



octane

The Entrepreneurs' Organization Magazine
September 2015

BUILDING YOUR BRAND FROM THE **TRUTH** UP

ANNUAL REVIEW EDITION



"Having a one-year runway of cash and access to growth capital was critical to taking my company into the seven figures."

Where Are the Million-Dollar Women?

Julia Pimsleur, EO New York

Pg. 12

EO Global Board of Directors

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8

The Broken Bucket – Andrea Culligan, EO Sydney

"In all stories of history and life, a level of personal destruction is required before rebuilding the real story."

10

It Takes a Village – Stephen Liu, EO Malaysia

"I had no way of knowing just how personally involved I would be in the tragedy, nor the circumstances that would call upon our EO community."

12

Where Are the Million-Dollar Women? – Julia Pimsleur, EO New York

"I decided to help bridge the gap by teaching women how to access funds in the crucial growth stages of their businesses."

18

The Readiness Factor – Chad Hughes, EO Calgary

"As entrepreneurs, it's in our nature to visualize where we will be, what can be or the next venture."

19

Fueling Your Business Strategy – Andy Reid, EO Johannesburg

"Only by completely transforming my business strategy was I able to turn admirers into loyal riders."

21

Rising from the Ashes – Jesse Proudman, EO Seattle

"I needed to mentally get back to where we all want to be: excited to tackle new challenges every day."

23

Give Your Business an Online Edge – Chris McGovern, EO Columbus

"Competitive intelligence is an important component for any company, but it is an absolute necessity for business-to-business marketing firms."

24

Go Away to Get Ahead – Morris Tabush, EO New York

"It was the first time since I started my business that I went eight days without 'checking in.'"

EO ANNUAL REVIEW

Looking Back at FY2014/2015

We recap FY2014/2015, a year that saw our #EONATION grow! Pg. 4



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CONTENT

SEPTEMBER 2015 / VOL. 10, ISSUE 1

SPECIAL FEATURE



Building Your Brand from the Truth Up

Pg. 14

"Honest people create honest businesses and truthful brands."
– Eitan Chitayat, EO Israel

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- 9 EO Asks
- 11 Connections to Experts
- 13 EO Q&A
- 20 10 Questions
- 22 EO Program Spotlight
- 25 Culture Corner
- 26 EO Pulse
- 28 Quoted & Noted
- 29 Global Learning Calendar

Together as One



Gilberto (center), with several leading women entrepreneurs of EO

Inclusion and collaboration—it is a powerful combination, and one that is fueling our organizational efforts this year. As entrepreneurs, we know how important these elements are to the success of our companies. Not only do we have to rally others around our vision, but we need to continually inspire and encourage collaboration to realize our goals. The same principles apply to our organization as we come together to create a new framework for growth and success.

Throughout the year, we are dedicating our efforts toward evolving EO's culture, one that is cultivated through the adoption of a new narrative and executed by thought leaders, executive staff and subject matter experts. We are strengthening our infrastructure from the inside out by redefining the way we lead, pursuing a clear and strategic purpose, and emphasizing inclusion, clarity, alignment, accountability and continuity at every level of the organization—from committees to regions and boards.

As we work toward a new narrative together, we remain committed to providing more clarity on leadership, establishing more congruity and building greater transparency for the entire

membership. We will be accountable to EO and all of the members, and we will be accountable to one another. In doing so, we will enhance member value through compliance, strategy, and above all, collaboration. We must work together to shed our "world's best-kept secret" label.

Countless members, member leaders and staff have created a great organization in the past 28 years. Now it is our turn to set the stage for the next generation by committing to ourselves, our families, our chapters and our communities that we will build a better EO.

Now is the time—let's lead together!

Gratefully,

Gilberto Crombé, EO Monterrey
EO Global Chairman, FY2015/2016
gcrombe@eonetwork.org

EO Together

EO Global Board SPOTLIGHT

We'd like to introduce you to the newest members of our EO Global Board, all of whom are committed to growing the organization, strengthening the membership and further establishing EO as a global thought leader on entrepreneurship. This year, we welcome three new faces to the Board!



Rosemarie "Bubu" Andres
Director
EO Philippines
bubu@candycorner.ph



Brian Brault
Director
EO Western New York
bbrault@pureroom.com



Fred Johnson
Director
EO Utah
fred@eagleenvironmentalinc.com



Learn more about
EO's leadership—
scan the QR code!

Transforming the EO Narrative Together



Vijay (third from right), with EO's Executive Team

Since 1987, EO has been transforming the lives of those entrepreneurs who are transforming the world. In that time, the organization has become an entrepreneurial thought leader, positively impacting the global business landscape and those who continue to shape it. In honor of this growth, and with a focus on the future, EO is building on its success to achieve even greater measures of significance. Helping to drive these efforts is **Vijay K. Tirathrai**, EO's new CEO. In this interview, Vijay elaborates on EO's new narrative and the impact it will have on the global community we inspire and support.

What inspired the adoption of a new EO narrative?

VT/ "In a little under 30 years, thousands of members, member leaders and professional staff have put their heart and hard work into building the EO we know and love. Today, we are the biggest and strongest we have ever been. That's a remarkable feat and one that shouldn't go overlooked. The adoption of a new organizational narrative doesn't stem from a place of repair or needed improvement, but one of opportunity and innovation. We have a chance to capitalize on our success, achieve greater significance and position EO as the leading voice in the entrepreneurial community. By adopting a new narrative, by adjusting the mindset of the organization and its operating body, we can further maximize our impact and influence around the world. Our theme this year—EO Together—aligns with this narrative. Our Chairman, Gilberto, is building synergy by ensuring all organs of EO—the Global Board, committees, staff and members—are working together to achieve a collective vision."

What are some fundamental elements of this new narrative?

VT/ "For years, the organization has focused its efforts internally to ensure its membership and supporting community receive maximum value from the EO experience. As a former Global Chairman and long-time member of EO Malaysia, I understand the importance of maximizing membership value. That's still a primary commitment, but in this new narrative, we will also adopt a more externally focused mindset. Together, we will extend our reach to the greater entrepreneurial public and ensure we're just as valuable to that audience as we are to our membership. I often hear EO referred to as the world's 'best-kept secret.' We want to remove that label. We want to become a more recognizable resource for the millions of people out there who've fallen in love with the idea of starting a business, or better yet, are seeking a resource to help them go from concept to company. That's how we begin to build a stronger, more global brand."

What will the transition from old to new narrative look like?

VT/ "Understandably, this is going to require a gradual shift in thinking, one that will require us to be more progressive and less passive, more proactive and less reactive. To achieve this new narrative together, to really position EO as a go-to resource for entrepreneurs of all locations and vocations, ages and stages, we will need to adopt a business enterprise mentality. It starts with: employing ahead-of-its-time technology to connect with the larger audience; integrating a strategic engagement element to our marketing and communications efforts; elevating our PR; leveraging existing programs like EO GSEA to serve as external-awareness instruments; and becoming less reliant on member dues by sourcing new methods of revenue-generation, among other big tasks. In doing these things, we will strengthen EO, internally and externally, while setting the organization up for continued growth."

How do you see this new narrative impacting EO in the next five or 10 years?

VT/ "Five to 10 years from now, I think people will see EO as the leader in entrepreneurship the same way they do Nike for athletic gear or Microsoft for computer software. Ultimately, our goal is to become the unquestioned brand for global entrepreneurship; to be top of mind when 'entrepreneurship' and 'support' are mentioned in the same breath. We don't want to have a seat at the table—we want to be the table. With the help of our all-star professional staff, selfless dedication of our member leaders and continued support from our growing membership, we will have positioned EO to be at the forefront of not just the entrepreneurial space, but the global business landscape. It's going to be an exciting journey, and one that will bring with it plenty of opportunities to build toward the future."

To learn more about EO's new narrative, email Vijay at asktheceo@eonetwork.org.

EO ANNUAL REVIEW



We launched seven new chapters: EO Bryan/College Station, EO Southwest Ontario, EO Uttar Pradesh, EO East Africa – Dar es Salaam, EO Jordan, EO Rio de Janeiro and EO The Woodlands.

We doubled our Sister Chapters partnerships from seven to 14, including EO Austin and EO Perth; EO Los Angeles and EO Mexico City; and EO Silicon Valley and EO São Paulo.



We hosted highly attended events, including the EO Geneva Global University, EO New York Global University, EO24 and the Global Leadership Conference.



Looking back, FY2014/2015 was earmarked by global expansion, membership growth, technological innovation, record-breaking events and enhanced EO learning. Here are some highlights of what we accomplished as one #EONATION:

We launched #EONATION, a theme that celebrates our diversity and global impact.

We hired a new CEO, Vijay K. Tirathrai, to usher us into a new era of organizational excellence.

We hit the 11,000-member mark in membership, our highest member count in our 28-year history.

We brought in nearly 2,000 new members, our fastest growth in EO history.

We achieved high ratings in our All-Member Survey, including a record number of responses (6,082) and an overall organizational value rating of 8.3 (out of 10).



We introduced new learning programs, including the EO/London Business School Growth Forum.

We earned tremendous international media attention for EO GSEA, with more than 100 articles published globally, resulting in nearly 400 million impressions.

We significantly increased our social media presence, reaching 75,000 fans on Facebook, 40,000 followers on Twitter and 20,000 LinkedIn followers.

We enhanced our technology, to include an upgrade of our public-facing website (EOnetwork.org), the introduction of EO Connect and a digital version of Octane.

EO ANNUAL REVIEW

Organizational Snapshot

(as of 30 June 2015)

11,000+

TOTAL MEMBERS WORLDWIDE

US\$536 BILLION

TOTAL SALES OF ALL MEMBERS WORLDWIDE

US\$52.3 MILLION

AVERAGE MEMBER SALES

2.4 MILLION

TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKERS THAT
MEMBERS EMPLOY WORLDWIDE

240

AVERAGE MEMBER EMPLOYEES

150

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHAPTERS WORLDWIDE

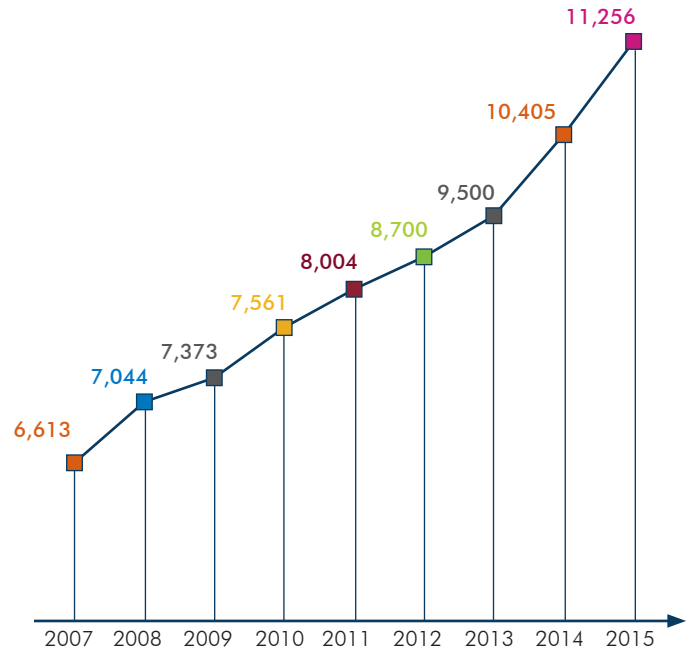
48

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WITH EO CHAPTERS

43

AVERAGE MEMBER AGE

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH



MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION BY REGION



- Asia Pacific: **17%**
- Canada: **9.2%**
- EMEA: **14.4%**
- LAC: **7.6%**
- South Asia: **9%**
- US-Central: **16.1%**
- US-East: **15.6%**
- US-West: **11.1%**

