

### Interview with Troy Rushton, CEO Winged Media

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Here's your program.

Michael Cyger: Hey everyone, my name is Michael Cyger. I'm the publisher of DomainSherpa.com, the Domain Name Authority and the place where you can learn how to become a successful domain name entrepreneur directly from the expert themselves.

Everyone talks about domain names. Dropping, grabbing, flipping, holding, building...but what if you just want to make some money off the domain names that you own or are planning on buying?

Joining me is Troy Rushton. He is the founder of Winged Media, a collection of online solutions that together leverage the full value of domain assets for professional domainers, traditional investors and those just beginning to get involved in the domain name trading development areas. Troy started four companies, three of which he has successfully sold to larger companies for millions. He is on his fourth now which we are going to talk about today.

I invited him here to talk about his current venture, Protrada, his entrepreneurial success, mistakes he has made along the way, and what you can learn from his Internet expertise.

Troy, welcome.

Troy: Thank you, Michael, and how are you?

Michael: Great. It is great to have you.

Troy: Thank you.

Michael: I want to start off today's show with the disclosure. So, Troy bear with me. Troy's company Winged Media and their software product Protrada are sponsors of the DomainSherpa show. I didn't ask Troy to come on the show because of this. When he signed up to sponsor DomainSherpa it was

because of our content, what we are delivering to the community, to educate people about domain names, not a promise of a featured interview. Instead I asked Troy to come on the show today because he is an innovative entrepreneur who has a long history of Internet success. While I do think that Protrada is a service that you should sign up for and try out, because I have and I believe it goes beyond any other software products that I have seen in the market place. Today's show is going to focus on Troy, what you can learn from him, not be a sales pitch for his product.

Alright that is out of the way. Troy, I like to start off the show with a little background on the guest. One of the most interesting things I have found out about you was not the businesses that you have started and sold in the past, not your hustle and sales, not your prowess in Internet startups, it was that you were named one of the 40 most influential men by Australia's Men's Style Magazine back in late 2009, early 2010. Most influential Men's Style Magazine! Tell me about that.

Troy: It was an interesting experience, Michael. I went to the dinner and at the dinner they paired off all the men with female people just to get the conversation flowing. And I was actually quite interested when I was there, because they had very well known celebrities. And there I was in the middle as I was a little bit of a geek if you like in amongst all the celebrities and the glamour of these sorts of events. I spent some time in the Murdock magazine business. So I sort of had an understanding of how the magazine events went along. And it was quite an experience. It was great to be part of that.

Michael: So wait a second. Men's Style Magazine in Australia has a wide distribution like a similar magazine here in the U.S. does. They said "Troy we think you are influential, would you please come and have dinner with us?"

Troy: Yes, technically, yes.

Michael: Was that a lead in to actually being named one of the 40 most?

Troy: Actually dinner was post being-named. So I got the phone call. I thought it was one of my friends playing a prank, a bit of a prankster,

Michael. So it turned out to be correct. And the photographer turned up and I was in print with all the other real celebrities. So I was actually interested. I think myself work in influential sort of social media. And we got a bit of commentary and a few seminars to fill that stuff. And obviously I bubbled up in Australia and obviously we are a much smaller market than in the states. But I was certainly proud to be named.

Michael: So what they said about you in the magazine had to do with your Internet skills, your social media skills, they looked at you as an up and comer on the Internet.

Troy: Yes I think again this might be a small community based part of an Australian Internet market. As I look into the states as I have for a long time. So when you asked about comment, the sort of comment in the Australian market is typically about Internet more broadly and globally. So I think to that end they recognize that as being someone of influence. And they fit me in.

Michael: So you didn't have to get in your underwear and do a photo shoot in an awkward position?

Troy: Thankfully not Michael, because there are a lot of good looking celebrity stars. I mean real celebrities. So Timmy Cahill and some of the soccer players were there. So I'm certainly glad it was coat and tie.

Michael: Let's take a step back and talk about domain names. How many domain names do you personally own and in what TLDs do they shake out, roughly?

Troy: As to the second part mainly .coms, .nets and .orgs. In Australia I don't typically get involved with .com.au's. Done some German .de's that is predominately what the tail is. .co's most recently. .me's as well. I think if you look at the number that moves around because we are trading domains all the time.

