter Totter, another of the 8 Key Drivers of Company Value. The Tscheinigs were importing and paying up front for new bakery equipment, which



**ROHAN WOOD**  
CEO, The EXITGuy



**In our exit planning, we had short-term and long-term goals but no way to get there, which is what Rohan was offering us.**



they then had to turn around and sell. Completing this transaction often took months, requiring them to offer payment plans to their customers. With the source of their cashflow issue identified, Wood and the Tscheinigs made a few strategic decisions to address this. Noela and David found different suppliers that offered better terms. They also switched banks and found a partner that fit their needs better. Lastly, they decided to subcontract remote customer service work instead of sending their in-house engineers, eliminating travel expenses. With The Value Builder System™ helping to uncover their financial performance issue, the Tscheinigs could better allocate funds. With sales now a well-oiled machine and improved financial management, David said, ***“We’ve gotten to the point where we don’t have to reinvest all of our profit back into our business.”***

When discussing the steps to rebuild the business, David said, ***“As far as getting things out of my head and on paper, I knew what we needed to do, but it was never documented.”*** Having built the business from the ground up, it had become reliant on Noela and David’s institutional knowledge of every critical process. Together with Wood, they documented each business process and shared it with the team to learn. By slowly letting go of responsibilities, Noela and David started to see the business operating more smoothly and efficiently while limiting their day-to-day involvement.



With the help of The Value Builder System™, we went from a 50% conversion rate to 75%. With this new process, it took fewer leads and less work to win more new customers.



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## RESULTS

With a focus on improving financial performance and reducing the business’s dependence on them, Noela and David successfully transformed All About Bakery Equipment into a more profitable and efficient business. Most importantly, they achieved their goal of having a choice. They could either sell the company and fund their retirement or retain the business while being less involved. When discussing the experience from an advisor’s perspective, Wood said, ***“Noela and David went through wars. They were very frustrated but were concerned about the future of the business and funding their retirement.”*** All their hard work paid off. They increased the company’s value by 128% and improved their Value Builder Score by 22, achieving a 73.

The most successful three years in the company’s history were after Noela and David took a step back and leveraged The Value Builder System™ with their Certified Value Builder™, Rohan. They now end workdays at a reasonable hour, leaving time in the day for themselves. They have also booked extended vacations with friends and plan to go to places on their bucket list, which would have been unimaginable only a few years prior. Reflecting on their accomplishments, David said, ***“We finally got the chance to go ahh,”*** as he let out a sigh. ***“It’s been years of a really hard slog for both of us.”***



## ANNA WOOLLISCROFT

CEO, Market Avenue Limited

Industry: Marketing

### AT A GLANCE



Increased Value  
Builder Score™  
from 47 to 59



Increased Company  
Value by 26%



Primary Key Driver:  
Recurring Revenue



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### VALUE BUILDER BUSINESS OWNER STORY:

## Copywriting Agency Owner Productized Her Service and Increased Recurring Revenue

### BACKGROUND

In 2009 Anna Woolliscroft founded Market Avenue Limited, a marketing consultancy based in England. Anna brought years of experience in traditional and digital marketing, copywriting, design, and print to her new business. Her goal was to help small to medium owner-managed businesses develop marketing plans and strategies.

In a few short years, the firm grew to include five employees and a healthy roster of clients. This growth coincided with the rise of social media marketing, which became Market Avenue Limited's primary service offering.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGES

In Anna's first two years in operation, she struggled to find her footing. She took on a wide range of projects for a variety of clients. Anna felt an immense amount of pressure to deliver quality work on time. She tried shifting her focus to providing social media marketing. Despite being one of her strengths, its 24/7 nature left little time for her personal life.

To get her business back on track, Anna needed to find her niche and center her business around providing a specific product. Furthermore, she sought to offer repeatable retainer packages to drive recurring revenue, a more reliable model than ad-hoc projects. Lastly, to scale the business, Anna needed to transfer some of her skills to other team members.

Anna is a true believer in coaching and mentorship. Ready to take on an advisor, she said, ***"As a business owner, you need to be in a place to take on advice."*** This led her to search for a business coach who had the right experience to help her business improve while also achieving a healthy work-life balance.