SIZE OF CURRENT PRIMARY BUSINESS



- Less than US\$2 million: **24.8%**
- US\$2 million to US\$4.9 million: **26.8%**
- US\$5 million to US\$9.9 million: **16.1%**
- US\$10 million to US\$19.9 million: **12.6%**
- US\$20 million to US\$49.9 million: **9.5%**
- US\$50 million and above: **10.2%**

FY2014/2015 ORGANIZATIONAL NET REVENUE

- Member Dues: **93.2%**
- Grant Revenue: **1.9%**
- Interest and Other: **1.2%**
- Forum Training and Events: **3%**
- Contributions: **0.7%**

EXPENSES

- Chapter Development: **26.6%**
- Communications: **7.1%**
- Conferences: **14.8%**
- Executive Education/GLC: **9%**
- Forum/MyEO: **13.4%**
- Governance: **6.1%**
- Healthnetwork and EO Connect: **1%**
- Technology: **4.6%**
- Management and General: **6.7%**
- Learning and Leadership: **10.7%**

ALLOCATIONS OF MEMBERS' GLOBAL ANNUAL DUES

- Chapter Development: **28.4% (US\$511)**
- Communications: **9.3% (US\$167.80)**
- Management and General: **8.5% (US\$153.20)**
- Global Benefits: **1.6% (US\$29.60)**
- Learning: **18.7% (US\$336)**
- Governance: **7.3% (US\$131.80)**
- Technology: **5.1% (US\$91.70)**
- Forum: **15.1% (US\$272)**
- Depreciation: **2.4% (US\$42.30)**
- Contribution to Reserve: **3.6% (US\$64.60)**

Awards & Recognition

LEARNING AWARDS:

- » Best Learning Calendar (Large): EO Edmonton
- » Best Learning Calendar (Small): EO East Africa
- » Best Chapter Learning Event: EO Kolkata
- » Best Multi-Chapter Learning Event: EO Cleveland
- » Best Community Impact Event: EO Indonesia
- » Best Wow/Social Event: EO Jaipur

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS:

- » Best Newsletter: EO Coimbatore
- » Best Social Media: EO Israel
- » Best Event Branding (Regional): EO Lahore
- » Best Event Branding (Chapter): EO Punjab
- » Best Video: EO Hawaii
- » Best External Awareness: EO U.A.E.
- » Best Chapter Branding: EO Portland
- » GCC Award for Marketing & Communications Leadership: Jeremy Choi, EO Toronto

MEMBERSHIP AND INTEGRATION AWARDS:

- » Bill Trimble Award for Most New Members: EO New York (46)
- » Randi Carroll Award for Best Chapter Launch: EO Punjab
- » Highest Percentage Growth: EO Guatemala (41%)
- » Century Club (awarded to chapters who hit the 100-member milestone for the first time): EO Columbus, EO Germany – Hamburg, EO Mexico City, EO Portland, EO Winnipeg
- » Half-Century Club (awarded to chapters who hit the 50-member milestone for the first time): EO Costa Rica, EO Guadalajara, EO Sacramento, EO Shanghai, EO Western New York
- » Membership Recruitment Excellence: EO Switzerland – Zürich
- » Membership Integration Excellence: EO Austin

OTHER AWARDS:

- » Mark Lincoln Volunteer of the Year: Jamie Douraghy (EO Los Angeles)
- » EO Global Citizen of the Year: Sriram Bharatam (EO East Africa)
- » EO Staff Member of the Year: Michael Smith (EO's Senior Interaction Designer)

ROCK STAR CHAPTERS

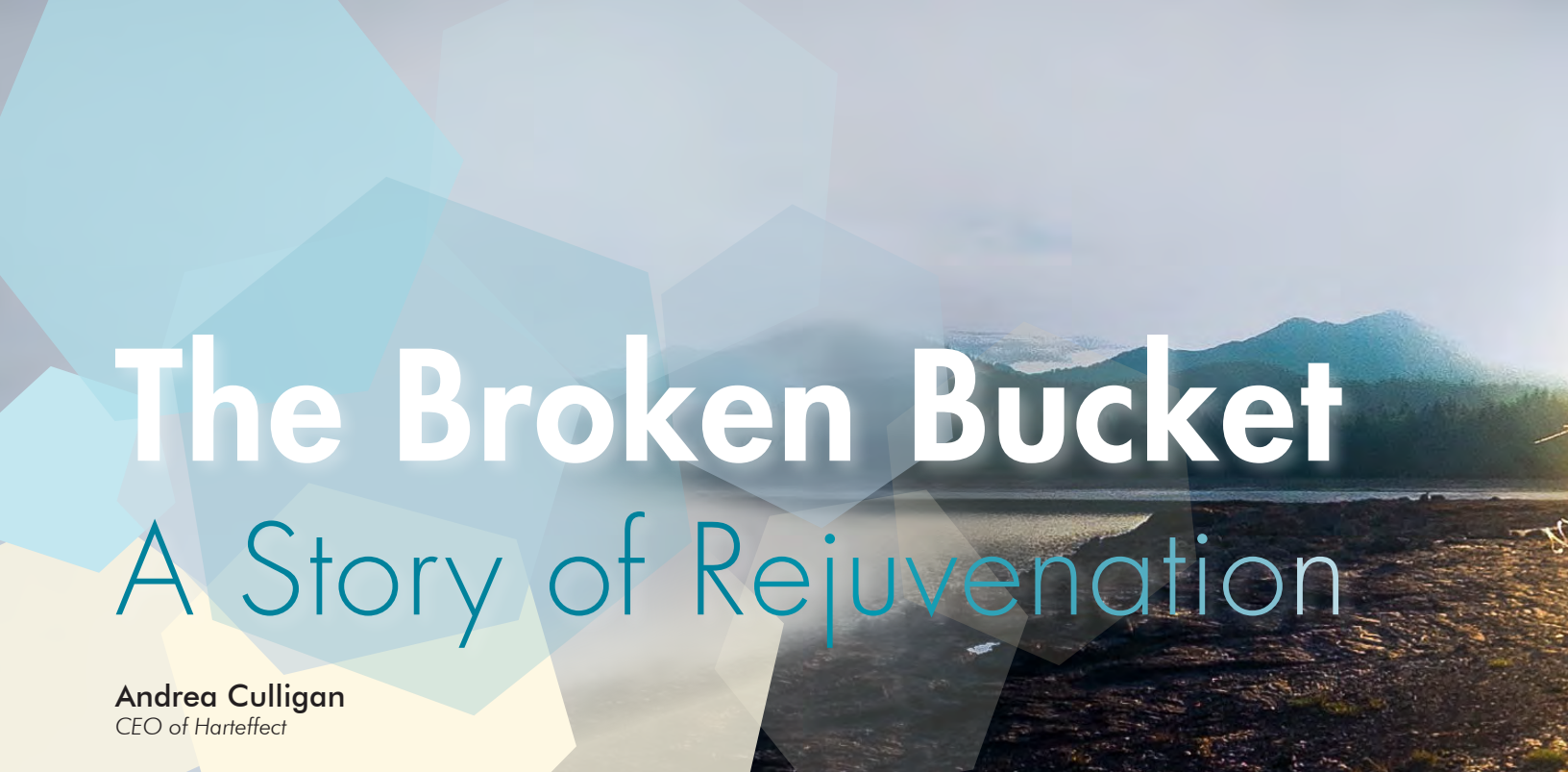
EO Atlantic Canada
EO Austin
EO Baltimore
EO Birmingham ⁴
EO Charlotte ²
EO Cleveland ²
EO Connecticut
EO Costa Rica

EO East Africa
EO Guadalajara ³
EO Guatemala
EO Gujarat
EO Hong Kong ⁷
EO Jaipur ²
EO Johannesburg ⁴
EO Kolkata ⁴

EO Lahore
EO Malaysia ⁵
EO Minnesota
EO Nepal ⁶
EO Nicaragua ²
EO Philippines
EO Portland
EO Raleigh Durham ⁵

EO Reno Tahoe ²
EO Seattle
EO Southeast Virginia ²
EO Switzerland – Geneva
EO Sydney ²
EO Winnipeg ⁴

**The number denotes the consecutive years a chapter has held Rock Star status.*



The Broken Bucket

A Story of Rejuvenation

Andrea Culligan
CEO of Harteffect

I don't know if I'd call it shame, grief or what. Either way, I'm not ready to move on. It's been one year since everything changed in my business, and I still haven't recovered. That month was the hardest time I've ever faced in business, and the three years leading up to it weren't any better. I recently read an *Inc.* article that detailed the often overlooked and unfortunate alignments with entrepreneurship—suicide and mental illness. Frankly, I'm not surprised. Entrepreneurship is hard. It's like someone takes your life and all your encompassing parts, throws them into a bucket filled with slime, gold and bad karma, and then just sloshes it around. Depending on how the bucket swings, you get what you get.

People say not to take it personally, that it's just business. I think that's bullshit. It is personal. It is your business. And your decisions heavily affect that business's future. I haven't always made the best decisions, and yeah, it would hurt. But other times my role as an entrepreneur created beautiful things, like witnessing an employee grow into someone you always knew they could be, or seeing a client give you a fantastic referral. Those days are pure gold—they're the best part of the bucket. Sometimes, though, the bucket just sloshes slime at you. Even when you think you're doing the right thing, your fear slops bad karma from the bucket, and the cycle continues.

I've been an entrepreneur for 16 years, building and selling businesses. All in all, being an entrepreneur is awesome, but it can bring you down if you don't remember to come up for air, which I hadn't done in a long time. In 2014, in the wake of my business collapse, I took a long, hard look at myself and realised I needed a break. Entrepreneurship had taken its toll. I was physically and mentally ravaged by years of the bucket sloshing me around and spitting me out. I no longer laughed easily; my confidence was shattered, my body ragged and my mind no longer at ease.

Losing our biggest client in 2014 was the final straw. I had done everything in my power to get us to that point, and before I knew it, I was forced to let much of my staff go. That day of exodus was dispiriting and painful, and as I sat at my best friend's kitchen

table sobbing and drinking whiskey at 11 a.m., I realized my tears were not a result of sadness, but of significant relief. Moving forward was a decision I should have made a long time ago; the client was never the right fit for our business and our staff was treated poorly. I was exhausted and making poor decisions, and well, hindsight is a bitch.

