
*****NOTE: DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES, THE TRANSCRIPT IS MISSING THE FIRST FEW MINUTES. WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE.*****

Jaime Masters: Seven times the charm, right?

David Munson: Okay, so I've got my cell service on now.

Jaime Masters: Really?

David Munson: Yeah, that should do just fine.

Jaime Masters: Interesting.

David Munson: Yeah.

Jaime Masters: It's is better. I can't say anything it does seem louder.

David Munson: So it was the internet.

Jaime Masters: Interesting. I'm gonna roll with it. We're gonna do what we can do and see how this goes.

David Munson: Okay.

Jaime Masters: So I'll ask you the question again; we can go through and if it cuts out we'll figure it out later.

David Munson: Alright, fair enough.

Jaime Masters: So branding wise, how did you – like, your story as you went through, how did you even become the guy that decided to go create leather bags?

David Munson: So I was teaching English. I was volunteering down near Mexico City in this little town called – a big town called Mineralia, a really pretty town. And I was there for a year and I had to carry my school books. So I needed a book – I wanted a book bag like Indian Jones would carry. And of course he's a lot of people's heroes, most men, you know. So I go – everyone – my daughter is crazy about Indian Jones. So we go down – so I go down looking around and I couldn't find a bag like the one I had in my head. So I

found a guy making bags and said, “Hey, if I were to give you the design, could you make a bag for me?” and he said, “Yeah, yeah, sure.” So I sketched it out.

And I told him, you know, I want people to really want this after I’m gone, you know, kind of thing. I want it last a long time. So he made it, and man, everywhere I went with it people were going: oh, my gosh, where did you get that bag? All these tourist down in Mexico. Got back up to the states and people were tapping me on the shoulder four or five times a day, how can I get one of those bags? So I thought maybe there’s a business in this. So I moved back down to Mexico and I ended up – I was selling real estate for a couple of years. I had a Federale sent to kill me one time. There was just a whole lot of stories in this. I traded –

Jaime Masters: Indian Jones, what the heck?

David Munson: So I just –so I used to trade my Blues – Blue, I used to breed him. I stud him out and I would get a puppy for Blue’s services. And so he had to pull his own weight. So I used to trade my puppies for tacos with the taco guy.

Jaime Masters: Puppies for tacos, okay. I’m with yeah.

David Munson: So yeah, we got that going. But anyway, I ended up in Juarez, Mexico. I ended up sleeping on the floor with my dog Blue, an all black lab. And lived in just a rough part of town. It was \$100 a month, no hot water, um, slept on the floor. And it worked out. So all the money I was saving, which is a good lesson to entrepreneurs, save money. Do whatever you can, like live like no other, so you can live like no other. That’s what Dave Ramsey says.

Jaime Masters: Oh yeah, I’m a big Dave Ramsey fan. **[Inaudible] [00:03:13]**. When you were a \$100 a month guy on the floor, you had money, but you weren’t willing to spend it, or you didn’t have any money?

David Munson: No, whenever I got money because I would – what I used to do is I would go to the bus station, get the bags from this father and son that used to send them up to me on the bus. I’d take them over to El Paso and I would sell them on eBay. And then I would go back, I’d take the money and I would just deposit back into their bank account. I’d buy dog food. I’d pay my cell phone bill. I’d pay my rent. And then I’d put all the rest of my money back into the bank.

And then they would send me more bags, you know, I started off with like three or four bags, and then got to six or seven, and then I'd sell all those, 14 bags, and then I'd have to pay rent.

I'd go back to eight bags and then 20 bags eventually. And then I would pay rent and it just kept going like that. But that's one of the keys, if you have an extra car that's kind of a collector car, your motorcycle you ride on the weekends to Starbucks. You weekend warrior, you. And you want to get – or you have a jet ski or boat, sell it, get rid of it, and invest that money into your bus. And so that's what I did. Instead of spending all the money on rent in El Paso, I didn't. I spent it on bags. One time I got down to about \$19.00 in my bank account. And I remember thinking: well, a lot of people go without eating, so.

