

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 98

Business Expo

Chris French with Cox Business

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Don: [00:00:00] Good morning Broadcasting Glide from Century two in downtown Wichita. Welcome to the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce Business Expo presented by Cox Business. We have Cox business in the house.

See?

Ebony: Good morning everyone. Today is an exciting day. Can you believe we are live and in action? Don't say anything

Don: I want to, but

Ebony: okay.

Shut up. Alright, well, so the good and exciting news is we have one of my good friends. Now, Mr. Chris French is in the house. Chris,

Chris French: Yes. Thank you for having me.

Don: Would you say, would you, would you say she's a good friend?

Chris French: Yeah. For the last hour? Yeah. ,

Don: It's normally a two hour deal, you'll think. Okay. Yeah.

Perfect. It was off.

Ebony: Tell us a little bit about who you are, Chris, and what are you doing here at this

Chris French: wonderful event. Okay, so my name's Chris French. I'm with Cox Business. Been there for 15 years. Um, you know, Cox Business gets it. They get what needs to happen in the community. They want to be involved with shows like this.



Networking business to business, doing business local. That's what Cox Business stands for.

Ebony: That's what's up. So you've been here since the beginning?

Chris French: Been the be, Yeah, since the beginning. So I was telling you before the, the live, um, so I've been part of this committee, part of this show for 18 years. So this is the 18th year of the show.

And just to give you a little history, so in 2005 when we first had it, I was selling beepers pagers back in the day. First of all,

Don: Ebo, she act like she doesn't know what that is, but she does. Right. You're right. And a beeper is, when it comes through, you don't see what it is. You don't know where it's from.

It's only from one person

more than likely. Right?

Chris French: Exactly, exactly. So that's a throwback. Yeah. Yeah. So back then, 2005, there was a technology company and just to to age ourselves, they were given away as a door prize, a 20 inch LCD monitor. Right. And we were just like that. We were like, Wow, it's so thin.

Remember cuz you were going from the big TVs to Right, right. And it was just amazing. So here we are. We, we've evolved. We've all evolved and it's, it's great to still be here, still have a great show.

Don: Excellent. We went from beepers to pagers, then you could see what, who was calling you. Right. But they had to do 9 1 1 if it was

Chris French: emergency.

Exactly. Gotta get

Chris Batcheller: you get the

Don: milk . Right. So what about the expo helps your business? Cox

Chris French: Business specifically? Yeah. So like I say, we're out here with the community. So Cox Business, we do a lot, we have a lot of customers. And here's what I told everybody at the office yesterday, so there's 150 vendors, exhibitors here.

What, how long would it take you to go out and see 150 potential existing customers? Right.

Plus the fact if you're a sales guy like me and I go knocking on a door and I'm interrupting your day, you may not be happy to see me right here. We're just having fun, handing out, shaking hands, kissing babies, things like that.

It's a relaxed atmosphere and it's a perfect way to talk to somebody. And you don't have to do business here. You just talk about an appointment or, Hey, I'll take you to lunch next week. It's really relaxed.

Don: Excellent, excellent. Did you grow up in Wichita? I did. What? High school? East High. That's okay. It is what it is.

Not everybody could go the the Northwest High School.

Chris French: Was that

Don: it? One

Chris French: That's good memories of East High. Yeah. You know, it's crazy. So I've been at Cox now for 16 years and I work right down the street from East High. Oh, okay. Right

Don: down high. Yeah, that's right. That's right

Chris French: down road. The gwb. I still feel like I'm going to

Ebony: high school.

Yeah. Do you ride down the street and do the

Chris French: e a s? Right. Yeah. And then I'm gonna really date myself. I used to be a yell leader at East Height, so I, I could actually do that cheer,

Don: really do a little bit for.

I would show you the back flip.

Oh my.

Ebony: So, uh, that's impressive. If you can still

Chris French: do that by No, exactly.

No, I can't. So what booth are you guys at? Uh, so we're actually on the red carpet. I don't know if we have a booth, but we're easily [00:05:00] found, come in down the red carpet. Uh, you

know, we're ready to, to shake hands and just talk business.

Ebony: All right. I love that. And so what is it that you, what services do you guys provide?

Chris French: So Cox Business has evolved just like the show, right? So we went from beepers to now iPhone 14. Right. We never thought we'd see that. Right. So we've evolved. So we started out as a cloud, well as a core company. So we did phone, internet, and tv, and that was really our main services, which now, you know, they say it's become a commodity.

We don't think so. But yeah, Internet's really a commodity. So we've transitioned into a cloud company. Oh. So it used to be you would have a server room or a basement, you know, with hot and loud machinery going on anymore. That stuff has moved to the cloud where we take care of it, we maintain it. You just pay us a monthly fee.

We're that one throat to choke that one back to pat so we can take care of everything. A lot of things that are big in the news these days. Ransomware, you hear about that? The cybersecurity disaster recovery. What happens if, if a tornado comes through and takes out your office space, we can help in that space.

Everything's in the cloud. Yes. Yes. Wow. So we're really trying to get the word out and that's what you use a show like this where we've got 150 say all of these are our existing customers. Mm-hmm. , just to get the word out about additional services that we offer.

Ebony: That is really neat. Yeah. And so remind us, So how do we get hold of you all?

Chris French: So Chris French is me and I'll be, I'll be personal here. Chris French. You can find me on LinkedIn. Chris French Cox Business for sure. Um, cox business.com. Uh, you can call me (316) 833-1754 is my cell phone number. Usually LinkedIn's probably the easiest way. Uh, Reach me there and we can talk additional business at that point.

Ebony: I love that. Now, so I, and I know I've been talking a lot, so,

um,

Don: shocker, ,

but tell me like, oh, the

Ebony: mic is on. Um, so, uh, small business, medium business, large business,

Chris French: any, any size business. And, and here's the thing. I think Cox business will treat everybody the same, right? Whether you're a big business or small business, because I almost feel like, and the chamber probably feels this way too, a lot of the majority of businesses are

small business, right?

So we wanna keep that local. So I'm gonna take care of you, like you're my friend and my neighbor because I go to the same grocery store you guys do, and I'm gonna run into you there. So I'm not gonna hide. There's no way I can hide. So I'm gonna take care of you there. Um, business wise though, the small businesses are probably more susceptible to like a ransomware attack or they need that protection.

They don't have the The budget for our whole IT staff. Right, Right. Somebody that's on staff that can learn all this. A lot of times we'll go into a business and the owner is the owner, the cfo, the IT guy. Yeah. The break fix guy. Entrepreneurship 1 0 1. Right, exactly. So that's where we can partner with them and we have a hybrid approach.

So say you've got a couple IT guys on your staff, we'll work with them to help them come up to speed on a Office 365 or cybersecurity. We can work with them, get them up to speed where they feel comfortable, but yet maybe three 30 on an afternoon when they're leaving town, we can take over and do all their IT for them.

Okay. It's a hybrid approach. It's been working very well.

Ebony: Excellent. Well, that's interesting just because, so you come in and a business may not even know that they're susceptible or that they. Right. But it's your job

Chris French: to kind of uncover some of this. Right? Right. And a lot of times, a lot of times businesses are afraid to talk about it because if you ask somebody, What's your disaster recovery plan?

They really don't have one. Right. They're like, Well, you we're hoping it doesn't happen. But if it does happen, and you know, ransom, ransomware is so big these days, but you get hit with ransomware, you need to have insurance, you need to have an attorney involved. You gotta know what you can say. Things like that, we can help navigate that.

And, and I do a say a free quote that's kind of overused, right. But we can come in and talk to you and kind of get a plan and work with you to make sure we're all on the same page. So in case something does happen there, you've got, you've got a plan in action. Okay.

Don: Excellent. We appreciate that averaging, cuz they're, I know averaging is a customer of yours.

Absolutely. And you're a customer of. And I'm personally a Cox business customer as well. So. Good. You got me coming and going . Good deal.