Needless to say, the decision was out of our hands, and we had to make the most of our reduction. Whilst relief was definitely present, I had a reputation to uphold in my industry. Our response to this loss would define the future of the company. I tried hard to keep my head and heart above the growing tide of fear, but it just kept washing over me. I didn't know what we were going to do next. I felt worthless. My emotions were hard and heavy-hitting—I wasn't ready for them. How could I think clearly or make decisions with that kind of rush overriding my system?

My solution came in the form of an impromptu camping trip last October, where it finally occurred to me that I needed a break from it all. The feelings I had about my business and life were muddled, and I couldn't fix them. I couldn't be the big entrepreneur I thought—and wished—myself to be. I needed to just *be*, not *do*. So, here I am, now on a completely different journey, using that camping trip as a trigger to travel around the world in a caravan. How does it feel one year later? Well, I still feel broken, physically and mentally. The people whom I trusted fell away, the situations that meant so much became irrelevant, the hierarchy I had is now insignificant ... and I still feel broken.

But here lies the big question: How do you build the person you want to be if you haven't broken yourself before? It's like a mandatory evil that has to happen for the next great thing to emerge. I use the analogy of brush fires allowing trees to regenerate—adversity creates success. In all stories of history and life, a level of personal destruction is required before rebuilding the real story. It's almost like it *has* to happen for true success to emerge. When I read that *Inc.* article about the entrepreneur's journey being difficult, I could relate. I, too, had been suicidal.

What's the most important lesson you've learned as an EO member?

"After nine years in the organization, I've discovered the power of peer relationships and learned to embrace all that we offer each other in areas such as leadership, business, family, social responsibility and more. Thank you, EO, for bettering my life!"

Scott Maloney, EO Cleveland
Director of k2m Design



I, too, have a mental illness and manage my anxiety disorder daily. I, too, have connected my self-worth and personal value to my business. And when it didn't go as planned last year, all of that came crashing down with it. I get it.

I'm broken. It hurts. But that is what is meant to happen before the really good stuff shows up. I believe the process of regeneration, although painful, is such an important step in one's recovery. I'm still doing great work, I just have larger questions: How can I contribute to the world in a bigger way? How do I find peace of mind and heart? How do I fulfill that dream of combining my skills and passions into one venture? Traveling and seeing so many things has turned off a lot of buttons—the snooze button, for one. It has also turned on the curiosity button, the question button and the learning button. I've read more books in three months than in the past five years, and I've listened to more people tell their stories in the past two weeks than ever before. It's been humbling and beautiful.

What I have now is a second chance. A chance to create something powerful, positive, purposeful and game-changing for people; something that empowers people and lets them feel they can achieve their greatest, because even in the depths of despair, I still know I can achieve whatever I set my mind to. But first, I've got to pick up the pieces, one by one, and put them back together. Perhaps in a different order to create the person I'm becoming, or maybe, have always been.

When I'm ready.

Andrea Culligan (pictured) is an EO Sydney member, as well as the CEO of Harteffect, an employer branding agency, and Unigrad, a university student jobs board. Learn more about Andrea's journey—or share your own!—by visiting www.sabbaticalish.com. You can also follow her on Twitter (@sabbaticalish) or email her at sabbaticalish@gmail.com.



"I learned to keep an open mind when meeting new people. I went into EO thinking I wasn't really interested in making new friends. However, a couple of days after I joined, I met another new member and instantly clicked with her. Though we belong to completely different industries, we're able to share experiences and learn from each other."

Maria Isabel Rivas, EO Nicaragua
Finance Director of Colegio Preparatorio San Agustin, S.A.

"That the more you learn, teach and equip yourself with enhanced skills, the more you'll be able to network and feel comfortable about yourself and your business. The first important lesson learned is about growing and satisfying yourself—your business comes second."

Hani Taresh, EO Kuwait
Head of Projects Department for
Concept Interiors Co.



"I'd say it's the importance of sharing with, and learning from, your peers. It's great to see entrepreneurs handling the same problems that you've lived. You can feel that all of us go through real things every day."

Ángel Maria Herrera-Burguillo
EO Spain – Madrid
CEO of Samastah

It Takes A Village



Jane (in red) and June at Everest Base Camp

Stephen Liu

Founder and CEO of Ridpest

Everyone in EO has their story of coming together to triumph, an inspirational tale anchored by enough experiences and lessons learned to motivate constant unity. My story is one that I share with many people, and one I believe speaks to the heart of our organization, its members and the power of our peer-to-peer community. This is a tribute to my good friend, Namgyal Sherpa.

The morning of 25 April began like any other for me and countless others in Nepal. Little did we know that a 7.8-magnitude earthquake was about to devastate much of the surrounding region. I was stunned, to say the least. I had no way of knowing just how personally involved I would be in the tragedy, nor the circumstances that would call upon our EO community.

I was on my way to a Forum meeting when my dear friend, Datin Lee Soo Soo, called with news that her friends' two daughters, Jane and June Gan, were stranded on a Mount Everest trek north of Lukla. The young women had gone hiking when the earthquake hit, and in its aftermath, network connections were severely damaged. Their family in Malaysia had no means of contacting them or ensuring their safety. Datin was calling on the family's behalf, wondering if my EO connections could help. Having children of my own, my heart went out to the sisters and their family. I contacted EO Nepal's Namgyal Sherpa, and he generously agreed to assist.

With Namgyal's support, the sisters' family didn't have to wait long for news of their daughters. They were safe at Everest Base Camp. As it happened, the earthquake struck four hours into their excursion to Lobouche, a small settlement east of the camp, but they were able to head back to safety. They were now making plans to travel south to Namche Bazaar, a hard, two-day journey. With news of their safety, the family desperately sought to organize an emergency air evacuation.

Unfortunately, the Nepalese government had placed a ban on all privately owned helicopters retrieving those who were capable of

hiking down the mountain. Instead, Jane and June would need to travel by foot for another two days to Lukla, where they would take a plane home. So, the sisters continued south, hoping to return to Malaysia upon their arrival. Unfortunately, this was not to be. All flights in and out of the village had been cancelled due to poor weather conditions and crowding, and Jane and June were only two of more than one-thousand trekkers grounded until further notice.

It was at this point that Namgyal generously offered the sisters free accommodation at his hotel, Yeti Mountain Homes, where he assured their comfort and wellbeing. I would later learn that Namgyal had, in fact, opened up his hotel to everyone stranded in Lukla free of charge, until they could make their way home. In addition to this favor, Namgyal contacted his staff at Tara Airlines to put Jane and June on the next available flight to Kathmandu. Three days after arriving in the village, the women boarded a plane to Kathmandu and were greeted by a Malaysian diplomat when they touched down. That same day, they were put on a flight to Malaysia, finally on their way home to overjoyed family and friends.

This story is my tribute to Namgyal. In spite of all the challenges he faced in Nepal—including ensuring his own family's safety—he was gracious enough to lend a helping hand to anyone who asked. He truly is an amazing person, and the EO community should be proud to count him as a fellow member. I believe we often underestimate just how generous and powerful our network is. Yet every day we go out of our way to help each other, support our journeys and share our stories. That's the power of EO. And that's a reminder of how we are all truly EO Together.

Stephen Liu is an EO Malaysia member who currently serves as APAC's Mentorship Director (FY2014-2016). He has run Ridpest, a pest management company, since 1985, and is a proud father of two children: Victor (29) and Betty (28). Contact Stephen at stephen@ridpest.com.

FINDING YOUR FOCUS

The ability to stay focused is a primary factor when it comes to achieving success. No one understands the role focus plays in one's personal and professional life more than **Ned Hallowell**, a child and adult psychiatrist, celebrated author and EO speaker. In this interview, Ned highlights how to strengthen one's focus in business and beyond.

How would you categorize the state of focus for entrepreneurs?

NH/ "Focus, for an entrepreneur, is the same as focus for anyone else; it's just usually more difficult to achieve. This is because the mind of the entrepreneur runs wild and free. Indeed, freedom and independence may be the entrepreneur's greatest treasures. The entrepreneur hates to submit, be hemmed in, conform and be still. Yet focus—mental focus—requires some measure of stillness and submission to a task. It is impossible to focus fully on two or more demanding tasks or ideas simultaneously, so the entrepreneur must learn to master the free-wheeling mind with which he or she is gifted. Failure to do this, to control the immense power of the entrepreneurial mind, is a leading reason why entrepreneurs underachieve and fall short of their magnificent goals."

How can a lack of focus be detrimental to entrepreneurs?

NH/ "Most entrepreneurs are gifted with a fertile imagination. They come up with new ideas as often and as easily as most people blink. Their problem is not in coming up with ideas, but in choosing which ideas, projects and ventures to focus on and develop. This task of prioritizing—of choosing what to focus on and pass over—can be agonizing. There are so many sparkling gems! Many entrepreneurs make the mistake of trying to focus on too many targets at once, so they never develop any one as fully as possible. Here's a tip: Make a list of all the ideas and projects you have that really grab you, then force yourself to number them from most pressing to back burner."



What are some signs that you're shifting in and out of focus?

NH/ "Signs that you are losing focus include: boredom, tending to too many tasks at once, frustration at having more to do than time to do it all, confusion, dissatisfaction with work products and spending more time on trivial tasks than on tasks that require sustained attention. Signs that you are in focus include: a merging with the task, such that you lose your awareness of the passage of time, hunger, thirst, external happenings or noise; sticking with a task even when it becomes frustrating or difficult; and a feeling of satisfaction with what you've produced. Here's an action step: Try to work within your 'sweet spot,' the overlap of what you really like to do and what you're really good at doing."

Is there a marked difference between focus and discipline?

NH/ "Achieving focus requires discipline, but discipline is not focus. To hone focus, you must first discipline yourself not to go off on tangents the minute you get bored or irritated. But you must also give yourself the freedom to work on something that captures your interest at the given moment. Where interest goes, focus follows. With no interest, focus is all but impossible. One reason why people procrastinate is, unwittingly, to scare themselves into focus. Fear focuses the mind. So, if you put off something until the last minute, and you face consequences for not getting it done, you can create enough fear inside of you to focus even on the most boring of tasks. Of course, this is not the best way to achieve focus. The best way is to work on a task that is challenging, matters to you and is within your skill set and interest."

Edward "Ned" Hallowell, M.D., is a renowned psychiatrist who specializes in helping people achieve focus. He last spoke at an EO Vancouver event and has authored 20 books, including most recently, "Driven to Distraction at Work: How to Focus and Be More Productive." Learn more by contacting Ned at hallowellvents@yahoo.com, or by visiting www.drhallowell.com.

WHERE ARE THE MILLION-DOLLAR WOMEN?

Julia Pimsleur
CEO and Founder of Little Pim

These are the best of times and worst of times for women entrepreneurs. Thanks to record-breaking levels of investment in startups, women potentially have access to millions of dollars in capital in a way that was unthinkable one generation ago. And yet, most women start their businesses with about half the capital of their male counterparts, and a majority feel they lack the training and support they need to expand beyond sole-proprietary, low-grossing companies, according to The 2014 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report, commissioned by American Express OPEN. In the U.S. alone, only 3% of all women-run businesses make more than US\$1 million in revenues, while a majority of others have no employees and revenues that hover around US\$250,000. I've often wondered: "Why the gap? How can I empower all women entrepreneurs to reach their full potential?"