Michael: No you personally. Not your company. You personally.

Troy: I maximized the major to my company right now. I started a company and put my portfolio in and it is part of my commitment to my shareholders. I don't trade separately.

Michael: Okay for the company how many roughly do you have?

Troy: Probably about 150,000. Of that premium it is probably closer to 5,000 more premium domains - That being worth \$500 or \$1,000 a piece.

Michael: What do you think is the most valuable domain name that you own? If you had to throw them all away and you could only keep one of them which one would you keep?

Troy: I could only probably put that...keep one I'd keep Protrada.com. I think from a trading standpoint. Most of our domain names we sort of have a small budget. We've gone for more volume, more scale across more verticals. So if we had a domain name worth \$5,000 to \$10,000 that would be a pretty good outcome. Honest we trade them so regularly...barcoasters.com was a celebration and a nice little one. There those are sort of meat \$5,000 to \$10,000 domains. I couldn't even tell you one specific one Michael unfortunately. There are many.

Michael: So I want to spend some time on your background Troy because I think it is important for entrepreneurs to see how your professional experience has led to your success today. So if I go into one of my favorite research sites, I go to LinkedIn. I can see that you graduated from college in Australia. A college called Hunter Institute of Technology, you studied accounting and business. Did you always know that you wanted to be an entrepreneur even heading into college from high school?

Troy: Yes absolutely. I think when I go back to when I was young with my brother roaming the streets, knocking on doors asking to wash cars and pick up leaves; I think we started our entrepreneur ventures way back then. And that was when I was 12 years old. It has always been in the blood. One of my favorite memories was Wall Street as a young kid. So I think the aspiration of being an entrepreneur was always there. My Mom actually pushed me into

accounting and she had been doing that. And it was a natural flow; I had done some bookkeeping with her. And the next thing I was down that path.

Michael: And you probably dreaded it but now you are so thankful that you have that accounting background?

Troy: Absolutely. Honestly I actually loved it. I liked it. The debit and credit, black and white, it was all very pure. It was all very predetermined, accounting. So I quite enjoyed that and as a CO, I've been a CO probably the last 15 years of my life, it has helped me be a CO with accounting experience. I can do deals. I read balance sheets and that puts me ahead of some of my colleagues.

Michael: Definitely. Why did you choose a technology institute when you were studying business and accounting? I don't know the universities or colleges in Australia, but...

Troy: It doesn't actually reflect, it is not a technology campus as such. They tend to...colleges in Australia, technical colleges will be called them, universities some are in the states. They just tend to grab a name because it suits a particular focus. It was more geographically based. It was the most closest place for me. So where I lived was sort of an hour north of Sydney and that was the one that was most closest to me so I tended to just flow into that.

Michael: A lot of times people come right out of college, they really don't know what they want to do, they land in a position and it turns out to be a position that really shapes the way they head in business. Your first position out of college was a business and finance manager for Murdoch Magazines. Is this the Murdoch, Rupert Murdoch?

Troy: Is this Mr. Murdoch? Yes. Actually my LinkedIn actually doesn't quite cover it. Before that I came out straight into an accounting firm. I was there for four months and then I worked for a group called Scholastic. You guys in the states would know Scholastics, here it is a large children's publisher. So they have got a pretty good business here in Australia. So I spent probably five years with them before joining the Murdoch's. So that

was Rupert's actual nephew was the owner of the Murdoch branch in Australia.

Michael: And so what did you learn at Murdoch Magazines that you look back on and say that really helped set me up as an entrepreneur?

Troy: I think when you get in these big organizations they have such a global view. I mean obviously scholastic deals but we are very straight and focused, versus Murdoch where we constantly looked abroad to Germany and other states as to how we would distribute product. So I learned boardroom skirmishes. And how to deal with, at the time I was in my very early 20s, so I was dealing with people with far more education and experience than myself. So I think that really taught me how to navigate the boardroom which is great for later use: How to identify opportunity and how to really assess an opportunity. Everyone comes up with ideas and I think we used that to go through the idea emotionally you start to see well I might like it and so will my six friends but will this sky, will this grow. This is a business here. And I think with Murdoch experience I learned a little bit about that process.