And I didn't have any money on the horizon for like three weeks, and no bags, anything. So I thought a lot of people go – I'll just go without food for three weeks. And I had a full bag of dog food. And I'll walk. I had a full tank of gas, but I thought I'd just ride my bike and walk and stuff. And nope, it worked out. I didn't have to do that, but I was – you know, I thought Jesus did it for 40 days. I can't do at least 21. And so I ended up – yeah, it got into situations like that, but that's all part of the story. And so nobody wants to follow someone who – who's daddy bought him a business. “Hey, daddy, daddy, I just finished school daddy.

And I want a business daddy.” “Oh, son, what would you like?” “I don't care daddy, just something.” And so his dad buys him a big old business. And okay, daddy, you know. And he's just a frat boy, no offense to frat boys, but you know that stereotypical one. No one likes that story, but people like a struggle story. And so I was – and so if you can share your story, unless you have a daddy who wants to give you a business, then you have a good story. And so what I say is share your story because other people are gonna say, “Hey, that guy is just like me. Wow, that's what I'm going through right now.”

And then they're gonna wanna – they're going to like you and they're going to want to buy from you. So share your story, no matter how bland or boring you think it is. Maybe you didn't get hunted down Federales or anything, but it's still a – you have a story that's gonna really resonate with people. And more than anything, I think that people like it when you open up and you're authentic. You know, people – yeah, I have a – I'm really real and

authentic, even on the website. I write with apostrophes as if I'm just speaking. I don't try to be too professional. And in some businesses that would be important to be professional, but not what I'm doing.

And people really appreciate it. Hey, this guy is real. Hey, if I had a bus I would do it just like that guy, just like that guy. So anyway, I just share my story. So anyway, 2006 – so it comes along 2006. I had been in Juarez for about three years. And I ended up meeting my wife. Well, in 2005 I was in Panama for something. And it was an internet café, and I was checking my MySpace account. And there was this really pretty girl and she was skinning a deer. I was like: oh, my gosh look at that picture. She was skinning a deer. And I thought: oh, that I'm sure is like ladies, for guys that's super cool. It's like better than any like lingerie picture or bikini, it's like gutting a deer is like fantastic, so at least for me.

Jaime Masters: Noted.

David Munson: Noted. Go kill something and have blood on your hands.

Jaime Masters: Deal.

David Munson: So yeah, we met and that really worked out, and just a few months later we got married. I was 35, she was 34 and never been married. And I got an amazing wife, seriously she is so cool. And so compassionate, seriously she makes us all look better. So if you're single, hold out for a really good one.

Jaime Masters: That skins deer, apparently.

David Munson: That skins deer, that's right.

Jaime Masters: Seriously you didn't wait awhile to get married. It's not like you waited that – you waited awhile in your lifetime, but once you knew she was the one and you were ready, you went after it.

David Munson: Yeah, once I had my business to the point that I knew I could support a family.

Jaime Masters: Which was what, like what are those numbers?

David Munson: I had sold \$75,000 that year. And so – which, you know, half of that's – I didn't know math or anything. I got a D minus in

accounting in college. And so yeah, I didn't make very much money, but to me that was a ton. I was like rolling in the dough. It was at probably \$30,000 or so. And then, you know, just take home or – because I was just by myself, just me and my dog and my dad. And he started helping me. But yeah, those were the numbers, but I thought I made \$75,000 because I sold \$75,000.

Jaime Masters: Yeah, I don't know where it is.

David Munson: I don't know where it is, but that's another lesson later. But anyway, yeah, that's – so I moved to San Antonio. We met, I drove down there and we really hit it off and I moved into this little apartment until we got married. It was real close to her house. And then she was so good at making me coming up with a plan. She didn't want to just fly by the seat of her pants anymore. She wanted an actual plan. And so I was like, "Well, let's move to Mexico." And she goes, "I'm not moving to Mexico." And I go, "But honey it will really help the business." She goes, "No, I'm not moving to Mexico. I'm staying at my job and I'm gonna retire from this job."