When my business, Little Pim, passed the US\$1-million mark a few years ago, a journalist contacted me for an article about the handful of women whose businesses were making "high revenues." She reiterated how so few women business owners made more than US\$1 million in revenues. Why are so few women running large-scale businesses? When I set out to raise venture capital (VC) for Little Pim, I discovered more disheartening realities: only 7% of VC dollars get invested in women-run businesses, and women are twice as likely as men to cite running out of cash as the main cause of shutting their doors. Study after study has shown that higher startup capital correlates to higher revenues. In

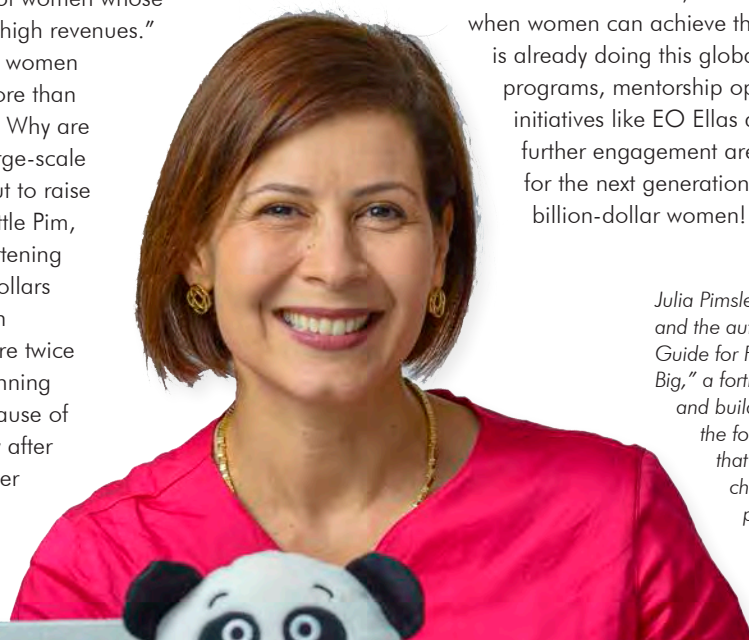
the spirit of supporting women-run businesses, I decided to help bridge the gap by teaching women how to access funds in the crucial growth stages of their companies. By helping them have the right mindset, skills and networks, I set out to help exponentially more women get to US\$1 million in revenues.

From my own experience, having a one-year runway of cash and access to growth capital was critical to taking my company into the seven figures. Every entrepreneur makes mistakes, and having the capital to get you through the dips before you find what works can make a fate-determining difference. Initially, I taught women how to raise angel capital and VC in my conference room; this turned into a one-day boot camp called "Double Digit Academy," now held twice a year in partnership with Morgan Stanley. Three years later, 50 graduates of the academy have raised a collective US\$10 million and are on their way to joining the million-dollar-women ranks.

Why did I take time away from family, friends and Forum to teach other women? I truly believe, to quote Sheryl Sandberg in "Lean In," that women need to "see it to be it." When women access wealth, research shows they invest in their communities, children's education and other women entrepreneurs. The ripple effect is tremendous. Investing time and capital into training and supporting women entrepreneurs produces more capital and global economic growth. While raising capital does not guarantee women success, having enough runway to make a few mistakes often does. Women globally who want to "go big" and who have the grit, domain expertise and smarts to do it, deserve that chance, and I can't wait to see the amazing companies they will create in the next decade.

In the next decade, let's all team up to ensure this is a time when women can achieve their full potential in business. EO is already doing this globally through its EO Accelerator programs, mentorship opportunities, peer-to-peer support and initiatives like EO Ellas and SheEO. The opportunities for further engagement are endless. Let's pave the way so that for the next generation, the question can be how to become billion-dollar women!

Julia Pimsleur (pictured) is an EO New York member and the author of "Million Dollar Women: The Essential Guide for Female Entrepreneurs Who Want to Go Big," a forthcoming book to help women raise capital and build multi-million-dollar businesses. Julia is also the founder and CEO of Little Pim, a company that teaches second languages to children; chair of EO New York's EO Accelerator program; and has served on her chapter board for three years. Email Julia at julia@littlepim.com.





Business Growth from the Ground Up

Running a successful business brings with it plenty of challenges, especially if your company revolves around a single product or service. For **Angela Santiago**, an EO Edmonton member and CEO of The Little Potato Company, maximizing passion, staying productive and setting boundaries goes a long way toward generating business growth from the ground up.

What would people be surprised to learn about potatoes?

AS/ “Potatoes were first discovered and appreciated in South America. They were so loved that they were nicknamed the ‘truffles of the earth’ and considered to be a small delicacy vegetable. Sadly, as they expanded through Europe and North America, potatoes became big, ugly and bland. But, initially, they were small, delicious and versatile like our creamer variety today. Another thing not many people may know is that it takes an average of seven to nine years to get a new potato to market once we find one we think is good enough to become a ‘Little Potato’ creamer.”

To what do you attribute your success in a highly competitive industry?

AS/ “I credit two important and unique aspects of our market for our success in the niche, competitive segment of creamer potatoes. First, everyone is familiar with potatoes in general, so there was no education needed. Second, potatoes had become boring. They were due for a refresh. Introducing creamer potatoes to North America seemed like a natural evolution for a forgotten favorite. We all enjoy making new food discoveries, especially if it’s something that’s delicious, nutritious, convenient and quick to prepare. Creamer potatoes are all that and more.”

What are the pros and cons of building a business around a single product?

AS/ “The big advantage for us, and our customers, is that we get to become really great at one thing, rather than just good at many. We’re more focused and specialized than others who are selling a range of vegetables or products. We have a team of passionate potato professionals who are focused on getting creamer potatoes to market: selecting, breeding, growing, harvesting, washing, packaging, shipping, merchandising and everyone else behind the scenes. It’s all about getting delicious creamers to produce sections, kitchens and plates. The risk when you’re starting out is choosing the wrong product or service as a single focus. We built The Little Potato Company around a product everyone loves.”

You work with family members in the day-to-day operations of your business. What’s the secret to maintaining a successful working relationship with family?

AS/ “We noticed that work could become a go-to subject when our family united, and especially so when my husband and I were working together. The risk, of course, is that when you have a business together, the commonality can become more about your shared company than your family, and we didn’t want that to happen. So, we put parameters around when we would talk about business. We limited business talk to weekdays, with emergency exceptions. If something came up on a weekend, we had to mutually agree to an exception before starting a business conversation. That created an effective and respectful barrier. More broadly, we all agreed that our homes were sacred ground for family, and that when you’re home, that’s where your energy should be spent.”

How do you stay productive in a largely seasonal industry?

AS/ “Our business isn’t as traditionally seasonal as you might think. People enjoy creamer potatoes every day of the year. Of course, potatoes grow seasonally, so to ensure a 12-month supply, we had to understand the different climates in North America and identify which offer the right conditions for creamers. Our team always gets excited about planting and harvesting, the same way people with home gardens do. Growing potatoes, like any vegetable, is a passion. We’ve developed systems and made significant investments to ensure we can transition from crop to crop seamlessly, while providing reliable distribution and support to our customers. Most recently, we invested in our team and infrastructure by expanding our field production, distribution centers and other facilities to support our ongoing success. We’re currently planning more infrastructure investment in the U.S. in the near future.”

To learn more about Angela’s entrepreneurial journey, contact her at angela@littlepotatoes.com.



Photo: Arthur Fuhrer

BUILDING YOUR BRAND FROM THE TRUTH UP

When it comes to entrepreneurship, there's a reliable core that fuels the process of turning a concept into a company. For Eitan Chitayat, an EO Israel member, brand-building pioneer and founder of Natie, an international branding agency, that core is truth. In this special interview, Eitan discusses the role authenticity plays in his life, business development and the brand-building process.

Authenticity plays a big role in your life and business. Why is it so important to you, and how has your background cultivated this approach?

EC/ "I believe living and working while being true to who I am plays a significant role in my success. It all starts with knowing who you are and being yourself. I try to manage my life and business by striving to be self-aware about what I'm doing, why and how. It also extends to embracing my strengths and dealing with my weaknesses, while understanding what motivates me to always push forward and never give up ... for myself, my family, my team and my clients' sake. I need to always be able to look myself in the eye.

"I've been fortunate enough to travel and experience a variety of cultures. This has, to a fair extent, helped shape me as a husband, father, friend, colleague and business owner. I have always had to adapt, but for better or worse, I've always been me. I was born in Tel Aviv in 1971, but spent my youth in Hong Kong. I went to high school in London, only to return to Israel to attend college and serve in the Israel Defense Forces, before moving to Boston to earn a master's degree and launch my branding career. New York City was my next stop, where I worked at Ogilvy & Mather and BBDO for

clients like American Express, Target and AT&T. I returned to Israel soon after to work as an executive creative director at TBWA Digital on accounts like Toyota and McDonald's, only to leave after a year to start my own firm.

"Starting a business was an opportunity for me to create something of my own to express my ideas about branding and advertising. And I have the best team ever, whom I'm so grateful for every day. Since forming Natie, we've worked directly with Apple, Facebook, Google and other great companies. Looking back now, my experiences helped me shape my own personal brand while building great brands for clients. The cultural and work diversity I've had in my life has always been a major asset. It invigorates my output and keeps me on my toes, especially here in Tel Aviv. There's an electricity in this city that supercharges my creative battery and entrepreneurial spirit."

When it comes to brands, they can fall flat or be remembered for decades. In your experience, what are some elements of a powerful brand?

EC/ "You know, the things people really like in a brand are similar to the traits they like in people. People gravitate toward brands that stand for something, know who they are and that are comfortable in their own skin. A powerful brand is consistent and presents itself uniformly wherever consumers meet it. It's not true in every case, but most great brands appeal to people's emotions more than their rational side. And the brands that endure and have an impact have something memorable about them. Again, the human comparison applies: The people we find ourselves drawn to are somehow memorable. Maybe they're great conversationalists or inspirational; there's just something distinctive and unforgettable about them. It's the same with brands."

You believe that what truly fuels a business or brand is its authenticity. Why is truth so integral to the development process?

EC/ "I think every business needs to do more than offer a good product or service to succeed; it has to also be honest. It needs to be inwardly and outwardly true about its values, strengths and weaknesses; what kind of people it's made up of; where it wants to go; what it wants to achieve; what it's good at; and what it could stand to improve. A company's margin of error is so slim—especially a young company's—that it has to be brutally honest with itself. And companies that are brutally honest internally tend to be companies that are also honest with their customers via their brands and what they claim to stand for. In today's digital age, companies must be able to look their customers in the eye and be straight with them across the board. Finding and adhering to your internal truth isn't always easy, but it's clearly a worthy goal."

There's power in authenticity, and yet so many entrepreneurs shy away from it in their businesses. Why do you think that is?