We are obviously looking at books a lot and magazine opportunities and constantly having to research will this grow beyond our immediate sphere. So having the courage to say no, equally having the courage to say yes, and obviously keep your cost quite tight. I think of all the things that is very easy to get lavish on cost and quite high quite early, but I think for us it was trying to monetize as early as you possibly could in the development process.

Michael: And so Murdoch Magazines, were they traditionally focused on business to business, business to consumer or were they children's, were they books, were they just magazines and periodicals? How did they shake out and titles did they...?

Troy: The magazine business was the predominant business but it had a much larger book publishing business which I eventually ended up with my scholastic experience. The magazines I lot of titles are in the states, Mary Claire, Men's Health, Better Homes and Garden. I had half a dozen really strong titles here in Australia in addition to that I had a nice Internet business that was starting to immerge. So I got involved with that. And that was my

first forage into the Internet. The Internet lagged a little bit on the states but that business gave me a great insight, this was back in late '99 early 2000, I was able to see inside the Internet as a business opportunity. So that with the magazines, with the books, is basically the magazine business there at Murdoch.

Michael: Great. So you left Murdoch Magazines and you started your first company which was called GRV Media. What did GRV stand for?

Troy: Global Royal Vision. So I come an hour north to Sydney every day and catching the train as well as all the other commuters into the city. And if you look around most are pretty bored. So I was one of those guys and I thought that it would be great to have TV right on this train right now. So I set about with an affiliate broad vision of putting TV on trains here in Australia. We had a lot of value as a big, big vision. Again I was probably in my mid 20s at this stage. And it was an exciting opportunity. We were ahead of our times in terms of technology. A lot of the rails are owned by government. Governments, they always sort of earn the side of safety and putting entertainment is a bit of a luxury item.

So the biggest challenge was raising the capital to do the capics to fit out the trains. So we got the technology done. We had some international military people come and have a look at how we were actually delivering media to a mobile train. Again this was back in early 2000. So they thought it was quite innovative. We successfully got a hold bit of program going with a lot rail through the city here in Sydney and I sold that business on to someone who had a bit more money to grow the opportunity.

Michael: So you had this idea that you put TV on the trains. Would it be sort of like on the airplanes where you are sitting down and you have the single TV monitor above you and you watch the pre-programmed CNN or what have you and the commercials and a captive audience?

Troy: Basically we sort of tailor the content relative to the audience. Commuter, early morning, we knew the average time of the travelers onboard, so we sort of got it down to an understanding how to match program with their travel habits. So we had a lot of demographic profiling of the



audience and then we would run it. So we had a lot of content deals here in Australia. So we were running the Fox and the news and that sort of programs. We had institutional. We had the History Channel. So again a lot of short shot programming to parallel the journey.

Michael: What was the business model that you had for GRV Media?

Troy: It was all advertising. If I was trying to do that business today, now the Internet is there, and You Tube, and this was all before You Tube, so content was quite difficult. You had to go to the larger media companies to get content. And they didn't give it away easily so I had to do a lot of deals where is as sort of content for ad space. So that was great but the model was fundamentally advertising. We did a ricocheted back with the route network again. So we took all the risk. And that was one of the challenges with the business model that if I had my time over again I would have really addressed early. I would have put it in more as a service to the router network. I would have tried to get some kiddy advertisers instead onboard much earlier in the process. And try to get it built and take all the risk and then try to sell it. But we thought it was good. it was innovative. A lot of people said it couldn't be done. In rural Australia we had the long haul where we could watch the movies. That had been there for some time but the short time, entertainment on a commuter route was first on Australia.

Michael: Wow so you actually got it implemented on the trains in Australia? You did the deals with major television companies, you brought it in, you brought in advertisers? How many staff did you have at GRV Media?