## WORKING WITH A CERTIFIED VALUE BUILDER™

Martin Williamson is a Business Doctors advisor who helps SME business owners with strategy and planning, business improvement, and value building. He previously served as a senior manager at PwC and as a freelance advisor for over twenty years. He has worked with everything from solopreneurs to large corporate enterprises. Describing where his true passion lies, Martin said, ***"I get an immense amount of satisfaction watching small businesses grow into medium-sized businesses."***

Having experienced the benefits of coaching and mentoring in the past, Anna was once again personally and professionally prepared to take on advice. Recounting how the relationship started, Anna said, ***"Martin came in at the right time. I attended his workshops and liked what he had to say; he resonated with me."*** With Martin's help, Anna aimed to gain control of her business and steer it in the right direction.

The first step when working with a Certified Value Builder™ is completing the Value Builder Questionnaire. This short survey provides business owners with a report on their company's current value. Once completed, they are given a Value Builder Score out of 100 as well as a score on each of the 8 Key Drivers of Company Value. Anna's first Value Builder Score was 47. Analyzing the Value Builder Report, Martin reflected, ***"This was the first time we were able to see tangible numbers for specific areas of the company."***

One key driver they examined was Recurring Revenue, in which Anna first scored 25 out of 100. To improve this score, Anna needed to deliver something more standardized and repeatable that could yield a



**MARTIN WILLIAMSON**

*Business Doctors Advisor*



**This was the first time we were able to see tangible numbers for specific areas of the company.**



monthly fee. This led Anna to rethink her offering and conceive of a product that she could confidently deliver. She went back to what she is best at—copywriting.

With Martin's guidance, Anna niched down to provide a robust copywriting service to her clients. To attract new customers and retain existing ones, she productized her service, repositioning it into a series of products. Comparing this model to her previous one, Anna said, ***"Rather than people coming to me saying they want something, it's me saying this is what I offer."***

After eliminating some ad-hoc clients, Anna developed retainer packages, which allowed her to charge a monthly fee. By introducing a subscription model into her business, Anna said, ***"I have fewer clients, but I'm doing more for them."*** After implementing these changes and retaking the Value Builder Questionnaire, Anna's Recurring Revenue score increased by a whopping 50 points, improving from 25 to 75.

Anna also revisited how the business was staffed. She reduced operational costs by replacing five employees with three freelancers. With standard packages offered, Anna can train her freelancers more efficiently and have them execute with less involvement. Impressed with this new process, Anna said, ***"There is very little back and forth, and it is now working very smoothly."***

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I now work an average working hour week compared to over 60 hours each week in the past.



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## RESULTS

Continuing the theme of productized offerings, Anna created a Do-It-Yourself Copywriting Workshop that clients can purchase. This product has been refined into a comprehensive 12-module course available in a group setting or one-on-one consultancy.

By offering a productized service along with retainer packages, Anna is now collecting more consistent revenue. Explaining how this affected her day to day, Anna said, ***"I'm not constantly working on projects I don't enjoy just to gain more money."*** These changes have also contributed to an improved profit margin.

Working with Martin and leveraging the Value Builder System™ has helped Anna gain a greater appreciation for herself while spending more time outside of the business. Reflecting on a much better work-life balance, Anna said, ***"I now work an average working hour week compared to over 60 hours each week in the past."*** In addition, by niching down and refocusing on copywriting—her first passion—Anna can say that she now truly enjoys her work.



## JOHN BRUMMETT & BJ WINDHORST

*Owners, Air Free Duct Cleaning*

**Industry:** Cleaning & Service

## AT A GLANCE



Increased Value Builder  
Score™ from 51 to 60



Increased revenue  
by 50% in first year



Primary Key Driver:  
Monopoly Control



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## VALUE BUILDER BUSINESS OWNER STORY:

# Air Free Duct Cleaning Increased Revenue by 50% in its First Year Working with a Certified Value Builder™

## BACKGROUND

In 2018 John Brummett and BJ Windhorst partnered to purchase Air Free Duct Cleaning. Together, they had a diverse background in sales, insurance, and business management, giving them the experience necessary to take over the company successfully. Their goal was to purchase a healthy business, grow the company, and have the option of selling.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGES

After taking over, Brummett and Windhorst agreed to keep the previous owner on board for a few months. Their first observation was that the owner was too involved in the company's day-to-day operations. They noticed him completing paper timecards, writing paychecks, conducting sales, managing invoices, and doing the air duct cleaning. Brummett and Windhorst knew these manual processes needed to be delegated or automated with the previous owner departing.