Chris French: It's like, yes, we appreciates.

Don: I know, I know. Um, what is going on at your booth today far as you got anything to give away? Yeah, we've

Chris French: got, we've got some swag to give away.

We've got some nice, uh, almost Yeti type thermo coolers. What? Be sure to stop by. Yeah. I'll be sure to grab you one before we run out. Yes, I see both of us. Yeah.

We've got

the big sides down there. Yeah. But we've got Cox Medias there as well. So we have a media group that does advertising. I know you want

Don: them as well.

Absolutely. I'm trying to remember who works over there.

Chris French: Who's [00:10:00] our, Mary Gragg Reed is also over there. Yeah, there's there's several other people over there. Yeah. Okay. And we've got him coming and going all day, so I'll be there most of the day though.

Don: Excellent. Well, we'll come down to see you. I, I see your banner from here.

Yep. Well, we appreciate you coming through Any parting chatsy?

Ebony: Nope. I'm just excited to finally meet the

Chris French.

Chris French: Hey, this has been great to be here. It's been fun.

Don: So coming up we'll be Bethany Johnson with

SCKEDD. Right. Very

nice nonprofit SCKEDD. How you doing Bethany? Doing great. Did you get voluntold to do this or, Yes.

Yeah, I know that feeling .

It's right. It's alright. Yay. Well,

Ebony: welcome. Yes, welcome. Good to see you both. Yes. I love, uh, your, your shirt. This is actually very nice. Polo. Oh, thank you. When I was in Don's department, he bought us Polos and they were not. Oh, wow.

Wow.

Don: We are live. See, welcome to my world folks.

Ebony: But no, we're so excited to have our friends from SCKEDD here.

Yeah. Live at the Expo. So if you would, could you kind of tell us like Okay. Who you are and what you do?

Bethany Johnson: Yeah, sure. Um, well my name's Bethany Johnson. I have worked at SCKEDD for the last 21 years. And, um, I'm really excited to be here today, um, representing South Central Kansas Economic Development District.

Yes, I know that's kind of a mouthful, but, um, yeah, we offer a lot of different aspects, uh, to the community. Um, one of the big things that we offer is our small business loans. Um, we offer, um, SBA backed small business loans, um, for small business owners who are looking at either starting up their business or expanding their business.

They may need to purchase equipment or need working capital, that kind of thing. And we are here to assist them. We often partner with local lenders and can, um, uh, help, help fill the gap, basically offer gap financing a lot of times. In addition, in addition to financing directly. We also offer a weatherization program that can help weatherization.

Yes.

Ebony: Oh, we like to hear that .

Bethany Johnson: Yeah. That helps make, uh, different homeowners help their, help their homes become more energy efficient. Yes. Right. Which we can all use help with that. Um, and um, so that's helped a lot of, lot of homeowners in the

Ebony: region, so, So you help both individuals and

Bethany Johnson: businesses? Um, the weatherization department helps the, helps people individually.

Um, we also have a grants department that helps, uh, write grants for different cities and towns. And then I work in the lending area, commercial lending department. And so we help businesses. So, Yeah. Yeah.

Ebony: That is amazing. Cause I don't know that we all recognize that you did that many different things, Right?

So the residential and the weatherization and so a small business if, um, You know, if I needed assistance, um, my bank has said I'm only gonna be able to provide this amount, but my project tells me I need, you know, more. Yeah. So that's when I would come in and put an application in with you. Yes. What does

Bethany Johnson: that look like?

Yes. Um, we have a loan application that you would fill out, but a lot of times if you've already been working with your banker, the banker can often contact us and say, Hey, we've got a project that, you know, we'd like to, it's a great project, we'd like to do it, but because of our regulations or our rules, we can't fund the full amount that the owner needs.

And so, um, if they, if you've already been working with them, we might be able to start with a copy of the application and kind of build from there. There may be a little bit more documentation needed, but you know, it's always

Ebony: a little more

documentation. Right. .

Bethany Johnson: But a lot of it can already be, you know, we can fill in a lot of the blanks to make your process as easy as possible.

So

Ebony: does that mean like, if they. They fund up to 80% of it, then we could come for you for that, that 20, Um, maybe, maybe

Bethany Johnson: not, maybe it depends on the project. Oh. Um, but we do like to see some kind of owner injection, but um, yeah, basically we could fill the gap with that. Mm-hmm.

Don: Interesting. Excellent. And I know you're a great person cause of your first name.

That's my daughter's name, so

it is nice. .

I knew I've got end .

Excellent. So, um, if we can go back a couple of years, what did y'all have to do to really help businesses during the pandemic?

Bethany Johnson: Yes. Um, a few years back we, uh, one of our loan programs, like a lot of our loan programs are funded through the small business administration, but one of our loan programs is from the Economic Development Agency or eea.

Um, and they were able, [00:15:00] for a short period of time, changed some of their matching requirements for their loans. Where instead of having to match two to one with another lender, um, they were able, we were able to do direct loans to small business owners. And so we were able to shorten our applications and be able to do, um, some working capital loans for small business owners during that time period and really do some quick turnarounds.

It makes a lot of loans during that period.

Excellent. Yeah.

Don: So why, why are you here

Bethany Johnson: today? Well, we're excited to be here today because, you know, being at these chamber events and there's so many businesses here, and, you know, as part of the community, we, it's a great opportunity to network with different business owners.

Um, a lot of times, you know, when you're here, you, you know, when you're doing your day to day business, right? It's hard to get out and see what other options are here, are available. And so here you're able to see a lot of business owners in one spot. And get to actually have that face time with them instead of just a phone conversation and you know, kind of meet, see what they do, what, how they can help us and how we can help them.

And it's just a great opportunity for networking. Yeah. That face to face makes a difference. It really does. It really does. Yeah. And seeing some of the familiar faces that you may not have seen since the pandemic started. Right, right, right. It's kinda seen some of those familiar faces have been nice too.

Don: So what, uh, so we don't waste folks time. What loans do you not do?

Bethany Johnson: That's a good question. We cannot fund, um, people who are wanting to like, buy a property and flip it. Good

Don: point.

Bethany Johnson: Um, good point. Uh, Yeah, there's different, Both, both of our federal programs don't allow that for the program.

Okay.

Don: That's good.

And that's big cuz people, I think you're into that right now. Well know they were, It's pretty popular. Yeah. But all the shows on tv, I can do that. Let me go to SCKEDD Exactly.

Not for that one.

Bethany Johnson: For that one. Excellent. We can do a little bit of refinancing, but some of our programs are restricted to certain situations, so, um, it's, it's not a no, but it's just we have to be a little more, um, limited on how much we can do on

Don: that.

So on the SBA loans, you, you team up with sba, right? Or you

Bethany Johnson: Yeah. Um, we are an SBA lender, so we handle their three of their different loan programs.

Don: I'm trying to remember, there's a seven a loan and a,

Bethany Johnson: there's a micro

Don: loan program Micro, and that's 50,000 less or something like that.

Bethany Johnson: Okay. Yes. And then we have a seven, a program called Community Advantage.

And it's uh, can do loans from however small up to, I think we're, I think the max is 250 or 300,000. Okay. Yeah. And then our SBA 5 0 4 program is when, where we would partner with the bank. 5 0 4. That's, Yeah. And that can go a lot larger into the millions of dollars project. Okay.

You do all of

Don: those? Yep.

Look at you. Okay.

Excellent. So they need some content. Wear

Ebony: a lot of hats. Johnson ,

Bethany Johnson: they'll probably wanna talk to Na Sano. Oh, okay. They'll, if they're first calling. Yeah. Or Tyler Ward. They're both our, do a lot of the initial intake. I deal with more of the five oh SBA 5 0 4 limb closing. You use the. Yeah.

Yeah. But I've worked in the Monzy smaller site for a long time before that. That's awesome. Yeah. And if you see

Ebony: Don's name just automatically

Don: I've,

Yeah.