Troy: It was quite light because we were a startup. So I was an entrepreneur funding a lot of it. I had some friends and extended family we who put some money in as you do. And we got going. We made some money on property was I was able to sort of get this underway. Left the Murdoch group so I had no income and I had to work. So I had to reach behind me and move forward. So there was only about a half a dozen people. We got up to about a dozen at one point when we joined the build. And then after that I started scaling it back and we were basically some sales guys selling the ads, a maintenance guy and myself doing a bit of everything. I had to learn how to cut content and how to program, how to manage networks. And I know some of the

advertising space as well. So it was a good experience. You know what I do now, because we are in different times now Michael.

Michael: So you ended up selling GRV Media to a larger transit company. What was that?

Troy: We sold to a Swiss group out of Melbourne. A small public company, a publicly listed company here in Australia. Now we are focused on the outdoor digital space. So now we are putting DVD movies into hotels in to buy. So that was one of the airport focuses. They built a technology platform to do the On Demand Continental Hotel. And so we sat alongside that as an out of home if you like digital offering. So we started their Transit Division. Now we are doing screens in shopping centers and a whole myriad of screens somewhere where the audience is. The challenge is always to get the critical mass to get the advertising dollars behind it. So that is always the challenge with those kinds of models. But I sold that back in '04 and for not as much as we liked but I was certainly happy to sell the company. We were starting to get a bit stretched for cash. So that sell certainly helped us to grow the business. I started on with a management company for the next 12 months. I mean before moving on to another opportunity.

Michael: And what did you sell the company for?

Troy: It was early small millions. It was just seven figures. It was quite a small deal compared to what we have grown to do these days. But it was certainly a great deal at the time. I think when we were in that position we had a few big deals with other large public companies that fell through ultimately. So in the end it was the one I least preferred at the time to be honest. It was a life saving deal so we did the deal with share options and stuff. The cash component with all the share options put us in the small millions.

Michael: And it is a very respectable entrepreneurial endeavor almost immediately out of college that moved you off on your entrepreneurial career. Very impressive from my perspective being able to look at what you did from a startup. Having a vision in a public utility and being able to

change that because when you deal with public utilities or governments – I pity the people.

Troy: I think indecision is the safest spot. I understand their protocol and public safety but definitely a lazy group to sort of try and get a deal done with.

Michael: So you stayed on with Swish Transit for a year as their contract CEO and then you moved on to another opportunity at Go Transit Media. Was that the same company or a different company?

Troy: No it was a different company but I had been in the transit space and go headhunted by an older guy who had founded a bus advertising company. So it is off digital now but more in the sort of transit lines. I seen an opportunity there. This guy was sort of older and wanted to build his company up and sell it. I some in as a guy who just made a sale, I came with a good background, fast growth sort of guy. And so Robert took me on again as CEO. And we turned his company around, it was losing money and in a short contract and I just kind of put it in order to see where we were at. And we had a building success really. We turned that company around. I think we triples the amount of busses he had on his fleet. In fact he sold that company about five years ago for about in the \$13-\$14,000,000s. So we were instrumental in getting that deal underway as well.

Michael: That's fantastic. So basically you just used your management skills, your accounting skills. You looked at the P&L Line and you were able to figure out where the waste is, where the opportunity is and then you just drove it right off of that game plan.

Troy: Yes I think skill set is always a little bit differently about opportunities. So I think you go back to the TV and the trains, if you go back to the bus advertising I welcome these opportunities and fairly standard way to think about it. And for me I had to think about it differently. Particularly when you look at it and say that is not working so well, how do we change it? So with the bus idea, I just looked around and changed the model, I changed the ad format, changed the packaging, changed how I reached out to the audience and sold it. It was a small business sort of play. And then I rolled

that out through national advertisers. And again by adding more busses and broadening our geographical reach it became more relevant for the brand advertisers. So one plus one does not equal five very quickly. So in the space of six months we started to see very positive returns and after my quick 12 month contract – the reason I left there was because really I got headhunted to come to the Internet space otherwise I would have seen that deal through.

Michael: I want to get into the Internet space because that is what I find most interesting part of it, but I want to pause it for a moment here because I feel like a lot of domain name investors, a lot of entrepreneurs need to think differently in order to look for the financial opportunities that exist. You know when Apple launches a new product and it becomes an entire computer division like iPad. People talk about it replacing laptops. There is an entire industry that opens up. When television sets have the ability to go three dimensions or four dimensions. Suddenly the entire landscape opens up again. There is opportunities there not only for domain name investors but entrepreneurs. How do you think differently about opportunities? What is your process for thinking? Is it purely just I'm on this train and I can't believe I don't have anything to do? Or is it an actual process where you think about a situation where something is lacking and then you go through a process yourself?