EC/ "It's not always easy to put yourself out there and unabashedly bare your business soul. That's especially true if you might be rocking the boat in a particular industry, operating non-conventionally as a business or you just don't feel comfortable being perceived as 'different.' So I get that it's hard to embrace. But a lot of people behind successful businesses don't shy away because authenticity

grounds them and lets them know exactly where they stand, what their values are, why they're doing what they're doing day in and day out, and what they have to do to get where they want to go.

"Besides, if you don't know or are not sure what your values are and what's important to you, then it's very hard to operate successfully in life or in business. For entrepreneurs, business is an extension; maybe not of us, specifically, but certainly of our values. Those values determine how that company conducts business. Honest people create honest businesses and truthful brands. And they want to hear honest opinions and ideas from their partners and employees, too. Back to my earlier analogy, branding is like a person. There's strength in living true to who you are and people sense it. As for me, like I said, I can't have it any other way. I have to be able to look at myself in the mirror every day: as a human being, as a friend, and yes, as a business owner. Not to mention as a husband to an incredible wife and father to two children I positively adore."



"Family is everything to me." Eitan, with his wife, Dina, and their children

How have you been able to incorporate truth into your business? Has it helped or hurt your brand over the years?

EC/ "When it comes to my approach, I say things that I believe are important to me for people to know. Like, we don't work with just anyone, and we expect of our clients what we expect of ourselves. Also, that we don't all share one office—we work remotely, which is always greeted with raised eyebrows. Something that's always a little uncomfortable is when I express how we don't see ourselves as vendors (with all due respect to vendors). We consider ourselves partners to our clients, working together to achieve success. Does saying these things put me in the occasional sticky situation? Sure, but not as many as being inauthentic would. And for the most part, as my clients get to know me and experience our direct way of working, they know that being upfront might actually help them get what they're looking for faster. Once they gain confidence in us and develop the right level of trust, once they see that our interests are aligned, success usually follows.

"At Natie, we'll often challenge our clients because they know

that someone has to ask the tough questions. Sometimes this can be uncomfortable for me and for them, but being honest and frank are crucial parts of our relationship. Likewise, if I see that a colleague or partner is bothered by something, I'll let them know they can speak openly and will be heard. And if they have a problem, it will be taken seriously. I guess I incorporate authenticity by just saying what I mean. It's become a part of our business brand."

Is there a project you've worked on that represents truth through branding?

EC/ "There have been many. Recently, there's the comprehensive branding project for Elma, a multi-million-dollar arts complex luxury hotel in Israel. The client is a visionary older woman who wanted to make a statement about how vital art is to life. She lives and breathes it and wanted her complex to communicate that idea through its every last detail. This isn't just her vision—it's her legacy. It was a challenge to carve out that position, especially for a luxury hotel located off the beaten path, but that's their truth. Working with her stellar team over the course of 18 months, that's the brand foundation we created. And the result has been nothing short of astounding.

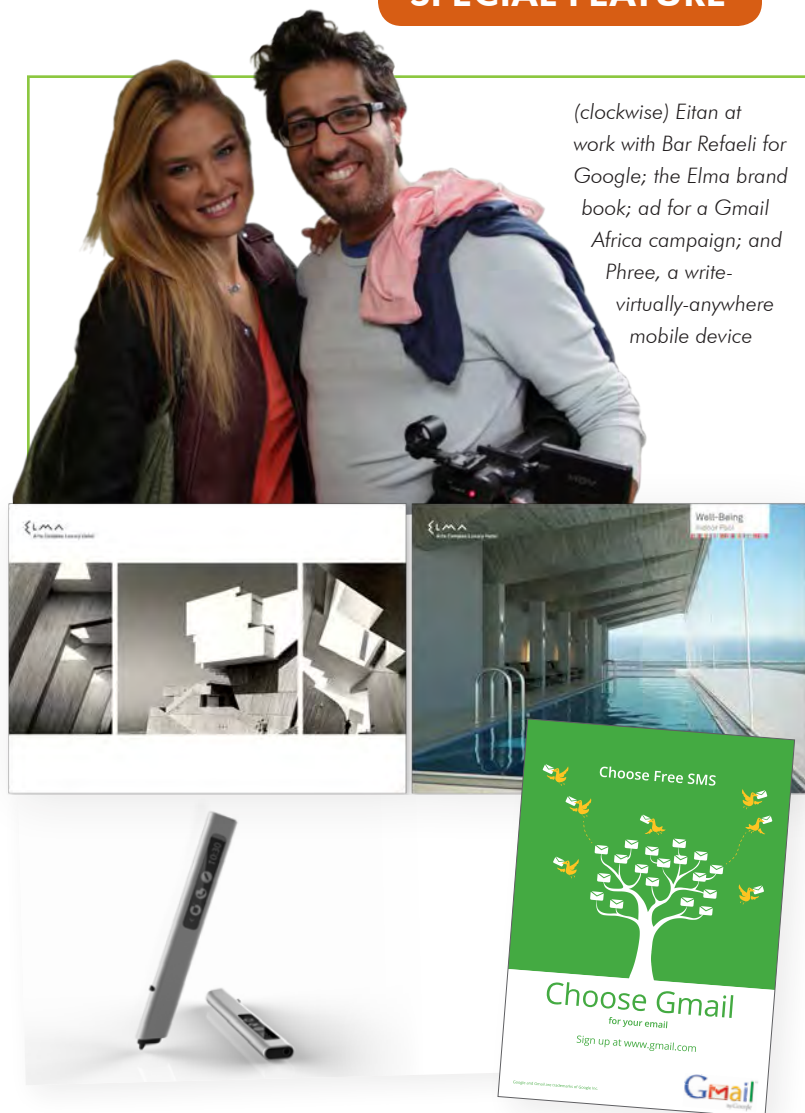
"I'm also proud of our introductory campaign for Gmail to Africa. We needed to embody the spirit of Google but also reflect the African culture, its directness, diversity and color. Our campaign was one of Google's most successful; not necessarily because it carried the Google name, but because the audience recognized the truth behind the work and responded to it. Another project was Phree, a pen-like digital tool that lets you write or draw on any surface, only to appear in real time on whatever Bluetooth device you have nearby. We delivered the strategy, naming and messaging, and developed a hugely successful Kickstarter campaign, helping Phree raise more than US\$1 million in 45 days. With a truth like theirs, our job was easy because they embraced it."

An example of your commitment to authenticity can be found in your new venture, "The 5 Percent Club." How is this project an extension of your focus on truth?

EC/ "When you think about it, 95% of our lives are mostly on autopilot, but the 5% is what's really important. I try to live my 5%, both personally and professionally. That notion is something my Forum mate, Tamar Yaniv, and I really bonded over. We wanted to put real effort into inspiring other people to live their 5%, too, whatever that means to them. So, we created a social, pay-it-forward narrative platform called 'The 5 Percent Club,' where we bring people together through expressing what truly matters to them via personal experiences. We hope these inspirational stories will spread with the 5%, becoming an ever-larger percentage of everyone's life. Creating something honest and good, paying it forward and potentially helping others through storytelling—these are all things that I love, so this project truly means a lot to me."

What can your EO peers do to fuse truth with their business or brand?

EC/ "I really respect it when clients care and are willing to do the hard work to get to their truth. For people running companies, branding can be like therapy in some ways. It's a process that helps them define who they are and communicate it to the world. In that process, I need to be clear that I expect the clients to push



themselves because it's better for the company they're trying to build. Everything's so competitive nowadays that clients need every little edge they can get. It's often amazing what comes out when you're sitting opposite a senior team: the differences of opinion they have with one another, the different takes on problems and solutions, and especially those moments of revelation when people see things from a different point of view because they pushed themselves.

"So, if I have any wisdom to offer, it's simply that: Do the work. Face yourself in the mirror and be brutally honest with yourself about your strengths, your weaknesses and what you want. And let your personal brand be all about your strengths. Don't lament your weaknesses—we all have them, and we could all afford to be a little kinder to ourselves. That's not to say we should be complacent, but we should acknowledge our flaws and strive to manage them. Ultimately, your strengths are the foundation of your brand. Build on those."

Learn more about Eitan's entrepreneurial journey by emailing him at eitan@natie.com, or by visiting www.natie.com. For more authentic stories, visit www.the5percent.club.

Watch a special video about Eitan's journey!



The Readiness Factor

Chad Hughes

President and CEO of LandSolutions LP

My journey as an entrepreneur has brought with it a series of ups and downs, with some of my ventures becoming successful and others memorable failures. My journey into the “unknown” started with a solid, five-year stretch of growth and success, which had given me a pretty good sense of confidence ... until the bumps and bruises came. Seemingly overnight, the tables began to turn, and for the first time in my young career, I questioned if I was capable of having sustained success in business.

I continue to have a clear vision for my life, as well as an innate sense of urgency that creates a lack of patience for things that don't progress as planned. However, after that rough patch, I started asking myself the really important questions. The biggest one: Am I ready for growth? As entrepreneurs, it's in our nature to visualize where we will be, what can be or the next venture. Integral to this is dedicating the time to stop and reflect about where we are, as well as our readiness to be in the place we envision ourselves. Over the years, I've come to rely on three areas of reflection:

1. Readiness to GIVE

We must have something to give in order to receive. When I was an entrepreneur in my twenties, giving wasn't something of which I was conscious. I wasn't aware enough of my own abilities to understand what I had to give, and I wasn't observing my behavior enough to understand how I would give. It wasn't until my mid-thirties that I began to develop a meaningful awareness of these things. Today, I have a very clear understanding of my abilities: energy, vision and leadership are a few of mine. Having clarity here enables me to stay mindful of what I can give each day to those around me, which has had a significant impact on the success of my ventures.

2. Readiness to GROW

It would be difficult for a non-runner to wake up one morning and run a marathon. Growth is a process similar to running, or preparing to run, a marathon. It's something you have to be ready for, mentally and physically, for it to be meaningful. Your growth as an individual will have a direct impact on the growth of your business. If your vision is to triple the size of your business, what needs to change within you to lead and support such growth? Growth can come from reading books, a coaching relationship, an MBA or through a Forum experience. Whatever the case may be, when it comes to growth for business leaders, winging it is not an option. We need to be intentional.



3. Readiness to RECEIVE

Have you ever read about the lottery winner who, over a short period of time, had blown through their winnings with nothing to show for it? Have you heard the age-old saying, “Easy come, easy go”? I believe that if you're not grounded in your values and purpose, success can be difficult to sustain. At least it was for me. What has helped me prepare for today's successes has been the journey of becoming clear and convicted in my values, my life mission and my vision. Being grateful for where I am today, and taking meaningful time to give thanks, is an important factor for me. I often ask myself: “Am I ready for that next achievement?” For many of us, the answer to that question will be “yes,” but I find the proof to be in the results, and the results come with ease when the readiness is there.

I am grateful for the chance to live a life I love and make a living as an entrepreneur. It's a journey that has exposed me to situations and people that have molded me into a person I feel good about. Looking back, it's been my readiness that has enabled me to arrive at this place; the more ready I am, the greater the experience. With still so many miles to travel and challenges to tackle, I continue to reflect on where I am in this journey and my next milestone. I can't wait for what's ahead.