Excellent. Excellent. This is awesome. I'll go ahead. I was just wondering what's going on at your booth? You giving away anything free?

Bethany Johnson: I'm asking for Ebony. Yeah, there's some pins, there's some magnets. Yeah, there's some lot of fliers and brochures, so, yeah. Come on by. I think there's some COSles. Yeah.

Ebony: Yeah. And you guys, are you on social?

Bethany Johnson: Yes, we're on Facebook and Instagram. And how do they find

Ebony: you? Is it just SCKEDD or do they have to type the full name or?

Um,

Bethany Johnson: I think you can just type scud. Okay. Yeah. S C K

E

Ebony: D. All right. You heard it here. S C K E D D. We should told like a chance, like like a chair.

Don: That's just don't sing. I mean, I'm good with all that.

She needs

Ebony: a song

Don: was That's that. . . .

Like they say, you can't unhear that.

Ebony: They want to hear it. I

see more viewers looking

Don: right now. . Nice, Nice. We appreciate you coming through,

Beth. Thank you. No, thank you. It was so good to meet you [00:20:00] both today. Nice

Ebony: meeting you.

Yes. Good luck over there. Have fun. You too.

Don: I'm the next victim that's here.

Hi Ebony.

What's up John?

Oh, do I need to leave ?

John Schwartz: Hi Don Sherman. John Schwartz. Nice to meet you. Is Ebony a friend? Me and Ebony go way back. Go

Don: back. Y'all went to Southeast junior high?

Ebony: Not that, not that far. First of all,

uh, don't talk about, Oh, did I like that? Yes, you did. that just slipped out. Uhhuh.

Don: Brian, can you cut?

That's already

out there. I'm sorry.

Ebony: So friends, we are here with like, truly one of my homies, . So John, tell us who you are

and what you do.

John Schwartz: Uh, my name is John Schwartz and I actually own Wichita Shredding. So, yeah, you know, I got, uh, uh, ran a shred company down in Texas for a while and when I moved back here I got tired of working for other people.

So I figured I'd do it for myself this time.

Ebony: So isn't that something just tired of working for other people and like, you know what, I'm gonna open up a.

John Schwartz: Absolutely. I work harder than everyone else around me, so I may as well be the boss.

Don: I hear you. Hey, I know that feeling. Yeah. them down too. The thing is getting me right now.

Oh, well

Ebony: you see how I get treated. I want this be documented

Don: it. So

where, where are you located?

How did

John Schwartz: We are actually in North Wichita. Okay. Um, and, you know, we do allow people to come do drop offs, but most of our stuff is business to business. So we, you know, we leave lock containers with our, our, uh, clients and then go and collect the documents usually once a month or couple times a month from 'em.

Ebony: So I like that.

So how do they, um,

contact you?

John Schwartz: Um, couple different ways. So we actually, you know, it's easy to go to our website, find my email address, uh, but they can also call us uh, at eight six nine two two one five. One more time. What is it? 8 6 9 2 2 1 5. And set your direct line. It kind of is actually.

So I haven't, So, you know, I started my business with a firm belief in customer service, considering I'm in the service industry. Yeah. And so it rings my, uh, front desk where my office manager sits, and then it actually rings my cell phone at the same time. So if I notice there's too many rings happening and I can assume she's on the other line or busy.

Right. And then, uh, and then I'll pick up the phone to make sure that we get the best service for our customers.

Ebony: I love that. And what size businesses do you work with

John Schwartz: all across the board? You know, I, I work with people who need to see me every other month with one of my routine schedules. I work with people, businesses that come in and drop off of one or two boxes a year.

And then I have people that need to have me on a routine schedule once a week. And then, um, also people do huge purges. Like next week I'm doing a big purge that's about 700 boxes. Oh my gosh. To be shredded. So it's. It's big, small, whatever it is in between, we're gonna take care of everybody. And when did you start in

Don: business

John Schwartz: with Charles Shredding?

Uh, I started about five years ago. Okay. And I bought out a couple of my competitors through the pandemic. You know, they were kind of towards their retirement age anyway. And I think the pandemic just kind of spooked 'em and, and, and, uh, so I went ahead and bought them out and uh, you know, I think I scared my wife a couple times with them.

Ah, I'm sure you did. Showed her the size check we needed to get ready. So, uh, but she's happy, She's a big supporter in what I do, so it's been great. But you were in Texas? Yeah, so I used to run a company, a shred company down in Austin, Texas for about five years. Yeah. We killed it, killed the market. And so I moved back to Kansas and I decided I wanted to do it again, but for myself this time.

Okay. So, so I started spending a lot of money mm-hmm. . And then after a while I started making some So excellent. ,

Don: after a while was shredding when you, you come to Wichita said, Look like there's a void in shredding, or how did that come about? ?

John Schwartz: Well, when I looked at the market, I did see some local competition.

I assumed they were probably great companies and they all were right. Um, but then of course I

saw the big national guys, and we all know how that works with the big national companies. You know, they always start kind of falling a little short on customer service and their operations. And so I've, you know, made an educated guess that if I got into the market, I could do pretty well.

So, uh, between buying out my local competitors and then competing against the big national guy that, uh, you know, those things have kind of fallen to the wayside. Um, we've had tremendous growth year over year with what we've done. Nice. And that's both in, in the avenue that we, uh, do primarily, which is our, our blood, which is document shredding.

But now I've actually expanded into other complimentary services. I do, uh, secure document storage. I do hard drive [00:25:00] shredding and electronics recycling. As well.

Don: Wow. Wow. So, so you, I'm sorry. So you're here. Why are you here? I mean, you got all this going on, but you here

John Schwartz: at the expo? Yeah, so we, we actually, uh, did our first booth last year.

Okay. Um, I've attended for several years just as an attendee. Uh, finally go in and, you know, uh, forked over some money to, to do a booth. Um, and we just did one of the little 10 by tens and we had great success. We love, you know, just chatting with everybody that's coming in, networking with all the people that attend, uh, the other exhibitors.

And actually I had a lot of success with gaining some business from last year. So this year I'd went ahead and stepped it up, got a bigger booth, I'm on the red carpet. Yeah. I, uh, brought one of my big paper bas for everybody to see, and I tried my best to not scatter paper all over the place, , but, uh, yeah, I mean, it just brings in business.

It's good to, to meet other like-minded business owners and entrepreneurs. And then, You know, of course people who are attending this usually are a lot of times are, uh, you know, purchasing managers or other business owners, office managers, things like that. So they're the people that I want to talk to all come into one place.

Don: Excellent.

Ebony: Yeah. Well he has this big bill of just like shredded paper and uh, you're supposed to guess how much it weighs, right?

John Schwartz: Yeah. So we, uh, are putting a little contest out there just for some fun, cuz everybody asks what happens with the paper? Do you burn it? Do you incinerate it? Do you donate it to an animal shelter for bedding?

And you know, we actually recycle everything that, that we bring in. Wow. And so, uh, we bail these into really big, large bales. I can't say the weight on it right now cause we're actually doing

the contest and I'm going to win. Ebony says she's gonna win. Um, but uh, yeah, so anybody that comes in and, and guess is the closest to the weight's actually, uh, gonna get a gift card to George's, uh, French Beast.

That's one of my favorite. Yeah, my wife and I love that place. So. So, um, yeah, so it was fun to drag that thing in. We got a lot of people staring at us as we were dragging a big bale through the, through the expo hall here.

Ebony: That is fun. So you started off with like a small little booth last year, had great success, gained new business, decided to go on the red carpet and now you're like just making a mess.

Just making, Well I did see a trail, .

Nice. Nice.

A paper trail, but no, that, this is pretty awesome. Uh, you know, and it's really exciting to see you do well and you know, find your purpose and um, make all this money love. That's the goal. That is

Don: the goal. I need a loan. . Oh my God. That's my next question. It always comes around in Ebony.

He does know

it. Always . He's fully aware. Excellent. But no, thank you so much for being here today. Absolutely. Thanks for coming.