And so I gave her a plan. I wrote it out. Here's what's gonna happen. Here's what we're gonna do. Here are our objectives and here's what it's gonna bring in in income. And here are going to be the results of us moving to Mexico. And I had it typed out. I hopped in bed and I handed it over to her, and I just picked up my book and started reading. And sure enough, within about five minutes she said, "Okay, let's go to Mexico." And she quit her job. And because I was like, "Baby, two weeks isn't gonna cut with us for traveling, for like time off."

Jaime Masters: Seriously.

David Munson: Seriously. So now we do like three or four months a year where we're out of health house at least. So yeah, it really worked out. But having a plan, just guessing on a plan, really gets the other person onboard. And she really enjoys plans, and so that's super important is the plan.

Jaime Masters: I love this. The wife does help with everything. Man, this is great. How close were you to that plan, like when you actually started implementing it, were you pretty darn close to what you projected?

David Munson: Yeah, you know, what, we got really close. It was amazing. I look back, I got some goals, and I was like I can see myself in five

years, you know, I put out physical goals and educational goals. And I list all these big plans out down to 2002. And you know what five year goals, and I was just guessing, totally guessing. And I got about 90 percent of them. It's super – vision, having a vision, what do I see myself doing in the future is so important. I mean, I can't imagine someone starting a business, unless they accidentally did it like I did.

But generally to really take it up to a level where it pays your bills and it grows, without having a plan or at least a guess at a plan, I can't imagine how anybody could do that.

Jaime Masters: So let me ask you this, because you started this thing when you were 34, did you not have vision and goals and plans before all of that? Or like did they work out or not work out?

David Munson: Well, I started it in 2003. And in 2002 I was selling real estate down near Mexico City. And I'm just kind of like what do I do? And then 2011 – or 2001 it happened, 911 happened and things were really slowing down. And I was really praying a lot, and I was like what do I do with my life? And should I go this direction or should I go out and do this leather business thing, should I continue trying to pursue that? And that's when I wrote out my goals, relational goal, yeah the physical goals, intellectual goals, spiritual goals, there's like five or six categories, and that made all the difference.

Jaime Masters: Did you pick – so when you were doing that, when you were saying I'm not sure what direction, when you started writing those goals down did it have the trajectory you were gonna go on, on which way, or was it just in general, like I want to make this much money, and then you could decide which path you took on based on where you wanted to go?

David Munson: Yeah. It was I want to make this much money. I want to be doing this sort of thing and have the freedom and that sort of thing. And then I looked at both paths, and I looked – hey, this one doesn't lead there, but this one does. It's kind of like – I always say like, if I know I want to go to Seattle, Washington. And let's say I'm in Dallas, Texas right now. And I want to go to Seattle. Someone offers me – and I'm walking, okay? Somebody offers me a job in Louisiana, but it's better paying than the one that's in Colorado, which one do you think I should take?

Jaime Masters: Yep.

David Munson: It's Colorado. If I know my ultimate goal is Seattle. And then, someone else goes: oh, there's this wonderful job in Wisconsin and it pays triple what you're making now. And someone else says there's this job in Boise, you know, which one am I gonna take? It's that one. It's the one that leading me toward my goal. But if you don't even have goals, you'd go to Louisiana, and then you go to Wisconsin, then you go to Georgia, then you go to Colorado, and then you go to Nebraska, and you're just wondering, so to me that was very important for me.

Jaime Masters: Exactly. I always tell people – because a lot of people is like visioning is voodoo. And over and over and over again millionaires have said this and how important it is, business I think the reason it's so important is because you make decisions based on that, and that's going to lead to where you want to go. That's exactly what you did, it makes perfect sense. I wanted you to make sure that we showed everybody, and I don't know if we can now that we're sort of on camera, but I know that you're actually in your facility right now with all of your employees and people. Can we do a little tour for the people that are watching?