Chad Hughes (pictured) is an EO Calgary member and president and CEO of LandSolutions LP, a Canadian-based land and environmental consulting firm. Chad is also the founder and chairman of Hughes Corp, a conglomerate involved in the distribution of health lifestyle products, and “Dogtopia,” a canine hospitality concept. Contact Chad at ChadH@landsolutions.ca.

Fueling Your Business Strategy

Andy Reid

Managing Director of Vespa SA

The Vespa has always been an object of great admiration. But when I first brought Vespas to South Africa, turning that admiration into sales proved to be a challenging journey. Only by completely transforming my business strategy was I able to turn admirers into loyal riders. It all started with branding. Here are some tips for brand success:

- › **Go big or go home:** Invest and commit—the more you put in, the more you get out. Every decision you make influences the direction your company takes. No revolutionary ideas were born from taking it easy or playing it safe.
- › **Get organised:** Understanding exactly what you need to deliver will ensure success. Carefully map out your daily, weekly and monthly to-do lists—meticulous planning is essential. Sitting back and hoping to reach your targets or goals is not an option.
- › **Empty planner, empty business:** Never have empty space in your planner—it means you wait for things to happen, rather than making them happen. Time is everything, and the way you use it reflects your character and business.
- › **It's all about the follow-through:** If you have an idea, get on it immediately. Act on your game plan. This is particularly important in a target-driven industry but is also sound advice for any business. Follow-through is what sets dreamers apart from achievers.
- › **Put people first:** A successful business is the result of a passionate and fulfilled staff complement. Always look for motivated individuals who are keen to progress and can stick to a plan. Nurturing staff is vital for continued excellence.
- › **Sell the experience:** Showing people a product—with the bells and whistles included—is easy. Getting them to buy into an experience is a lot more interesting. Creating an interactive



Andy Reid (pictured) is an EO Johannesburg member and the founder, majority shareholder and managing director of Vespa South Africa, which has five outlets across the country. Contact Andy at andyvespa@mweb.co.za.

experience gives customers more than just a product and nurtures loyalty. Everyone wants to be a part of something. Recognising that will put you in a league of your own.

- › **Always be on the hunt for what's new and exciting:** You may have an amazing business idea this year, but that idea needs to be relevant in five years. Stay abreast of new trends relevant to your product or start trends yourself. You're only as good as your latest offering.
- › **Give them what they want:** Look for innovation from your customers—they're the ones who are most critical and know what they want.
- › **Network, network, network:** Keep good company that will help boost your business. Surround yourself with intelligent people who can be a source of constant learning. Get involved with other professional organisations to interact with like-minded individuals.
- › **Views, tweets, likes—find your brand its match:** If you don't have an online presence, you'll get left behind. Use social media as a tool to stay relevant and connected. Share product experiences in different ways that suit your offering and look for honest feedback.

EO Together Engagement and Exercise, EO Style!

On 23 May, EO Japan and EO Osaka participated in Sports Festival 2015, an annual event that had 72 members—and several EO Asia Pacific guests—learning and growing together. Held on an athletic field in Tokyo, activities included a photo puzzle, a rope-jumping challenge, basket tossing and “bubble soccer,” where players wore plastic orbs while navigating the field. Sports festivals, called “Undokai” in Japanese, are common events in elementary schools and are becoming increasingly popular for adult team-building functions. This was EO Japan's eleventh such event.



With big risks, come big rewards. EO San Francisco's **Kevin Balestrieri** took the risk of a lifetime by fully committing to his startup in 2013. In the process, he sought to create a fun, dedicated workplace that cultivated what many construction firms lack— culture.

1 When did you choose to fully commit to your startup?

KB/ "I was working a full-time job when I started BALI Construction, and it wasn't something I was passionate about. My wife and best friend helped me realize how much potential the company had to be successful, so I quit my job and put all of my energy into it."

2 How do you set your business apart from the competition?

KB/ "What differentiates us is our pre-construction process— it's very detailed. If clients don't have an architect or drawings for design concepts, our team helps them create their ideal space and then realize it."

3 What are the defining components of your company's design aesthetics?

KB/ "Our work can be described as very detail-oriented. I am a finish carpenter by trade, so I understand the importance of quality craftsmanship. We love to take on projects with detailed components, like restaurants, and use as many sustainable products as we can."

4 Speaking of sustainability, how do you keep your company culture sustainable?

KB/ "Our business is special because of the wonderful employees who work here. They are passionate and talented in their trade, so I try to create an environment that both supports employees and holds them accountable for their part in the company."

5 How, exactly, do you keep your employees accountable?

KB/ "I encourage consistent and open communication at all times and have frequent team-building activities outside of work. I also help my staff set quarterly business and personal goals. We have quarterly check-ins about them. Also, each year we hire a facilitator to lead a meeting that determines our revenue goal and topic for the year."

6 What was your topic this year?

KB/ "'Keep Kevin selling.' That was a huge deal because it made everyone realize they are all accountable for the company's growth. Our employees understand our desire to expand, so that was a great team-building moment for us."



Kevin Balestrieri
President of BALI Construction
EO member since 2012

7 Does your community play a role in your company culture?

KB/ "Absolutely. We reach out to the community in several ways. Namely, we keep a strong connection with businesses whose buildings we helped create. That's another reason why we love doing restaurants— we can go back to see our work and visit our clients. We also love to promote their businesses and recommend them."

8 How are you using your experiences to give back to your community?

KB/ "I hold information sessions for construction management students at two local colleges, and I've implemented an internship program for the company. The interns are a part of our company culture and learn a variety of skills from our employees."

9 What are your future goals for BALI Construction?

KB/ "We're looking to expand our business nationally. In the short-term, we're doing projects in Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Arizona. I want to have projects in all 50 states by 2020."

10 What tips can you share for those who want to marry their passion with purpose?

KB/ "Figure out what niche your passion could fit into; you have to differentiate yourself from the crowd. If it's your passion, it will come naturally to you. Seeing the concept as successful will be hard at first, but don't give up— it will pay off!"

Want to be interviewed for "10 Questions" in the next issue of Octane? Contact us at octane@eonetnetwork.org!

RISING FROM THE ASHES

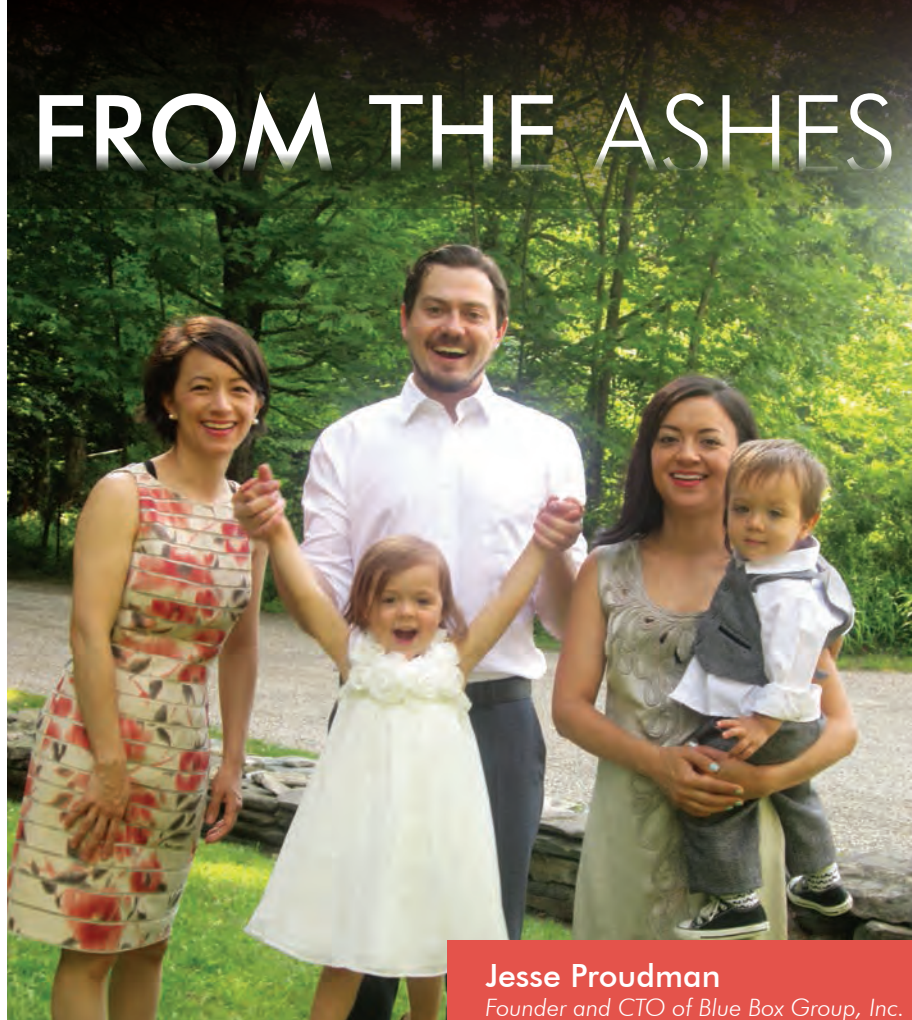
Last month marked the twelfth year of my journey at Blue Box, a managed hosting company I bootstrapped in my dorm days at the University of Puget Sound. We've had tremendous success over the years and more than a few days in the gutter. The past few years, especially, proved very challenging.

In 2011, I made the difficult decision to fund the next chapter of Blue Box, and by the following October, closed a US\$4.3-million initial investment. Everything was going great ... until our largest customer left in December, taking 30% of our revenue with them. Three months later, we discovered embezzlement by an executive, which required an exhausting six-month repair. To say this took a toll on my personal and professional life is an understatement—I was a wreck.

As entrepreneurs are known to do, I clawed my way back from the bottom. But unexpected revenue loss and other distractions translated into unmet sales goals. We were forced to raise a convertible debt bridge loan, followed by a structured debt deal, in February 2014. If you're nodding your head right now then you can understand how this process left me wildly depressed. I needed to mentally get back to where we all want to be: excited to tackle new challenges every day. Here are a few approaches I took that helped me reposition my business and life:

Communicate Effectively

You've probably heard the expression, "Work smarter, not harder." Communicating with the closest people in our lives is no different—it's simply a matter of approach. As Brad Feld notes in his book, "Startup Life: Surviving and Thriving in a Relationship with an Entrepreneur," communication with our spouses can be one of the most challenging aspects of being an entrepreneur. His book gave me a blueprint of specific ways to interact at home without burdening my wife and family with my many professional struggles. Most crucial for me was being able to communicate my emotional state of mind, allowing those around me to understand the pressures of entrepreneurial life. I highly recommend adding this book to your reading list.



Jesse Proudman

Founder and CTO of Blue Box Group, Inc.

Commit to Being Well

It sounds obvious, but one of the first things I cut when the going got tough was proper self-care. That was a mistake. Shortly after my emotional dive, I reached out to my physician and a counselor. Having trained professionals to ask difficult questions and act as sounding boards proved wildly helpful, as did modern pharmaceuticals. When you don't feel well physically, it's hard to feel well emotionally. Also, when I began exercising consistently, I began to see a huge difference. Eating healthy meals and getting enough sleep were other necessities that I shouldn't have taken for granted earlier but did.