John Schwartz: Absolutely. It's blast. Thank you for your time. Do

Ebony: you

bet. Well, we're gonna take a break for a few minutes while we topo. Excellent. Yes. And we're gonna go find some more people to have conversations with.

What's up, friends? We're back. Guess who I found as I was walking down the red carpet? Hello. Hey. So tell us who you're, what do you do?

Tara Clary: I am Tara Clary. I am the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for High Touch. What do they do? Oh, , all manner of technology solutions. What do you need?

Ebony: Nice. What do you need?

I love that.

Tara Clary: So whether you need managed, uh, it, cybersecurity, business communications, uh, custom software development. We also do website design. We have two proprietary POS systems. One in rent, own one in hospitality. So a whole lot of technology,

Ebony: a whole lot of techno. Now do you develop this, um, technology yourself?

Tara Clary: You Oh, no. No. They don't let me do that. They don't let me do that part. You wouldn't want me to either. No.

Ebony: So, no, that's pretty dope. Um, from cyber to creating, you know, personalized software for businesses. Yeah. And what size business do you help?

Tara Clary: So really small to medium size businesses are our bread and butter.

Okay. You know, a lot of what the Chamber of Commerce here locally gets to. That's the people that we are really trying to reach.

Ebony: I love that. Yeah. I love that. So how many years have you guys been a part of. Uh, Expo.

Tara Clary: So this is my seventh expo at High Touch Technologies, and my understanding is that we were actually part of Expo for a number of years prior to that.

I was just chatting with some folks over in our booth and we have been in the same booth spot, I think for a decade at least. Oh, very nice. We signed that dotted line as soon as we can.

[00:30:00] You have a, A prime that we do. Yeah. That's awesome.

Don: Excellent. So why would you encourage folks to come through here today?

No.

Tara Clary: First and foremost, being a part of the Chambers really meaningful to our business. You know, there's great connections here. You're always meeting other business owners who may be able to help you and your business or that you may be able to provide solutions to. And really just getting to know other people in the community.

Um, it's really important for us to kind of get out and meet the neighbors and make sure we know what's going on. So it's a great day of camaraderie and to really continue to learn about the community and how we fit in.

Don: Excellent. And you've. I mean, you guys been in the community a lot. Why is that so important to High Touch?

Tara Clary: Being part of the community is super important to High Touch. We are an ESOP company, which means that we are an employee owned company. Mm-hmm. . Um, so every employee at High Touch actually has a true stake in our business and a stake in our success. I love that. And it's important for us to make sure we are investing in the communities that are giving back to, to us, um, so beneficially, um, our folks really, uh, wanna see us invest here in our own community and we are happy to do that.

Ebony: Who do you serve? Like is it all over Wichita? Is it the state of Kansas? Is it Missouri?

Tara Clary: We've got clients all over the state of Kansas. Uh, we also have offices in Denver, Colorado, Kansas City, Missouri. And then, Dallas, Corpus Christi and San Antonio, Texas. So we are regional. Yeah. Yeah, that's right. And then our rent to own point of sale, which is really the foundation of our business.

High Touch has been around for nearly 40 years now. That's where we got our start. And we have clients in the rent to own business nationwide and in Mexico.

Ebony: Did you know that Don didn't?

I didn't know that part. Wow.

Don: Yeah.

See dropping all I know. She always

Ebony: does. That's how she comes in and rolls. Wow. Got the nuggets of knowledge.

So how can a business reach you?

Tara Clary: You can reach us. You'll find us online@hightouchtechnologies.com. That is the easiest way to find us. You can hop open your phone, find us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter. We are all over. We've also had a lovely building at Douglas and Maine.

Just can help but see it.

Lovely, right?

Don: What about,

Tara Clary: No, not

on I, The, I know what

Ebony: you need to get marketing person

and we're

Tara Clary: not on, we are not on. Am

I a dancer?

Don: Oh,

Tara Clary: don't me. Don't tempt me

Don't tempt me. I'm a music theater kid though, so you're probably more likely to get a box step in jazz. Oh, I love that. Is that like a

Don: kickball chain too?

Tara Clary: Yes, I can do a kickball change. Gosh, would you like to see?

Don: Have a daughter . Oh my

God. That's funny. I bet you have a mean kickball chain shuffle step, huh?

It would be brutal like it was then.

It's brutal to watch.

Ebony: Well, thank you for stopping by. We really appreciate you.

Tara Clary: Absolutely. Thank you for having me. Thanks for all that you guys do for the chamber, so appreciate you. Of course.

Don: Good to see you, Tara, too. All right,

Ebony: well enjoy. So come on over and

Don: see us. The next victim is coming through here,

Ebony: right? We have Chris. So is Chris. That

sheer not. Sure. No, what is it? What's your last name?

Don: Batcheller. That's what I was just like, I'm trying

say like Shane, right? Shane's last name is,

She went to Southeast High. I know there's an issue there, but I'm knew it

Chris Batcheller: was Ella.

Well, I grew up in Massachusetts, so I butcher everybody's name,

Chris French: so don't feel bad.

Don: Excellent. Oh, she's quiet now. Now I'm not talking to Didn't anyone I didn't miss you might be in trouble later.

Ebony: All gonna be good for a live podcast when I'm not talking to anyone.

They're all getting into silence.

Thank you for coming over.

Chris Batcheller: Well thanks for having me.

Ebony: Yeah. Tell us a little bit about who you are and what you do.

Chris Batcheller: Yeah, so I'm with Check Six Creative Studios and we do marketing and video production.

Ebony: That's what's up.

Yeah. He has the bright lights back there.

Chris Batcheller: Oh yeah. We got all the fun toys.

Ebony: All the fun toys.

So how long you been in business?

Chris Batcheller: Uh, so I've been in business about two years now. Okay. And, uh, we're really try and focus on that higher end video production work. And, uh, we do marketing and

marketing strategies. So help people out with social media, digital marketing, print marketing, all those sorts of things.

Ebony: I love that. Yeah. And you, this is your first year here at the Expo? First year at the expo, absolutely. Okay, wonderful. Well, this is awesome. This is great exposure for you. Have you been able to meet some really awesome people?

Chris Batcheller: I have, yeah. There's been a lot of people coming by and, uh, just a lot of folks that, that I, you know, knew and didn't know and, and it's been fun and talking with everybody, just, I love how there's such a variety of different things here in the business community and, uh, getting to see what everybody does is really awesome.

Don: Did you say this is your first expo? First expo here and you've been in business two years or 10 years? Uh, two years. Wow. You're pretty smart. Cookie. Well, just two years. You've only been in business two years and you're already at the expo your second [00:35:00] year.

Chris Batcheller: Well, you know, we know a good opportunity when we see one,

Don: so, Yeah.

So what was the, what was the pivot point that made you. I'm gonna do it this year.

Chris Batcheller: Well, I really like how this is a business to business expo and for my business, you know, we deal with a lot of businesses. Um, we're really not a business to consumer, you know, type brand. So we're really business to business.

So this, this fits really well with our marketing niche.

Don: Excellent, excellent. So when you're here, what are you trying to do? What's, what's the number one priority you're trying to do?

Chris Batcheller: So, for me, it's a couple of things. You know, number one, I want to bring awareness to my brand, right? I want to let people know that I'm here, I'm a new member to the Chamber.

So I'm looking forward to getting involved with a lot of different groups that the Chamber has. And this is, you know, of course, a good way to meet people and, and recognize 'em when you go to those events. Uh, so that's, you know, sort of the first thing. And the other thing is, you know, kind of on the other side, I wanna walk around and see what businesses are here and, you know, see how we can help them.

Because ultimately, as a marketing and video production company, that's what we do, is we help businesses. And I love coming up with creative ways to help businesses. And, uh, and, and

really that's, A lot of fun. So part of what I'm doing here is, you know, walking around trying to figure out, see where we can be helpful to other places and, and other businesses and, and just bring value to our customers.