Troy: I think it's ideation is what I call it. It is just something that you just sort of do. You think that way, once your mind opens up to that sort of directional thinking I think you just think of opportunities all the time. It is a bit like selling your house and then all of the sudden there is for sale signs everywhere. Or you are thinking about buying a particular car and there they are everywhere. And once you open your mind up in that direction I think then solving problems becomes an easy thing to think about. So again, most of it is on personal experiences, I had another business that I started when I was young and it was about trying to solve a problem in the video industry.

So here in Australia it was an issue where people were borrowing videos, taking them and not returning them and it was costing the video industry multi millions of dollars a year. I think in excess of \$60,000,000 a year in lost revenues and replacing of the videos. So I simply said "I can solve that problem." And I put together a centralized data base and that was quite easily

done, again early days of the Internet, I used that process. And that was a nice one and we got it in and it is sort littered sort of through my career having mentioned that one so much. That was Video Store Guardian. So again hearing the opportunity of the problem and how to solve it and having personal experience with the problem or the challenge or the issue, I'm not someone that complains, I'm someone who tries to solve it.

I just think it could be solved this way. I mean for every one good idea I've got there is probably 100 bad ideas, right? You think this is a great idea and then you sort of investigate it and you realize it is too tough. Then I get ideas coming to me fairly regularly here mostly from Australia but even abroad. Someone sends an idea along, typically Internet based these days or a buddy at a BBQ, "So I've got an idea". So then he starts talking about the idea and very quickly I can see the drama or the challenge or the issue or the problem with the idea. And I can dismiss it. I think it is your idea and you have that passion around it and you don't see those problems sometimes, it is always good to test it. But I think that is what I typically do. So a business is basically being to solve a problem that typically I've had personally, or I have heard about somehow.

Michael: I think you bring up a great point that I think a lot of other people miss is that when you are selling your house and suddenly there are a million for sale signs pop up instantly. They have been there the whole time you just haven't noticed them. I have a friend that bought a Chrysler Caravan. Is it a care or is it a van. You know that marketing thing. I had never seen one before until they bought it. Suddenly they are all over the place. I think that directly ties to ideation which you said because when you start thinking about new ideas you get more and more ideas. I know I find I get up early in the morning before my kids wake up - I get on my treadmill if it is dark outside, and that is where my brain starts moving - During exercise. Do you have an area, a time of the day, or something that you do where you tend to find more ideas are popping up rather than you know nothing is happening during that part of the day?

Troy: Not specifically. I don't have a 'treadmill' moment. I have, actually when I am not running businesses I have actually got properties where I buy

cows. Sometimes I'm out in the boots with my cows and just enjoying the rural atmosphere. And that is a nice time to think. And there could be a part of a day where I think about stuff. But otherwise sometimes not a big idea, or the idea we actually go with is not the original idea. We might start down a track and say you know what that's not the idea but three degrees to the left maybe that is the idea. So look at the businesses we have now. We keep evolving it as the market tells us to or we learn about it or again we hit another barrier and we think hang on, wow that is the bigger idea than what we originally had. So it happens at any moment, at any time if you are just looking for it. I think sometimes you know it. You spread your mind open to it and you have a 'treadmill moment'.

Michael: So how do you back your ideas how do you take all these ideas that you have, how do you run them through a quick analysis of whether it is worthless, whether it is a mediocre idea that is only good for a single person, or whether it is a scalable idea that could be really big. How do you do that?

Troy: I think we have another part of the business called Winged Adventures. As a matter of fact it takes in opportunities like something in the States called Y Combinator.

Michael: Y Combinator.