Rediscover Your Passion

In November 2013, I read two entrepreneurial biographies that helped me get back on the right course: "The Hard Thing About Hard Things: Building a Business When There Are No Easy Answers," by Ben Horowitz, and "Steve Jobs," by Walter Isaacson. Both books are about wildly successful individuals who went through hell and back to grow their companies. Horowitz's story, in particular, is strikingly similar to that of Blue Box's.

For me, though, the details and outcomes of their stories were irrelevant. Just like my Forum experience, their testimonies helped me find commonalities and come to the realization that I wasn't alone. Also, I learned that behind every successful startup there lies a certain measure of turmoil and catastrophe. Knowing this inspired me to start working on my passions again. I replaced myself as CEO, and the company benefitted immensely because I was back to working where I belonged.

Rising from the ashes is a part of what can make the entrepreneurial life worthwhile, but it is only rewarding if you are mentally present to witness it. I'm proud to say that IBM acquired Blue Box in June to leverage its technology platform as part of the company's private cloud strategy. This marked the end of one personal and professional journey, and the beginning of the next.

Jesse Proudman (pictured center) is an EO Seattle member and the CTO of Blue Box, an IBM company and Seattle-based cloud provider. Jesse is a proud father who races cars in his spare time. Contact Jesse on Twitter at @blueboxjesse.

EO Accelerator

OUR MISSION:

To empower entrepreneurs with the tools, community and accountability to aggressively grow and master their business.

38 OPERATING PROGRAMS **IN**
11 COUNTRIES

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS
WORLDWIDE **600+**

LAUNCHING PROGRAMS IN
LOCATIONS **5** AND
3 COUNTRIES

380+
GRADUATES

GRADUATES IN
EO LOCAL OR
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP **1/6**

COLLABORATED WITH
BUSINESSES **2,585**
SINCE 2005

24 Months
AVERAGE TIME BEFORE
ACCELERATORS HIT
US\$1M
— AND JOIN EO —



"The EO Accelerator program provided me with incredible ideas and connections to members, all of which played pivotal roles in decisions I made to keep up with my company's growth. Thanks to this program, I was able to build a solid foundation for my company; a foundation that supported growth from US\$800,000 to US\$20 million in annual revenue."

—Andrew Duneman (EO Minnesota), EO Accelerator Graduate

WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN EO ACCELERATOR?

There are several ways you can contribute to this renowned program. You can attend an EO Accelerator learning day in your city by visiting www.EOAcceleratorPortal.org; learn how to become an Accountability Group Coach by contacting your Chapter Administrator; or start a program in your own chapter by emailing accelerator@eonetwerk.org. For more details, visit www.eonetwerk.org/eo-accelerator.

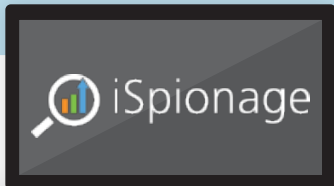
Give Your Business an **ONLINE EDGE**

Chris McGovern

President of Emerging Marketing

Competitive intelligence is an important component for any company, but it is an absolute necessity for business-to-business (B2B) marketing firms. B2B companies face many unique challenges in obtaining customers, not the least of which is having their customers research, scrutinize and comparison shop every purchase. In fact, 80% of a customer's research is done online before they ever contact a vendor, so it is critical they find your website when they're searching.

I've been in sales and marketing for more than 30 years, where I specialize in companies that have complex products and services. I subscribe to a variety of helpful online tools that allow me to audit a company's online presence, or that of their competition. Through these tools, I can determine where a company has an industry edge, where they may be lacking and what to do to improve their online presence. Try these free services to see how you rank against your top competitors:



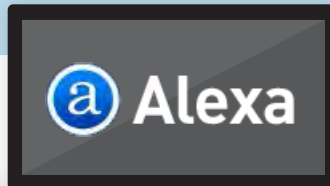
iSpionage.com

Use this tool to view your competitors' top paid and organic keywords.

Benefits include:

- » Covers Google, Yahoo! and Bing search engines
- » Searches 45 million domains for 88 million keywords
- » Identifies PPC (pay-per-click) versus SEO (search engine optimization) competitors
- » Its KEI (knowledge economy indicator) score shows how effective your keywords are in advertising

Tip: Potential customers may be looking for your product, but they may not be searching for you. It's always better to position yourself with search terms your customers are using, rather than your company name.



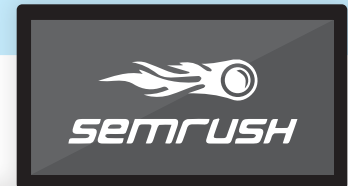
Alexa.com

This tool shows you how popular a site is based on global traffic rankings, basic engagement statistics and top keywords.

Benefits include:

- » Identifies a company's audience geography and demographics
- » Shows engagement percentages through bounce rates, daily page views and customers' average time on site
- » Lists related sites, up-streaming sites and linking sites
- » Incorporates your company's data into visual tools that are easy to use

Tip: You can install the browser extension for Chrome, Firefox or Internet Explorer to instantly view the Alexa rankings of any site you visit. Also, check out the "Wayback Machine" feature to see how your competitors' sites have changed over the years.



SEMrush.com

This tool provides a fairly technical look at organic and paid search terms, in addition to offering an online audit tool that gives an overview of your site's health.

Benefits include:

- » Differentiates statistics of desktop and mobile browsing
- » Well-designed, interactive interface
- » Offers educational webinars by industry professionals
- » Its video-advertising research tool helps you create effective ad campaigns

Tip: The site audit dashboard gives you a good idea of what's going on behind the scenes of your website, allowing you to identify issues that are hurting your search rankings.

Chris McGovern is an EO Columbus member and the president of Emerging Marketing, a consultancy that specializes in helping B2B companies worldwide grow through strategic, targeted marketing. Contact Chris at chris@emergingmarketing.com.

Go Away to Get Ahead



Morris Tabush

Principal of Tabush Group

I never thought I could go a week without email, until I finally did. I started my business 15 years ago when I was a senior in college. Since then, I've taken many vacations, including personal trips, long weekends, an 18-day honeymoon and more. But this past January was my first "real" vacation since I started the business. Let me explain why that's a big deal for me.

In 2000, I started Tabush Group, and have since evolved it into an IT business focused on managed infrastructure and cloud services. IT is different from other service industries in that emergencies are part of the deal. There's no "closing the office for a week" or telling a client, "Let's work on the issue next Tuesday." Our clients rely on us to be available pretty much 24/7.

Like all entrepreneurs, I was always mentally "at work," regardless of where or when. Before 2003, I would check email remotely via a VPN, terminal server and even a dial-up modem (remember those?). But as we all know, Blackberries, smart phones, Wi-Fi and international roaming only further fuels our "always connected" habit. Taking time off is important to everyone. After all, isn't that the reason why we work and save money—so we can enjoy it? In January, I decided to do just that.

As my family and I packed for a week-long vacation to Mexico, I announced to my staff that I was not going to look at emails the entire week. Most of my management team has been with me for years, so I couldn't imagine what could happen during my absence that they couldn't handle. At the same time, I figured that if something really does go wrong that would have required my involvement and couldn't wait a week, then I would have bigger things to worry about and probably deserve the outcome.

The night before we left, I set my out-of-office message, asking people to contact the office for any emergencies, and turned off email on my iPhone. Eight days later, we returned home from warm and sunny Mexico to bitter-cold Brooklyn, New York, USA. It wasn't until I got back to the office the next morning that I opened my email. It was the first time since I started my business that I went eight straight days without "checking in." And do you know what happened while I was gone? A lot, actually. We landed a new client, dealt with hundreds of support tickets, got a few leads, managed proposals, etc. In other words, it was a typical week and everything went just fine ... without me.

Why am I so proud of this? First, because it proved to me that the business can run day-to-day without me. As a business owner, it gives me the confidence that I really can work "on" the business, not "in" the business. And I've been doing just that ever since, focusing my time and energy on Boxtop, our newest offering. Second, it gave my team a chance to shine and prove themselves to me, which I'm sure all of the HR consultants out there would agree is good for their morale. Finally, it made me enjoy my vacation more than I ever had in the past. I came back to the office recharged, chock-full of ideas and ready to rock and roll. Who knew that simply going away could help you get ahead?

Morris Tabush (pictured) is an EO New York member who loves technology and recently started Boxtop, which helps companies move to the cloud, simplify their IT and focus on growth. Contact Morris at mtabush@tabush.com.

Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Miranda Barrett

EO's Vice President of Strategic Engagement

What do a university in Kenya, a women's entrepreneurship group in Peru and a non-profit in Nigeria have in common? They are just a few of the many ways in which EO is engaging the local entrepreneurial ecosystem on a global scale. By building these new relationships, and through our growing commitment to globalization, EO members are helping us further realize our vision of becoming the world's most influential community of entrepreneurs.

In the past year alone, EO's Global Growth Task Team (GGTT) developed new ways to launch and grow chapters through a special "Entrepreneur Tour," where they focused their efforts on strategic engagement with the wider community. For example, with new chapter launches in progress in both Peru and Chile, the team spent time locally hosting breakfasts for entrepreneurship organizations, holding an EO Global Student Entrepreneur Awards (EO GSEA) competition at a university, meeting with the press and diplomats, and recruiting new members. Why? Because each stop is a step toward nurturing the global entrepreneurial ecosystem and our role within it.

"By truly connecting with the community, we demonstrate our commitment and gain the support we need when new chapters are launched," said Jamie Douraghy, Global Growth Chair and a member of EO Los Angeles. "We're working hard to support local entrepreneurs and give back, and in doing so, they're more open to helping us find quality members."

The impact of this initiative has been felt near and far. In both South America and Africa, for example, the EO GSEA program proved to be a unique tool to recruit new members. In Lagos, Nigeria, prospective members were invited to watch or judge the event, and then remained for a recruitment presentation and dinner that highlighted the vision and mission of our organization. Among other programs that play a role in generating interest in EO, EO GSEA is one that recognizes successful university students who are operating their own businesses. It's just one way EO is expanding its role as a global thought leader.

"This is all about the power of connections," said Sri Bharatam, EO's Chair of the Africa initiative and a member of EO East Africa. "The potential for EO to grow and make a meaningful difference in lives is so much greater when we don't go at it alone. The value of engaging with the ecosystem is beyond measure. From recruitment and finding great speakers to accessing resources, it all comes from the seeds you plant." Sri was recently recognized



Miranda (third from right), with GGTT and EO members

as EO's "Global Citizen of the Year" for his work in nurturing entrepreneurial growth in Africa, launching several chapters and supporting the local business landscape.

Meanwhile, in China, EO is connecting with various government offices, and a similar tour is planned in November to engage new and nearly launched chapters. The Discover China Series (DCS) event in Shanghai, in particular, will showcase the Chinese culture to the EO world. "The DCS is the perfect event for those who are interested in learning more about China and meeting our great members," said Wing Hong Soong, Chair of the China initiative. "It's also a way for us to showcase EO externally to Chinese entrepreneurial leaders. We expect to receive attention from important business leaders that will help our chapters thrive."