Don: So you have, Oh, sorry, go ahead. No, go ahead.

Ebony: It's a full production company, right? So, so tell us a little bit of some of the offerings you have

Chris Batcheller: for Yeah, so I mean, we do anything, uh, you know, marketing related. So I have, uh, freelancers I use for graphic design, uh, websites, social media marketing. Um, we actually do social media management.

I, I do a large non-profit that's a national non-profit right now. Uh, and so really any, any marketing needs that a company has, uh, we can even build like displays and things like that for, for trade shows. Oh wow. We're really, you know, we're, we're kind of, uh, you know, whatever you need, we'll figure out how to get it done kind of thing.

Um, I, my background is in engineering and so, uh, you know, I like to solve problem. And, uh, recently just completed a master's degree in media psychology, which is Oh wow. Really the psychology behind how marketing works. So I get really, you know, in the how do we, how do we take a concept and how do we make it, uh, work with different groups or different people?

How do we get people to respond to different ideas? How do we get ideas across all that sort of stuff?

And

Ebony: that's a huge swing from an engineer. Yeah, that's where I was . I mean, so we work for an energy company, which means we have a billion engineers.

Chris Batcheller: Oh, you go. Lots of, I hope you do. Cause

I want my power to go.

Ebony: And so when I come across a creative engineer mm-hmm. , that is, you know, remarkable.

Chris Batcheller: We're kind of a special breed, but I love problem solving. And, you know, I, I originally was gonna do like an MBA and I was like, Oh, you know, mba, there's a lot of MBAs out there. So I wanted to do something that was really unique and I had spent, um, some time before I started this company doing marketing for a company that I work for.

And I really enjoyed it. And then I went back to engineering. So it's like, you know, I want to do something marketing related. Uh, and I wanted to do, you know, something that wasn't just a generic marketing degree. I wanted to specialize a little bit. So that's what's up. Uh, yeah, so it, so mechanical, uh, civil, aerospace, aerospace, being Wichita.

Ebony: I, but we have the other.

Chris Batcheller: We do. Yeah. And they're all important. Everybody has a job to do. Yeah.

Ebony: So from, uh, aerospace engineering to creative chief Creative officer of Check six Studio.

Chris Batcheller: Yep.

Chris French: Check six Creative Studios

Don: with, uh, Master's in Media Psychology. I don't think I've, Is that what it was? That's it.

Chris Batcheller: You got it right. You never heard of that? Oh, that's awesome. It's actually pretty brand new field. The, the degree itself's only about 10 years old. Okay. Uh, and they just started doing PhDs in it. So there's a, Whoa, a research side of it, which those are the folks that you see on TV talking about like media and the VI and violence.

So, you know, violence and video games and those sorts of things. Uh, the, the track that I did was the master's track, which is more application based. So really

taking those, uh, you know,

those ideas and those concepts and how do we apply them, uh, to a customer project, Right. And get the most Monzy bang for the buck out that

project.

Ebony: That's what, so well, thank you for stopping by today.

Chris Batcheller: Well, thank you for having me.

Don: It's a pleasure meeting you. One last question, and this is for Ebony's benefit. What are you giving away free down there?

Chris Batcheller: I have business cards right now. , I give you all the free business cards you want.

Don: Nice, Nice. Thanks for coming through.

Chris Batcheller: My thanks. Appreciate. Thank you.

Ebony: It's, it's great. I've

never met, Can you hold on? Oh,

Don: man. She brought,

Yes, we have, I have yummy treats for you guys. What? Yes. Okay. She didn't say it was time. It's time. I just want the sweet time is time. I am going have,

Ebony: and they're.

Don: We're gonna get fired. was ice. You get fired on your first day or something like

Nicole Williams: that? No. Oh my God. Welcome. Yeah. Thank you. [00:40:00] Thank you for having me. Bet. Who are you? . We got, let's, Okay. I am the Nicole Williams. I'm the, the owner of NCredibly Sweet. The experience of incredible Edible, Gourmet Sweet Treat.

Wow. Yes. That's exciting. So how long have you been in business? So I have been in business almost eight years now. Yes. Located where? So I'm located in Andover. I have a home based business there. I am venturing out to get a space, a brick and mortar or a truck in the near future. Okay. Okay. So I'm excited, excited about that.

Don: You should be. Yep. Excellent. I'm sorry, I'm all up in your cup.

Nicole Williams: Go. That's good. No, that's, Or

Don: we're, we're

Nicole Williams: live and so I can't eat. Right,

Ebony: Right. So hopefully get an a truck or brick and mortar coming soon. Definitely. Um, will you hire Don to drive the truck?

Nicole Williams: Cause , You know what, Don, you can drive the truck if you want to. Thank you. I will drive the truck. Excellent. No problem at all. So

Ebony: what type of, uh, deals do you, who do you look for?

Who do

Nicole Williams: you cater to? How do we, So actually I cater to everybody and the reason why I cater to everybody is because everybody loves sweets. That's true. We have sweets for every occasion. It is a celebratory thing for you to have a cake, for you to have cupcakes. For you to have gourmet caramel popcorn as favors any of those popcorn as well?

I do. I actually have some gourmet caramel popcorn here today. I have five flavors. Okay. Where's your booth located? My booth located. I'm asking for evidence. 9 29 all the way in the bag. That's right Next to chicken and pickle. Okay. . So

Ebony: tell us what all you offer And we know the popcorn. We know the cupcakes.

Yes.

Nicole Williams: So what flavors too? So actually that is our lemon deluxe. Oh, I love lemon. And then we have the strawberry deluxe. Mm-hmm. . Um, that's just a few of our cupcake flavors for our popcorn flavors. I actually wanted to create flavor. Um, that were delicious that would sustain the weather. Cuz when I first started out I actually specialized in chocolate covered strawberries.

Oh, okay. And on your logo. Exactly. Exactly. So that's where it originated from, from the chocolate covered strawberries. But once I started doing the events, I figured out that I needed something that can sustain the weather and could have a longer shelf life that was not as perishable as the strawberries.

Okay. Strawberries are very delicate. Mm-hmm. and so I have to treat them as such. Yeah. Okay. And so when I started developing my flavors for the uh, strawberry caramel popcorn, I have the banana butter rum. And those flavors are so distinctive because I actually put freeze dried fruit in each bag Oh wow.

Of the popcorn. So the banana butter rum will have, uh, banana chips. And the strawberry will have strawberry, uh, freeze dry slices on the inside. Yes. I also have the zebra pop, which is our classic gourmet caramel popcorn with a white chocolate drizzle and a milk chocolate, chocolate drizzle. Oh my delicious.

A

Ebony: I'm hungry too. This is that time. I was trying to look at my phone to see. It's noon.

Nicole Williams: It's, she's

Don: getting hangry. And have you been around Ebony once? She's hang, It's not a good site.

It's not

Nicole Williams: a good site. Okay.

Don: Help me understand. Yes, That's for Ebony's benefit as well. Mm-hmm. . How do you eat this? I mean, so some folks

Nicole Williams: just eat it.

Okay. So there's a few ways that I discover that you can eat a cupcake. Okay. The mini cupcake, you can just pop the top, pop the top, pick it up, pick it up, peel it up, peel it up, and pop it in it, pop it. Pohto, Pohto, pop. Pohto Pohto.

Exactly. I love that. Exactly. Nice. The other way, the standard cupcake, some people love to make that into a sandwich. So what they do is they, they take it and they peel the paper off and they put the icy in the middle and eat it as a sandwich. Wow. Yeah. And also, if you don't wanna get anything dirty, you don't wanna get your hands dirty or your mouth, you can use the cute little.

Now that is, is that way too, That looked a

Don: little

Nicole Williams: bougie too. Oh it is. I And that's totally ok.

Ebony: That's OK with me. I'm bougie.