David Munson: Sure.

Jaime Masters: Because it's awesome. Because it was one guy creating these things, right? **[Inaudible] [00:14:53]**.

David Munson: So this is a little bit. I'll walk you all around to the children's work area, not really. We don't have children's – so here is – this is where they make some of our harder pieces suitcases and that sort of thing, the really really brutal ones to make. And we have different lines here. We have Toyota production system people here right now teaching us the Toyota way. And we have here – yeah, we have different lines of people – lines of things. Here we have a – yeah, this is kind of the place. We have a daycare for the employee's kids. We have a – here's some accounting people in there.

Jaime Masters: They're like: okay, we're on camera.

David Munson: Hola! It's a video. You're being famous now. So gracious, gracious. One of the keys – oh, yeah, so we have a daycare for the employee's kids, for the little babies, so they don't struggle. We

had one guy came in crying. And he said I just want to tell you what this has done for us. He said I drop the kids off – he and his wife drop the kids off at his mother-in-law's house out of town on Sunday night, and picks them up on Friday night. And he said – he goes – and they're two and three years old, and he and his wife both work for us.

And he said now I get to raise my own kids. Because they didn't have anyone to watch them, they moved from their home where their family was. And so he said now I have somebody to watch my kids. And now I can raise my own kids. So it was really – and there's stuff like that. And we have an English program, where I was teaching English in the past, you know, when I had my first bag made, well, I talked to them and said: hey, can you guys open a school here in **Leona**, where our factory is for the kids of our employees, for the older kids to teach English?

And they said: yeah, absolutely. So they're here. All this is free for our employees. It costs a little bit, so they appreciate it, otherwise it – it's kind of weird. It's a long story. But we have – it's just a really neat thing we have going here. We've really been – God's really blessed us with some really cool opportunities that alto of people don't get. It's cool.

Jaime Masters: How do you go from a guy that you find to make a bag for you to this crazy operation that you have? Like, what do you really think has been those been pivotal moments that made a big difference?

David Munson: I would say – I used to be a youth pastor.

Jaime Masters: You did?

David Munson: Yeah, I was a youth pastor. I studied theology. And I didn't have any business classes, but I knew – I was like: hey, I want to help youth. And so I felt kind of – I was always working with youth playing guitar at Young Lights. Young Lights started up in Juarez and stuff like that. And that's really what brought joy to me. And then I got so busy with Saddlebag that I started doing the business and I felt really guilty about it. And then I was like: well, at least we can support some people to work with at risk youth and stuff like that. So they started doing it, and I'm supporting three or four of them, and then ten of them.

And then I was like wait a second, instead of me sitting around a campfire with 30 kids: hey, wait a second I could have ten people with 30 kids. That's like 300. That's way more of an impact that I could ever have. And then it just kept growing and growing and growing. And so when it finally dawned on me, I was talking to guy a name Scott Burns. And he said to me – he was just a business man, but he was having more impact in people's lives than like the pastor at my church was, or that I was, or anyone that I knew was.

He was really impacting with his money and with his time. And I thought – it was that moment that I said: okay, I'm going for it. I am going to do this as a business to love people and help people. And it was another time when I met Scott Burns that everything really changed for me.

Jaime Masters: You just gave me goose bumps like crazy. I mean, I think that's one of the reasons why I do this is because I think the more people with integrity that are amazing that have money and the mindset to go do really big amazing things, that's what changes the world. The more of those people we have that care – which, you know, is kind of sad that we have to be like: oh, people who care, yeah. But imagine – like, look at how much impact you're having on people's lives. You're changing people's lives and insane. So how do you go up from here, like what's next? You're already doing these amazing fantastic things, is there more? Are you like: I still want more and it's not done?