Committed to expanding its influence, EO will continue to pave the way for growth in the farthest corners of the world. Since 1987, EO has grown considerably in membership size and geographical representation. And thanks to the GGTT's recent efforts, EO now has chapters in Ecuador, Brazil (São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro), Nigeria (Lagos and Abuja), South Africa (Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg), Kenya, Tanzania and China (Hainan, China South, Dalian and China East).

These are just a few of the GGTT's recent accomplishments, with more wins coming down the pipeline. In the past, the message was that EO wanted to have a "seat at the table" at important entrepreneurship gatherings. The new vision is that EO can be the table—the gathering point for important players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This will bring increased visibility that will help with membership recruitment, strategic alliances, access to experts and so much more.

Do you know of any entrepreneurs in China, Africa or South America that might be a good fit for EO? To refer prospective members, get involved in a chapter launch or be connected to the GGTT, please contact Miranda Barrett at mbarrett@eonetwork.org.

THE POWER OF A GESTURE



Photo credit: KDMedia Australia

Mick Mullins

EO Brisbane

EO Brisbane has a tradition of celebrating at the end of each fiscal year, lauding the accomplishments of the departing administration and installing new board members. This year, we embraced the French concept of *dîner en blanc*, a private party whose location isn't announced until the day of the event and where all guests are required to wear white. Since our annual parties are held during Australia's winter season, you can only imagine how difficult it is to dress in weather-appropriate, white attire.

Nevertheless, we came dressed for a good time. Rob Nixon, the outgoing Chapter President, led the ceremony, handing the "baton" from one leader to the next. The awards portion highlighted members who epitomized EO's five core values and included an award honoring Darren Mullen, who passed away in the early formation of the chapter. This award is particularly special to me since I was a Forum buddy of Darren's, and I had the honor of presenting it. This

year's winner, Belinda Vesey-Brown, is a powerhouse contributor who oversaw the launch of our EO Accelerator program in a matter of weeks. This was a very special moment to share with Belinda, and she received our chapter's highest honor—the chance to crowd surf! It's a meaningful ritual that shows our appreciation.

To my surprise, I was also honored that night for my service to the chapter. Before I knew it, I was lifted up by my peers and crowd surfing across the room. I have no idea how everyone held me, but it was one of the most euphoric moments of my life. I think we all harbor a dream of being lifted onto the shoulders of our peers, yet this was most humbling. It was apparent in that moment the respect I held from my peers and the gratitude I felt in return. The power of that gesture has had a profound impact on me. Thank you, EO Brisbane, for your (literal) support! I think my smile says it all.

Building Memories One Bottle at a Time

Oscar Diveroli

EO South Florida



My Forum, "The Directors," is the founding Forum of EO South Florida and boasts nearly 100 combined years of EO experience among its members. To celebrate our growth, we spent our last retreat in Napa Valley, California, USA, and it was arguably the best retreat in our rich history. Not only did we rent a compound and engage in deep and meaningful exercises, but we met a vintner while touring the region. In an instant, an entrepreneurial bond was established.

Ten hours of laughter, storytelling and bonding later, we came up with a way to commemorate our new friend and build upon the cool experience: create "The Directors" wine. Our wine was formed from one barrel of the finest Cabernet Sauvignon that our honorary Forum brother created from the hills of Howell Mountain. After six months of barrel-choosing, label-designing and bottling, the unveiling of our wine occurred. We flew the vintner down to Miami, Florida, USA, as a dinner party guest and soaked in the culmination of our passion project. Our loved ones enjoyed the fruits of our collective labor, and the overall experience served as a real testament to what EO is all about.

The typical misconception about the primary value of EO is that membership will equate to being a more successful entrepreneur by way of learning events and experience-sharing. To that I say, "Yes and no." The real value, in my opinion, is having the honor and privilege of being allowed into each other's personal and professional lives without thought or hesitation, due to the safe environment in which we, in EO, thrive. Creating our wine was just added proof to me that EO brings more to the table than just business support, and that's a delicious notion.

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



David Nobbs

EO Saskatoon

Managing Partner at Canpulse Foods

Joined EO in July 2015

How did you hear about EO, and what inspired you to join?

DN/ "A close friend and EO member suggested I join. Our company has had fairly significant growth in the past 13 years, and he recognized I was struggling with certain aspects of my business; mainly, the fact that I have my fingers in too many issues on a day-to-day basis. Additionally, we recently purchased the shares of a significant and strategic partner, and the idea of having a group of people who could offer their thoughts, especially on long-term issues, is important to me."

What would people be surprised to learn about your global exporting business?

DN/ "About 15% of our business is tied to the export of canary seed from Canada, which has no human food use—it's for the birds! Canada is the dominant global trader of canary seed and Latin countries tend to consume the largest volumes. The other 85% of our exporting business focuses on red and green lentil exports, which of course is for human consumption."

Your business is known for its efficient movement of farm products to end users. What tip can you offer regarding how to develop greater efficiencies?

DN/ "I think supply-chain logistics is more about constant cost analysis than anything. Since our company exports in U.S. dollars, something as simple as a shift in USD/CAD can determine if we ship grain to Vancouver or Montreal because our domestic freight costs shift with the dollar. I also think that visiting supply-chain customers can create great paybacks."

You stress the importance of honesty and transparency in your business. How do you go about engraining that into your company culture?

DN/ "It's a funny question because I have never had to try and engrain those values. We hire strong people and show them how we treat both our vendors and customers. I will never ask a staff member to push the principles of our business, and they know it."

What insights do you bring to the EO community, and what are you hoping to get in return as a member?

DN/ "I think one of my greatest strengths has been building customer relationships, especially in destination markets, so hopefully some of those insights will help others, irrespective of the destination of their products. I hope to learn from others who have taken their businesses through the next growth phase and how they were able to build teams to achieve success."

Welcome David to EO— contact him at david@canpulsefoods.com!

MyEO Spotlight: Bringing Forum to Your Family

"Growing up in a family of entrepreneurs tends to develop an entirely different set of perspectives that revolve around watching how much of the world we can change through determination, ingenuity and perseverance. The Young Adult Forum unites the next generation of entrepreneurs in a place where we can relate to one another and gain value by sharing our life experiences."

—Nic, 24, son of Greg Stemm (EO Tampa Bay)

Want to share the Forum experience with your children? Now you can through the Young Adult Forum (YAF), a new MyEO initiative that brings the peer-to-peer power of Forum to your kids. Launched in early 2015 by a group of entrepreneurially minded young adults, YAF is currently targeting children of members, ages 18 to 28. Opportunities to engage are available across the United States, Canada, Europe and any other region where interest exists. If you'd like to give the gift of Forum to your young adults, contact sydney.eoyaf@gmail.com for more information.



Members of YAF; Nic is second from the right



Kolkata Member Honored with Top Industry Award

Naresh Pachisia, one of EO Kolkata's most tenured members, was recently honored with the "CNBC TV18 Best Regional Financial Advisor Award (East)." Naresh's company, SKP Securities Ltd., is a regional leader in wealth management and mutual funds distribution.

Tampa Bay Member Addresses Risk Management

Rachid Zahidi, a risk-management expert, published a new book, titled "The Business Immunity System," wherein he outlines the use of data-security measures to maintain a company's health and longevity. Rachid is the president and CEO of Sentinel Background Checks.



Germany-Berlin Member Profiled in Bloomberg Businessweek

Julia Derndinger, a longtime EO leader and local EO Accelerator champion, was recently profiled in *Bloomberg Businessweek*, wherein she discussed her role as a "startup therapist" in Berlin and the state of entrepreneurship locally. Julia is the founder of several companies and works under the brand: die Gründertrainerin.



Gujarat Member Spotlighted in Business India

In a recent *Business India* article, titled "Hitting the Mark," Anuja Parikh was highlighted as EO South Asia's 1,000th member, a significant feat for the thriving region. Anuja is the president of Intech Systems, a leading software-consulting, implementation and management services company. She joined EO in April.



New Jersey Members Publish New Book

R.J. Lewis (pictured right), president and CEO of e-Healthcare Solutions, and Scott Weintraub (pictured left), principal of Healthcare Regional Marketing, released a new book, titled "RESULTS: The Future of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing." The book provides a forward-looking overview of key healthcare marketing trends and outcome-based medicine.



New York Member Featured on "The Today Show"

Jeremy Miller's company, FSASTore.com, was recently featured on "The Today Show" as a source for millions of Americans with a flexible spending account (FSA) to shop for FSA-eligible products. FSASTore.com is the only "one-stop shop" stocked exclusively with FSA-eligible products and services.

GLOBAL LEARNING CALENDAR

2015

EO Key Executive
PROGRAM

1-4 NOVEMBER | EO KEY EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

Dedham, Massachusetts, USA
Sold out! Join the wait list



1-5 NOVEMBER | EO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Washington, D.C., USA

EO24

19 NOVEMBER | EO24

Virtual
24 hours of learning at your fingertips

2016



**9-13 MARCH |
EO BANFF GLOBAL UNIVERSITY**

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Register now!

EO London Business School
Growth Forum

**30 MARCH-2 APRIL | 2016 EO/LONDON
BUSINESS SCHOOL GROWTH FORUM**

London, England
Registration opens 20 October 2015

EO Executive Education

**13-17 APRIL | 2016 EO/WHARTON EXECUTIVE
EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Registration opens 8 October 2015



**12-15 MAY
EO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

Bangkok, Thailand
*By invitation only

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PROGRAM

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PROGRAM, CLASS OF 2018, YEAR 1**

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Applications available 23 October 2015

Coming Soon!

2016 EO LONDON GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

7-11 September
London, England

2016 EO KEY EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

19-22 October
Dedham, Massachusetts, USA

**2017 EO MEXICO
GLOBAL UNIVERSITY**

Mexico City, Mexico

For more event information, visit events.eonetwork.org
or contact events@eonetwork.org.

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visit www.eoprivileges.com!

Want to register for
upcoming MyEO and
regional events?

Expand your EO learning by
attending one of these events:

- » **EO Alchemy** – Denver, Colorado, USA; 6-9 October 2015
- » **EO Thrive** – Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA; 28-30 October 2015
- » **EO Ignite Auckland** – Auckland, New Zealand; 18-20 November 2015
- » **EO RIE** – New Delhi, India; 18-21 February 2016

For more information, scan the QR code at right.



Entrepreneurs' Organization
500 Montgomery Street, Suite 700
Alexandria, VA 22314-1437
USA



OUR MISSION

To engage leading entrepreneurs to learn and grow.

Coming Soon— A New Members-Only Website!

You've asked for it, and we're delivering! In Q2, EO will launch an updated member website, to include a variety of new resources, benefits and tools that will help you maximize your EO experience.

Things to look for include:

- Intuitive user interface
- Access via any mobile device, tablet or laptop
- Content available based on EO location and leadership role
- All member data searchable in a single, standardized database
- One-click search functionality
- Upgraded event-registration tools
- Sharing and storing documents with ease
- Instant connectivity with 11,000+ EO peers

These are just a few of the new benefits associated with our faster, more robust member website! For more information, contact technology@eonetnetwork.org.