Nicole Williams: I'm down that excellent. So, well I appreciate

Ebony: you coming by and thank you for the delicious treats. So we

Nicole Williams: get a hold of you. So you can reach me at [00:45:00] www.NCrediblysweet.com or Instagram, NCredibly underscore sweet.

You can also find me at NCredibly Sweet LLC on Facebook. And you're in Andover? I'm in Andover, yes, I do deliveries. You do? I do. Cause I live in Andover and sometimes

Don: I want, I got a Hanking

Nicole Williams: for something. Well, you call me, I always have some popcorn on. Ooh. Not all the time. You heard to hear first y'all.

Always popcorn. Thank you for coming through. You're so welcome. Can I get my phone

number please? Yes. So you can gimme a call at (316) 491-1738. Are you Ont? I am on TikTok. Are you dancing? I'm not dancing. She's making I make the calendar. That's my job. Make that holiday nice.

Don: Oh my God, I've heard that before.

Thank you for coming through. You're so welcome. Oh

Nicole Williams: my. And remember, be incredibly sweet. Be incredibly. That was nice. I like you heard

Ebony: it here, right? We have our next

Nicole Williams: beat on the street. Uh, hey. Hey. How are you? We are well. How are you? I'm doing well.

Ebony: Oh, I love that. So tell us a little bit about who you are.

Ben Saucedo: Yeah. So I am Ben Saucedo. I'm with the Kansas Aviation Museum Here in Wichita? Yes. Oh, okay. Yeah. Just having fun hanging out here today at the. Uh, Expo. It's a lot of fun, a lot of great vendors. I love

Ebony: it. How many years have you been here at the expo?

Ben Saucedo: This is the second time that I've come. Okay, wonderful. So it's been a few years in between last time and this time.

So what do you do at the museum? So I'm the executive director there. Okay. So get to oversee everything that takes place out there and try to help get people out there. And where is there, Tell us where the museum is. Yeah, so the Kansas Aviation Museum is at 33 50 South George Washington Boulevard, which is 31st Street.

And about Oliver, um, there by Boeing and, or not Boeing, sorry. Spirit Now. Spirit and McConnell Air of McConnell Air Force Base. Yeah. So the easiest way, honestly, So people ask, So George Washington Boulevard, people know the town, the street. It's one of those diagonal ones. It was actually built by the city back in the 1920s to get people from the city core to the airport, which our building,

Don: The original airport?

Ben Saucedo: Yes. In Wichita. I did not know that. If you get on George Washington Boulevard and take it south, If you miss the museum, I don't know what to tell you because it is dead end, George Washington Boulevard. Dead ends at the museum.

Ebony: There you go. That's a little history for you. So why are you here today?

Ben Saucedo: Oh man.

It's always great to come out here and, and see what the chamber's doing. Uh, let's see what businesses are doing here and how we can be supportive of them. Cuz uh, that's really what it takes is working together. Yeah. And supporting each other. So coming out, learning what, who's out there, what they're doing, how can we help or how can we partner?

And uh, so that's, it's a lot of fun.

Ebony: Okay. Well I mean we need to get out to the museum. Yeah. So what's the exhibit right now? Sure.

Ben Saucedo: We have several right now that we, uh, that are in there that are permanent ones. We have, we, we just opened our Women of Aviation exhibit back in August. Okay. Wow. So just a little over a month ago.

We opened that one up. And tomorrow, Actually, I guess I'll tell you guys first cause we haven't announced it yet. Oh. Scoop. Am I right? Scoop alert. Tomorrow we'll be making a special announcement at the museum. For our next, our phase one renovation of inside the, the museum. There's gonna be four areas, and I won't tell you everything, but I, the one thing I'm super excited about is, uh, we are going to be, uh, renovating and creating the Rip Gooch Black Avis Exhibit inside the museum.

It's gonna be great. Rip. Yes. That's amazing. Rip is great. Rip was a member, a board, a member of the board of trustees for a number of years down there at the museum and was so supportive out there. In fact, we have his, uh, rounding airplane that he owned. Uh, Wow. When he was flying and in fact he came out on his 97th birthday.

So back during Covid on 20. In 2020 came out and he climbed up in the plane and

Ebony: I remember seeing the video of him having his birth. Yeah. That's pretty awesome.

Ben Saucedo: Yeah, he's, So we have that along with three other areas that we'll be unveiling tomorrow. Okay. For the public to see at two o'clock. So,

Don: And that's called the Rip Gooch, what

Ben Saucedo: Black Aviators exhibit.

Don: Nice.

Ben Saucedo: So we're excited by to

Ebony: see it. Awesome.

We appreciate you stopping by.

Ben Saucedo: Thank you both for what you're coming through. Definitely. Have a good one, you all too. Thanks. Take care.

Nicole Williams: All this. I hope

Don: some

Nicole Williams: into,

Van Williams: I know how to find the fun.

Don: We might have to. Can we cut this? Cause this might not go well. I'm just saying live with band.

It might not go well.

Van Williams: Hey, what are your ratings? Cause they're about to go up. .

Ebony: Here we are.

Don: Here we go. So good to see you too. Oh my god. Strangers. The Van Williams right here.

Ebony: This is our lucky. I mean, what can we, We've been blessed.

Don: They paid him something. They had to. They had to, If he would've

Ebony: known that we were a dancer.

Oh gosh.

Van Williams: Well, well somebody paid [00:50:00] me. It wasn't a chamber. Somebody did pay me.

Don: That's so good to see him. I mean, we go. Well, yeah. We go way back, back to the, uh,

Van Williams: Y'all go way back. Yeah. The African American Museum. Yep. Probably my days

at the Eagle. Yep. I might have interviewed you for something Yep. When you were doing radio or something.

And you and I, uh, remember heroes. That's right. That's right. I think you owe me forgetting you on the board. Oh,

Ebony: okay. Well, thank I'll give you . Nice. So what capacity are you here this time? You have so many hats.

Van Williams: Yeah. Yeah. Well, uh, I'm here to represent, uh, Youth Horizons. I am the Vice President for Strategic Communications and Mentoring at Youth Horizons.

Yes.

Don: Name. Did we say his name? I know we were

Ebony: happy to, I'm sorry. You say your name?

Van Williams: Van Van Williams. That's V as in Victor. Yes. Uh, uh, my, my oldest friends just call me V. V. Yep. So, so, but I'm here with Youth Horizons. Um, we've got three focus areas. We have a community mentoring program. Okay. Uh, where we match kids who tend to be from low income.

Homes or single parent homes. We match in with Christian mentors in the community because we're a faith-based organization. We have residential services program. We have a boys' home in Valley Center. Okay. And a girl's home we're about to open in a matter of weeks. Oh wow. In key height. And these are just gorgeous.

Don: That was, That's Scoop. Yeah, we're Yes, yes,

Van Williams: yes. We just got, Wow. We just got like a far marshal or state far licensing approval earlier this week. So we can start hiring people now. And we're hoping to have girls there in November. Wow. We got two homes. They'll be five girls in each home. And we have an administrative building and it's just gorgeous.

It looks like something off of hgtv. Oh wow. You gotta come on, check it out. Right. And then our boys' home is, um, 15 years old in Valley Center. We've got four, um, family style homes out there in administrative building. About 30, 30 boys out there. So we do community mentoring, uh, we do foster care, youth.

And then the third piece is what we're doing right now, advocacy. Okay. We need to raise awareness about our services and the needs of the youth and families in our programs.

Don: So that's, I take it, you led right into it. That's why you're here today. That's why I'm here today. What, what do you think, what are you aiming to gain by being here today?

I know that's your goal, but what Yeah. The different ways you're wanting to do that.

Van Williams: Great question. You used to be the journalist for me.

Don: No, no. I just learned from the best. Right? I just learned from the best.

Van Williams: So what I'm doing right now, Right. This is a great podcast, right? Mm-hmm. , it's got a brand in the community and people are hearing about what Youth Horizons does.