Troy: Yes. That's it. You take some little ideas, you put a little money into it and you get it going. So we get these opportunities all the time. And whenever I'm assessing them, my own or someone in the team here, it's always going to be based on who is going to use this idea, who else is going to use it, how far is it ahead where other things are (like I've looked on the Bleeding Edge and that is not a good space). I think the Leading Edge is great. First the market is good but it can be very costly to educate the market. So always think of the cost to get something up and how far is the next idea close to me, behind me, or beside me. And the biggest thing I think about is who would like this idea as a big company? Like if we build this company, who can we sell this opportunity to? So who are we really solving this for? So it might be a consumer based company but again it could be solving something for Amazon. It could be solving something for Go Daddy. We will think about

these three big guys. They have in my opinion it's more difficult for them to innovate. I think.

I did think of running B companies. I think I've found my space, my niche, is to innovate where the bigger companies might not want to tread. And so we will work hard. We will work whatever we need to work and we will just have a startup field. So I think we can do that very efficiently and get that done. And then we can really think about these ideas in as much as who would like this idea and how do we package it up for them? So we start to build up ideas based on the exit really.

Michael: Alright, I'm going to come back to that because I want to ask you who your exit is for Protrada but we will resume where we left off, in your experience and your professional path. The next company you started up after you left Go Transit Media as a contract CEO, General Manager and turning that company around. You went and started up iMega Group. What did iMega Group do?

Troy: Basically I came in again as my experience with turning companies around. And I joined a group of guys, in fact two guys at a time, who were quite savvy in the Internet marketing space. So we are talking now mid 2000s. This is when Ad Words was out. They were looking at doing some affiliate marketing and they heard of the keyword arbitrage or traffic arbitrage, pay per click arbitrage. So yes these guys are starting to think about these sorts of ideas. They read it somewhere and wanted to get it going. And they need someone to sort of come in and sort of robustly build a team, do the business, and then exit it. I got recruited and left the transit opportunity to join this. It sounded right up my alley. I like to build up opportunities. So I joined that more or less to CFO/COO capacity. So I was selling the product, helping build the product and then I had the business together that actually exited.

So I got the shoe box with all the receipts and they said Troy can you put this into a business? At the time it wasn't call the IMega. It was called something else. And then there was a couple of different entrepreneurs together. We strung our businesses together. Rebrand as IMega and sold that insignia within six months. We had only completed a sale.

Michael: So basically you were buying low, you were selling high. You were doing Arbitrage when it came to online advertising?

Troy: Absolutely. So we had an AdWords account once and it had a million keywords in it. Which I think is quite a bit difficult these days. I've certainly not duplicated it ever since. But back in those days, this was before Google really started building the quality into their accent product. We were driving, trying to give up AdWords, millions, literally millions of click a day from these keywords. And we are making pennies per click. We had a click through of 80 or 90% back then. If you went to one of our pages, which was originally and Ad Sense blog and then we put two Ad Sense blogs in the search box which then just did another Ad Sense search. So that was quite cool. I didn't really value ads. I didn't necessarily like the business, but I love the money. We were doing quite well. I think we were all amazed every time we looked these keywords up it would just do it. It wasn't my idea. So I was quite amazed by young entrepreneur who had the idea on onset. He was a snowboarding guy. He couldn't even get a credit card when he first joined us but he raised some money, he borrowed some money from friends and family. He grew his business in space in two months. We basically acquired him, brought him in and you know this young snowboarding guy, surfy sort of guy was quite intelligent obviously and considering the opportunity we just wrapped the team around him and just went after it. And again drove a couple million people a day. It was great.

Michael: Wow so what did you grow the revenue to for iMega Group? Do you remember?

Troy: Look we are going back now, it was, I think we did \$500,000 to \$600,000 a month. So it grew quite quick but with all these things back in those days as Google make algorithmic changes it changes in the space of nine months. So the business changed, the landscape title changed, and we were really forced, and my that stage the snowboarding guy had gone, and I had been elevated by the public to come into the CEO world...

Michael: So wait a second. Let me take a step back. So you joined in. You took a leadership position in the company. You created a business out of an idea and a proof of concept. Within 6 months you sold that startup that was



earning some amount of money. Not \$500,000 a month yet to a larger public corporation?