They also realized that training new employees took six to nine months. In a high-turnover industry, this timeframe had to be reduced. With a better understanding of the air duct cleaning industry, they prioritized cross-training all staff. ***"We wanted to find a way to have teams learn all roles (lead and support) as much as possible,"*** Windhorst said. In doing so, they would have less reliance on specific employees and a more agile workforce.

Brummett and Windhorst knew how to address the operational side of the business. They now needed guidance on how to grow the business. This led them to search for a consultant who could get their hands dirty and provide useful, actionable plans for growing the company.

## WORKING WITH A CERTIFIED VALUE BUILDER™

Susan Clements is the CEO of Benchmark Business Group (BGG) and is a Certified Value Builder™. With over 20 years of business consulting experience, she has helped hundreds of business owners gain control of their companies and increase value. Brummett saw Bob Clements, Susan's partner, speak at a Remodelers Association event. The presentation discussed strategies for designing a business to increase value and mentioned how The Value Builder System™ can help. After seeing this and speaking to existing clients, Brummett was convinced BBG was the right choice.

When discussing her first impressions, Clements said, ***"I saw two owners; both wanted to grow but thought differently. The most important thing was to make sure they had a common vision on how to grow and scale."*** To create alignment, Clements leveraged The Value Builder System™. By providing 12 simple modules for them to follow, Brummett and Windhorst found a common language and worked together on improving the business one step at a time.

Reflecting on how this impacted the owners, Clements said, ***"The Value Builder System™ does a lot of the heavy lifting. They both went through exercises and came together to discuss it. They began to see things more clearly and wanted to grow and create a turnkey business that would work without them."***

The first step in leveraging The Value Builder System™ is the Value Builder Questionnaire. This online assessment gives business owners a score on how valuable their business is based on the 8 Key Drivers of Company Value. One key driver they focused on was Monopoly Control—how well-differentiated the business is from competitors. At the time, Air Free Duct Cleaning was like any other duct cleaning company. To stand out, they decided to invest heavily in marketing. The rebranding exercise included a new logo, a redesigned website, updated messaging, and eye-catching



**SUSAN CLEMENTS**

CEO, Benchmark  
Business Group (BGG)



They began to see things more clearly and wanted to grow and create a turnkey business that would work without them.

direct mail promotions. In identifying this as a turning point, Clements said, ***“Once they focused on improving Monopoly Control, it flipped for all the other Key Drivers.”***

By addressing Monopoly Control, they created differentiation in the market. They repositioned Air Free Duct Cleaning as a full-service air quality company for homes. Brummett and Windhorst also diversified their offering to include dryer vent cleanings and laundry room inspections.

A beautifully designed direct mail campaign fueled new business and positively impacted another key driver, Growth Potential, which assesses the business’s likelihood of growth. A renewed focus on marketing helped to increase their Growth Potential score from 53 to 73. This rebranding effort enabled them to increase revenue by 50% and gave them the ability to add a third truck and crew.

Brummett and Windhorst decided to delegate specific functions to other employees. They replaced an office admin with a salesperson and added a field supervisor. They also cut down training time by half and cross-trained technicians to handle multiple roles. The company can now operate smoothly without direct involvement from Brummett or Windhorst. These changes enabled Windhorst to sell more large commercial jobs as they continued to scale.

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The value has really been in meeting us where we need it. The tool has something for every phase of the growth path.



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## RESULTS

Before Brummett and Windhorst began working with Clements, they had already made several process improvements. They deployed mobile calendars, a digital invoicing app, QuickBooks, and direct deposit. Clements and The Value Builder System™ helped identify other vital areas that were impeding growth. When describing how applicable The Value Builder System™ is over time, Brummett said, ***“The value has really been in meeting us where we need it. The tool has something for every phase of the growth path.”***

After redoing the Value Builder Questionnaire, Brummett and Windhorst discovered they increased their score from 51 to 60. Describing the journey so far, Brummett said, ***“This increase is validation that we are headed on the right path. Working with Susan has kept us focused.”***

In their second year of working with a Certified Value Builder™, Clements notes, ***“Now they are asking, what progress did we make, and what is the next level of achievement?”*** Improving processes, identifying growth potential, and differentiating themselves from competitors is only the beginning. Brummett and Windhorst are on the right path towards building a valuable, sellable company.