David Munson: Yeah, yeah, so this is, we're trying to get this model of manufacturing down here, so that we can do – have a model of social manufacturing. And the idea behind that is we want to go into Rwanda. We go to Rwanda quite a bit. And it's a very friendly place, very low corruption, very easy to be and a lot of needs. So we want to start up a shoe factory and a bag factory in Rwanda. And it's fantastic – I mean, the people are fantastic. We go there quite a bit with out – we take a lot to Rwanda. We have a lot of kids there now in Rwanda, so we want to start up a factory there.

And then eventually have that factory going into places like Algeria, or like Morocco, Libya, places that are pretty much closed to the Western world. And we want to have maybe the Rwandans, who learned manufacturing, who learned the Toyota production system, we want them going to those places and head up that manufacturing. And in the mean time, we have schools for the

kids. We have daycares. We have all of the same stuff and just show them that we love them. So it should be a really cool thing, but we're just getting the system down right now really well, so that we can take it to Africa.

Jaime Masters: I can feel your vision, just as your describing it. You're like: oh, I have no doubt in my mind that of course that's gonna happen. You're like done. You've got this already. You have a plan. You're already moving forward.

David Munson: So yeah. So here's the cool thing, when you have a vision, even if you're just guessing at it. So like what do you see yourself doing – what do you see yourself and your business like in three years? So if you got into a time machine and you stepped out in three years – this is what my coach told me to do – and he said you step out in three years and you're kind of walking around invisibly around yourself and others. What do you see your business like? What's it like? And I was like – and like what are your sales like? What's your purpose?

What are you actually doing to help others? And what's your HR department like? And all this different stuff and I was like, “I don't know.” And he goes, “Well, guess.” “Well, it would be cool to have it like this and be selling this amount. And to have factories in Rwanda and factories in, you know.” and he goes, “Okay, keep writing, keep writing, keep typing this out.” So I did. And when I shared my vision, and the more I talk about my vision, the more it pulls for its own success. So I – the more a vision is a strongly spoken, the more it pulls for its own success. And so I started sharing it with people, and we're getting some really really talented people on our boat because they go: hey, I can't do what you're talking about, but I want a part of it.

Can I help you? Can I help you get there? And at first I was like: uh, get where? You know, your vision. I was like: oh, yeah, sure, of course. Wait, come onboard. And people really want it. They want it. And it was my vision. I wasn't just making it up, that's what I really wanted. And he said, “Hey, think about this for awhile. What do you really want – what would really bring you joy? And what would really impacting to people?” and so, you know, the way we do business – and so I already have some tanneries here in town.

I have a big shoe factory here in **Leona**. We want to be a part of what you're doing, so when you get it all figured out, could you share that with us, and could we also do that in our factories? And so we're starting to make it – we want to make it the standard of the way people do manufacturing. But not just manufacturing business, where they really treat people right. They really do things well. So yeah, that's what we going.

Jaime Masters: You know, just changing the world, it's simple. I love this. I think we'll start wrapping up. I so appreciate this, though. If you could take all the people that are listening right now, and they're not there yet, right? They've got their vision most likely, or at least a part of it, but they're way back at the beginning of – like, living with your dog, right? So what's one action listeners can take this week that will help them [inaudible] [00:24:00]?

David Munson: Well, I have two.

Jaime Masters: I'll let you.

David Munson: One is in branding. Be taking notes and taking pictures, and just be – taking, just write notes about what's going on with your business, your struggles, that sort of thing, because your story is very important, so remember your story. And that you're – and be thankful for your story because it's gonna be a part of what helps you to grow into a real business.

Jaime Masters: I want to say one thing on that. Because I remember being \$70,000 in debt, like hating my job, and going no matter where I am right now, this is going to make a great story later when I climb out if it. No matter how far in the whole you are, the farther you have to go, the better the story. So always stay positive, no matter how deep you are, it's an amazing story.

David Munson: Absolutely. That's so true. And I would say also, sit down with yourself or with your spouse and say: hey, I want this – what should this business look like? For me I pray about it. And I was praying that my business would look like the way God would want it to look. For other people you may go: hey, what friends do I have – who do I really admire? What does their business look like? How do they do business? And just really be thinking about it over like a week or two. And then write down some categories, in the finance part, in the marketing part, in the structure part. And you go: I don't know about structure.