Troy: Yes as a marketing communications group here in Australia, they are very innovative themselves. They had recently launched a few years earlier and now growing and acquiring companies at a fairly quick rate. And they sent out a shooter. They knew the founders of IMega and basically did the deal. I facilitated the due diligence, transactive stuff. They put the deal together. And I got implementation into it and transitioned it into the big company and then again got elevated in as I had that sort of accounting background about what kind of start they needed. And so they found as one left, two just sort of dropped back in a role capacity and so I was elevated to CEO and we went about building a team fairly quickly after that.

Michael: And this was Photon that you sold to?

Troy: Yes.

Michael: So this was the second company that you then took through the sale process and successfully sold?

Troy: Yes.

Michael: And so did you learn something different? I've only had the fortune or pain to sell one company. Did you learn something different the second time around?

Troy: Absolutely. Every time Michael, it depends on who you are dealing with as to who and what you learn. So I think for me personally I feel I learned a lot of things. One is the final deal isn't the final deal. I think that was the first thing I learned.

Michael: The final deal is never the final deal.

Troy: Yes, get the deal done and where it needs to change it changes, on both sides - the buyer and the seller. So I learned that. I learned that again how to present a proposition in a different sort of way than I had done previously. The previous business was a legitimate startup they had small incomes, quiet cash flows. They needed the help. The second deal we had the flow, we had the funds, we were fast growing, slightly different less anxious proposition for us. The Synergistic fit into the bigger Photon group and that was exciting. It was lead by some affiliate guys here in Australia. They were misfits by their own definition trying to shake up the whole marketing communications industry, which they were doing. So we sort of fit in with the personality kind of level. That can be said. It had recent challenges and we will talk about that later. But I learned how to do that deal and get it done.

I had to present financials because in a way it can be ordered in a proper due diligence process which was a bit new to me even as an accountant. I hadn't really learned what to do in selling a company. How you actually need to present everything from operations through to financials and your forecasts. So we learned a lot. It was great.

Michael: Okay so then you stayed on after the acquisition. You became the CEO, after awhile you decided you were going to move on to something else. What was that decision process? Your next company was Geekdom. For the transcriber, Jeanne, a shout out to Jeanne doing a great job on our transcription...

Troy: Hi Jeanne.

Michael: Geekdom is G-e-e-k-d-o-m, like a kingdom of geeks. Did you start Geekdom inside Photon or did you start it separately? How did that work?

Troy: We only had the business going and again I rebranded the business to become Geekdom but the entity itself was an innovation incubation business I'd already had. In fact that was the company that I basically created with the trains and all.

Michael: Oh okay so this is one that you had on the side even before iMega Group. You had it going here on the side even though you were running down this direction. I got it.

Troy: That interview I had since early 2000s and I had just been selling assets out of it. So it was sort of asset sales at that point. Or export a new business and sell that entity as a sale. So Geekdom, which was the rebranded name, just fitted where I wanted to take it. It was an opportunity that I identified. It was a technology opportunity. And again I just set up an opportunity to start to build a more or less a CMS style structure and then provided mini service to people who were looking to invest into the Internet space. So I had a couple of buddies who were in the financing sort of sector. They had these small funds of money and wanted to invest and they didn't know what to do with it. And I said to them "Hey why don't we build some websites? I'll do a scout, a sort of development for you. And then we can monetize sites that way and you can invest your money into the Internet space that way."

Michael: You built a technology that handled a lot of different assets over time but basically at the end of Geekdom before you sold that company it was a technology platform that allowed you to build out sites in a scalable fashion.

Troy: Well what we called scalable back then was say 500, what I call scalable today which is 200,000. But back then scalable for me at the time we were going to build out I think about 1,000 sites with these funds and it was going to take us 12 months to build them and it was going to be all pretty cool. It was through thread a, which is what we considered scalable, not just to build but also to manage. So Geekdom was that company. It was a technology company. It had always been a technology company. I was going to leave Photon to do that on my own pursuit. In fact I had some internal backers that we interested in getting involved. And Photon didn't want me to leave so they said why don't you stay? Why don't we buy that company and we funded that through. So at one point I was running iMega and Geekdom simultaneously for Photon. I eventually exited IMega which was called the search arbitrage business to folks on the technology company for Photon.