We're raising awareness about our ministry, our programs. So this is a great opportunity to do that. Uh, even for an introvert like me, I can come out and, you know, and find the energy for this. Exactly. I'm excited. Um, Uh, and then, um, you know, just connecting with people to see if we can collaborate. I just met a woman, a beautiful woman from the chamber, Jill Johnson.

Mm-hmm. . And we had been trying to expand our network of churches, and, and Jill told me she's gonna get me in over the St. Mark's. Oh, don't, Yeah. . So, so we need to find more partners to, to serve these precious young people and families who may be not as blessed as, you know, Van Williams and Don Sherman and Ebony.

You know what I mean? Yeah. So, um, this is a perfect platform to make those connections, to raise awareness and, and keep serving, serving the families that, that, uh, in our programs.

Don: Well, we're glad you're here because of course this is called a Wichita Business Expo, and people don't realize you can be a non-profits and roll up in here.

Yes. So, excellent. Excellent. Yes.

Ebony: I love that. Well, I, I mean, I think you explained everything that I wanted to know. I'm just thankful that you said yes and you came over here. Exactly.

Van Williams: Well, it's gonna cost you.

Don: Does it always Do I get that all time? I gotta buy a lot. .

Van Williams: I'm so glad I saw

you folks. You know what I'm for being here.

Don: You just, did you just, uh, build your corporate office or build a new corporate office?

Van Williams: Good question. I'm glad you brought that up. We have a new home office in downtown, in Old Town. Yes. We're at the corner of, uh, Douglas and Washington. Just west of me's. Right. If you're in me's, you look West there. We are.

We are. Yeah. Yeah. We used to be, uh, farther up. Douglas moving toward East High. Mm-hmm. . But yeah. Great. New facilities. Uh, come visit us sometime. We'll give you a tour. Okay. I wanna thank you two. I see the work you do in the community. I see it on Facebook. I see it on his podcast. I hear it. Word of mouth and I know you.

Get thank yous, but you probably don't get it enough. So thank you for the work you're doing in the community.

Don: No, you

Ebony: been, It's really nice by Van. You, you're doing something right. I'm done. It's a wrap [00:55:00]

Don: to see you. I'm follow up with a lunch, a coffee or something. We're gonna do that. We'll do late October.

Van Williams: Thank you. Like what you guys are doing over

Don: it is what it is. Come on over. Come on. Hi Marilyn. How are you? Nervous. Don't be nervous. Don't let Ebony scare you. She's, Oh no, she's really I'm

Ebony: the face. Yeah, you're definitely that smile. I could see that. Thank you. Don't do that. Yeah. She's so cute. Well,

thank you.

We're so excited to have you here with us. Thank you. Thank you. Glad to be here. Yes. So, Marilyn, tell us who you are and what you do. My

Marilyn Lee: name is Marilyn Lee and I'm with Scott Rise Commercial Products and Apparel. So I put logos on anything that will stand still long enough. So anyway, um, our. My main business is working with other businesses and finding, um, products and things that work for them and their clients.

So I've been over in this, this business for over 25 years. So I've really good relationships with our suppliers. Yeah. And also our local people we give, uh, special pricing to as well. Okay. I'm more like a consultant and finding, you know, wonderful need products for people. Nice. And we also have, uh, Scott Rice Office Interiors and Office Plus as part of our company.

Ebony: Where's that at? Douglas and Alice? It's that, it's that

Marilyn Lee: we're, well, we're actually downtown on Broadway and Douglas Broadway in Douglas. Oh, not Broadway. Um, Ellison.

Ebony: Yeah, Douglas

Don: and s Yeah, yeah. Right, right north of our Connect facility. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. Excellent. Okay. Excellent. Well see. See how you run into

Ebony: folks The world.

Yes. All live tv, . I love that.

Marilyn Lee: And of course the Chamber, um, we've been involved and I have for years and on the committee, you know, for this. Right. And, uh, the chamber here is amazingly, uh, business oriented and helping the local people. Right. Um, they're all so talented and caring, which is what I love. And of course this expo is just a highlight of one of the things that they do, but it's, I think having business to business mm-hmm.

people is exciting because everybody wants to be involved with each other and learning about the other companies, and especially these local

Don: companies, so. Excellent. So you would highly recommend folks coming to this, uh, business expo? Oh, absolutely. And how many years have you been coming?

Ebony: Well,

Marilyn Lee: I'd say forever.

Ebony: you've been here since the beginning? Yeah, the beginning. Excellent.

Marilyn Lee: And I'm on the committee too, so then I really have to Yeah. Yeah. Awesome. And you know, one time I said to someone, even if nobody came, just we, all the businesses, there's enough business here for. Exactly.

Don: I know. Exactly. Yeah.

Ebony: Wow.

That's cool.

I, I love that. So, as a committee member, you know, what have you been doing to, uh, get the

word out or engage new businesses to be a part of the committee?

Marilyn Lee: Well, fortunately, since we're, you know, in business and I work with people, you know, it's so easy to tell 'em about the expo and about the chamber as well.

Yeah. Because it's a, of course, the expo is the chamber, but I think that they, it's, it's just such an exciting group to work with. Mm-hmm. , you know, they're bright and. Understand business and you know, and personally caring about people. They're not just selling. So that's really important to me.

Don: They're good people.

Ebony: Where's your booth at? Yeah.

Marilyn Lee: Um, it's over there. Over there. I know where the networking zone is. Oh. Oh, okay. Those are all our office furniture and then our booth is right by That makes sense.

Ebony: I saw all of the office furniture.

Don: I didn't get over there yet. I gotta get over there.

Marilyn Lee: So we had a great big truck that brought all the furniture in and um, and then our booth is right by it.

Don: Okay. For Ebony's benefit. You got any freebies?

Marilyn Lee: Yes. Oh, well, yes, of course. S . Okay. Yeah. You gotta come by and I'll come by and get something for her. Okay. Definitely, definitely. Yeah. Yeah. But we, I think that's part of the not you two are in, what kind of business are you? I work

Don: at Evergy. Oh, you do? She works sometime at Evergy.

Okay. No, Ebony works hard at Evergy. Thank you. That's good. I had to clean that up cuz I would get it . But, uh, no, we both work at Evergy, so. Oh, great. That's a great call. She's in charge of economic development. I'm in charge of making people happy.

Marilyn Lee: Well, just give me a call and we'll get together and find unique products for you.

Don: And see this was a, this was live on tv, on how you get business. This is how you get business, this is how it's done. Just [01:00:00] like she did it. Thank

Marilyn Lee: you for coming through. The neat thing I think is, you know, when, when I'm able to find products and things for the people and they're happy about it, it's such a good feeling.

Yeah. You know that it's really, it's not just stuff. Correct. It's things that are gonna really work in your business and. Be beneficial for you.

Don: Excellent. Excellent.

Ebony: And how do we get ahold of you? Yes. Use

Marilyn Lee: websites. Um, I have a business card that I can drop off.

Nicole Williams: Please do. Mm-hmm. for can see it. You can go

Marilyn Lee: to, uh, Scott.

Oh. You can go to Scott Rice Commercial Products and Apparel. Okay. Or office. Yeah. Right. And find us. We're, and we're right downtown, so it's very easy to, to drop. Do you do social media? Uh, no.

Don: Not really. So Tik Toks outta the question. No, Facebook.

Marilyn Lee: No. I love, well I do. Um, because, you know, people around me are younger, do a lot of that, so Yeah.

Ebony: Yeah. and That's awesome. You need to check out dot either.

Don: I don't do it, but you need to check out her TikTok tot Okay.

She can dance. She can dance. She can't sing, but she can dance.

Marilyn Lee: Oh, I love to dance. We can dance together.

Ebony: Yes. Let's do it.

Marilyn Lee: I love it. I actually, I do, I have, um, a horse. And ride dressage to music.

We, we, they're, So it's like music and horses dancing. Yeah.

Ebony: Oh wow. Yeah.

Don: Excellent. Well, thank you for coming through. You're welcome. Nice to meet you too.