What's that look like? A product part, you know, and just sort of start thinking, brainstorming what do you want it to look like in three years? And you will be shocked at what happens when you write out, actually physically write out what you want it to look like in three years, and the different categories of a business. And if you don't know what a category should be, then look it up online. What are the aspects of the business – of any business? You just look that up, Google it. And just start writing it down, just go for it and just guess, but you have to write it out. And you watch what happens; your decisions will be dictated by your vision.

Jaime Masters: I love that. To reiterate, people need to hear this over and over and over again. If you have heard this before and never different anything with it, go do it right now because it doesn't help you in any way shape or form if you don't actually do it. Thank you so much for coming on the show today. I so really appreciate it. Where can we find your bags and all that amazing online, so they can read more about you?

David Munson: Saddleback Leather. So like a saddle on a horse, you know, the sweat off your back, and then leather. Saddleback Leather, or if you just Google leather briefcase. Don't click on any ad that's there, just go straight to our website. Just go straight to our website.

Jaime Masters: Ca ching, ca ching.

David Munson: But it costs us like .75 cents for every time you click on one of the ads, or sponsored link, or whatever. So just go straight to the website. So yeah, Saddlebackleather.com.

Jaime Masters: And I highly recommended everyone checking it out. Not only because their bags research fantastic, but also because their branding is just so on point. I literally use them as an example of what to do, so make sure everybody checks it out, it's amazing.

David Munson: Hey, you guys. Here's a little thing you can do for branding. As you're thinking about your business, the better you think about it, you have thought it through, the better everything will be. So if you go: hey, if we were like a food, what would my business be? And so like would you be spaghetti, you know, like filet mignon? Would you be a filet of flounder, you know, what would you be?

And then all the different foods like desserts, would you be cream pie or would you be pecan pie? We tend to be kind of beef steak or peppered steak, beef jerky, pecan pie, turtle pie, you know, those are the foods.

Which actors, which movies would you say: hey, that's kind of like – we could belong in that movie. We'd be the service department in that movie. So is it – what is it? What's that movie? And go through the movies, actors, and that will really help you to find a few – I don't know. And really help you to find your business and your brand. So when someone has pink bubble gum letters and a marketing agency that wants to do your logo or something, you go pink bubble gum letters, no, that's not us. It's more modern.

It's more a squared away fine wine Maserati, you know, Astrid Martin, sort of black panther. It's not black lab and a Land Cruiser. Do you know what I mean? So anyway, I would say go through and make a list of all – if we were a mode of transportation, what would we be? Do you know what I mean?

Jaime Masters: Heck, yeah. So I learned alto about branding. I hear a lot of ideas about branding. I have never heard anybody say that before. And I'm gonna make people do this because it's utterly fantastic. Because then you can wrap your whole hand around it, just like the Indian Jones thing. You're like it's got to be like this, and you can feel it, and it makes it way more tangible than us sitting there twiddling our thumbs going like: I guess we want to be cool and authentic and awesome, you know. Oh, I love that.

Jaime Masters: Well, yeah, if you're going for a professional crowd, then what kind of shoes are you? You're a pair of like shiny kind of patent leather or your whatever sort of thing. You're not hiking boots. And so when marketing guy, your cousin's friend does your website and it looks like hiking boots, but really it's – you want it to be more professional, then you have to let them know, this is the kind of shoe we are, this is the kind of clothes we wear. We wear suits and slacks and dress shirts tucked in. we don't wear flannels and cargo shorts. So you can really get that into people's mind by defining yourself with all of these different descriptors.

Jaime Masters: I adore that. We're redoing our website too, so I'm actually gonna go do that. I really appreciate it. Thank you so much. Everybody

check out their website. I really appreciate your time. I hope you have a fantastic day.

David Munson: Hey, you too, thanks for your time. I appreciate it.

[End of Audio]

Duration: 34 minutes