Marilyn Lee: You too. And work with you again. And thanks for being here and inviting me. You bet. So you made me more relaxed.

Ebony: Yeah. Now that I'm a TV star, I

Don: Yeah. You all over.

Yeah. You're all over the world now, so I'm sorry. It is what it is. ,

Marilyn Lee: my husband will be so surprise.

Can't wait to show him. Just,

Don: And the deal is, it'll live forever there

Marilyn Lee: again. I, I know. Excellent. Well, well, at least he won't ever get bored.

Ebony: That's true.

Marilyn Lee: That's true. Well, thank you again for inviting me. And do come over and Yeah,

Don: we're neighbors now.

We'll come through, see what you're doing. We're in the red building to the south of you guys. We're putting in a new, what we call Everygy Connect. It's a walk-in. Center. Oh

Marilyn Lee: really? You need to, I

Don: think you needed to do that. Yeah, we're, yeah, we're working on that, so. Okay. Uh, we should open soon, so Good. Not too soon though.

But, but we will be around the corner from you, so we'll stop right across the parking lot. You look at, look at your back parking lot. Building is ours. Oh, right there.

Marilyn Lee: Oh, that's where you are when you're, And you're planning those.

Yep. Cool things in the front. Yep. Oh, I love that. That would be us.

Don: Oh, we are neighbors. Yeah. She put us, Yeah, she put us with Cool. I like that. Yeah. I love that .

Ebony: We'll see you

soon. Take care. Thank you. You bet. Yay. Let's see, guys, we of course we're here. You know how you, and we're ready to go. Lets here. Every rolling into purple as she does. Jennifer

McDonald. It's not K State, which is a beautiful thing.

It is a K State purple.

Jennifer McDonald: It definitely power Cat K state purple.

Don: No, no, it's okay.

Ebony: So welcome.

Jennifer McDonald: Thank you for having me. It's good to see you both. .

Ebony: How you doing?

Jennifer McDonald: I am doing well. Excellent. Excellent. Yes. Enjoying the expo. Such a great turnout today.

Ebony: Oh my gosh. We've met so many people. Seeing people we haven't seen like in forever.

Yeah. I mean it it feels

amazing.

Jennifer McDonald: It does. It really does. Just to reconnect. Yeah.

Ebony: Yeah. And meet new folks too. True. You've been meeting new folks at your booth?

Jennifer McDonald: I have. Okay. Yeah. Excellent. It's amazing. So, you know, Jenny Don Sellers has been around for six years, but it's amazing how many people have never heard of us.

Ebony: Wow. That's crazy. Isn't, Yeah. Yes.

Jennifer McDonald: Who may know a little bit, but not a lot. So it's fun to kind of share what we do with everyone here today.

Don: Yeah. Excellent. So, I mean, you've been, you've been all over the media. I, I'm sure you have paid media, earned media, all that, but help people understand why. Are you still here today?

Yes. I mean, seems like you're, you're pretty exposed out there and people know you, but like you just said, people, some people don't.

Jennifer McDonald: So we find that word of mouth is our best form of advertisement. Okay. And so you have to be where the people are. And exposure brings in a large, diverse crowd of people.

Lots of different industries represented, lots of different companies, and then all that walk-in foot traffic. So they may not be a vendor, but they came in to meet the vendors that are here. And I find that one-on-one kind of personal contact where you get to share, you know, what we do and what we have to offer.

Goes a long way.

Ebony: Excellent. I agree. I love it. So where is your booth located? Yes. Do you have bottles over there, ?

Jennifer McDonald: So we do, I wanna say sample bottle samples.

Don: Oh my God.

Jennifer McDonald: We have our white and red sand R. So we're [01:05:00] booth number 3 0 1 and it's literally just like two rows over.

Ebony: Okay. All right, friends, come on down.

We're at Century two.

Don: Matter of fact, we're taking a break.

Ebony: We have to take a break. Ay Break . And we're going over to Jenny Dawn's booth. Yes.

Don: What's going on at Jenny Dawn's these days?

Jennifer McDonald: We have a packed calendar of events. Okay. So we update our website very frequently to let people know what we have going on, but just a few highlights as live music.

So we've always been a lover of live entertainment. So on Thursdays we have a DJ that comes in and does kind of hiphop r and b, you know, old school jams.

Ebony: Yes.

Jennifer McDonald: So that's a lot of fun. Nice. And then we continue to have jazz music. So I'm a huge lover of jazz and I feel like there's not a lot of venues that play it.

Right. Right. So, um, through the month of October, we'll have jazz on Fridays. Okay. Then in November through the rest of the year, we'll have it on Fridays and Saturday nights with the DJ on Thursday.

Ebony: You know, because, and I didn't mean to interrupt, but the jazz Right. It's real standard jazz. It's not, I mean, I'm okay with smooth jazz mm-hmm.

but it's not necessarily the smooth jazz, It's the standards. Their real life. When your grandpa used to be like,

Jennifer McDonald: Yeah, it takes you back. It does. It takes you back. I love it.

Don: Now you recently did you expand.

Jennifer McDonald: We did. So back in, tell us about that. April we expanded our footprint at Union Station. Mm-hmm. , which was such a big deal for us because we ran outta room.

Wow. We ran outta space to really serve our guests the way that we wanted to, as well as operate efficiently internally. Okay. So we found that we needed more space to make wine. Oh wow. So running outta wine and selling our wine too fast is still a problem.

Don: Oh wow. So our,

It's a beautiful problem, is not in the wine itself.

It's a problem.

Ebony: It's a problem.

Jennifer McDonald: So having more space to bottle our wine, store our wine, um, and make it is important. But then also that space is used as an event center so people excellent can rent excellent this space from us, um, during normal business hours. And so it's fun to partner with the community.

I mean, we've had every event under the sun. We've had, uh, proposals, engagement parties. We've had graduation celebrations, we've had bachelorette parties, corporate events, you name it, we've had it at the winery. And so that's a lot of fun.

Ebony: Leadership Wichita was just there. Oh, they were. That was so much fun.

It was a And her entrepreneurial story. That was great.

Don: Beautiful. Beautiful. So let's do what's on the horizon for jdc?

Jennifer McDonald: Yes. So we are excited about the holiday gifting season. Okay. So it is hard to believe that, you know, Thanksgiving, Christmas, all of that is around the corner. Yep. So one of the things that we're excited about is all of the gift baskets that we put together for people to come in and purchase for a loved one.

We do specialty labels. Got it. So if you have, you know, a company that wants to gift our wines for any occasion, we do that and then we just kind of have. You know, a lot of fun with our decorations and just making it festive for holiday parties and

Ebony: gatherings. Excellent. Sounds like the beef needs some wine.

Don: Yeah. .

But I'm talking about right now is are you two rolls over and to the right?

Jennifer McDonald: We are.

Don: Yeah. Thank you so much for being here. You're welcome. You're welcome.

Jennifer McDonald: Thanks for having me.

Ebony: One last time. Where are you located? Here at the Expo? Nope. In, How does the public come? Fine. Okay.

Jennifer McDonald: So we are located, um, downtown at Union Station at the south end of the building.

Mm-hmm. , so definitely drive through the parking lot. We have ample parking, so stop and come see us. Are you on TikTok? We are not, but I hear other people are posting our wines on TikTok. Oh, they

Ebony: they are,

Don: they are. Right. Well, you and Ebo need to be on TikTok to do something.

Ebony: That's, Can we bring you in too?

No, no. .

Don: Okay. Well you want viewers, so take me outta there. Thank you for coming in.

Jennifer McDonald: Thank you very much. All right.

Ebony: Well, friends, that's the end of our segment for today. We've had a wonderful time here at the Chambers Expo. We've met so many friends. We hope that you've enjoyed this time with us, and I hope you've enjoyed to hear all of the wonderful stories, uh, that we've heard today.

Don: Until next time, peace. We flipped it Nice.[01:10:00]