Michael: So I'm unclear on Geekdom. It's a technology but was the business model that you were licensing the technology to other people or was it that you were using your own technology to build sites quickly and put advertising and make money through advertising?

Troy: Correct. The later is the model. The first model for Geekdom was a bad idea. Let's do technology, and just put the website on it, we will pick the domains using some technologies as part of the platform and then we will recruit some writers and then we will build that out. So that was kind of a technology and manage service combined. And that was Geekdom's first offering.

Michael: And so Geekdom, that contact management system, that created a number of websites in a scalable fashion, how long did it take to build that technology? Was that a course of like ten years or was that a course of like a year?

Troy: It was six months. Version-wise we got it pretty rapidly. You have got two ways of thinking about this place in my opinion. One is to brood it really well and take the extra time to get it right from the get go or the second way, which I think 37 Signals uses as well with their base camps and stuff is do a prototype, get it out, test the market and then refine it. And I think that I have always used that approach. Get it out for some times and prototype or even beta and get the market feedback. I don't pretend to know what the market wants entirely; I just think I can solve a problem. How we twist that

technology or solution the market typically tells us. Or again highlight a problem that we need to then innovate around.

Michael: And I can vouch for that. I was one of the trials a few weeks ago of your Protrada system. I noticed some items that I wanted to point out to you. And you guy immediately took action on them. I thought it was a fantastic response to potential customers. So to your credit you are iterating very quickly and you are looking for that input from customers.

Troy: I think sometimes our balance - Michael like when you highlighted those problems for us, I quickly jumped out of my seat and straight to my best buddy who is the head of technology and said right let's get these sorted. Fortunately he was already down the path and we were able to turn pretty quick. I think 24 hours later, right? But I think again someone like you could do a spot of that as you did and again had we not thought about it it would have been a great feedback response to say guys we missed it because we do. We miss stuff all the time because we are moving at speeds.

Michael: So in a period of six months you built out enough websites that you proved that you were able to bring in revenue on these websites?

Troy: Yes we did. We built them out, we built out the 1,000 or 1,500.

Michael: Do you remember what your run rate was in advertising revenue at that time?

Troy: No I can't remember but it I think our first month might have been \$30,000. Maybe even \$25,000. It wasn't spectacular but...

Michael: That is pretty impressive for a first month of running and building out websites.

Troy: It was okay. It was okay. It was below our expectations.

Michael: How were you getting the websites ranked so well so that you could get the traffic for the people that were clicking on the advertising?

Troy: We put them on a PPC. Again we are driving traffic as well. So we are booting up these small mini sites with content which were driving traffic to it. And again it was just a more elegant arbatros model ultimately if you think about it. So the other arbatros was also running. It was running off of a few sites, small fry. Using dynamic pages, I think there are four or five different domains we were just punching \$30,000/\$40,000 a day. So that was quite a substantial business. This business was \$30,000 a month, so again the sky was not quite there but again month one it was great. We were profitable month one. That deal underwrote it. Then the Photon style in the back of that the first iMega style was only a part acquisition to out with. We sold the balance of that business out. I think it was, in the first transaction was for 90%. That was about \$10,000,000. And then the second part was about \$27,000,000.

Michael: For iMega Group?

Troy: For iMega Group, yes. So in context iMega was doing really well. The envy about the Geekdom thing I was also lucky there as well. So I had aspirations that Geekdom would be also this juggernaut as well. So we did that, we recruited people in, we built the sites, the funds liked it, we are growing again. I thought of some great achievements not necessarily financially to what I'd have liked, but I think that it really started to sink my thinking about using technology to really solve some of these Internet marketing related problems.

Michael: So are you comfortable telling the audience what your exit at Geekdom was when you sold to Photon?

Troy: I probably can't go into it. But it was certainly not as exciting at the other one.

Michael: Certainly not as exciting as iMega Group.

Troy: Still not as exciting as iMega. It was over \$5,000,000 let's put it that way. But that still nowhere where I wanted it to be. But it was an earnout basis. And we sold it – we had only been building it for six months and from

that point of view it was probably quite exciting. And it was going to be an earnout over a few year period.

Michael: It was a scalable website business that monetized advertising. Let me ask you this: so it was based on an arbitrage which you also used at iMega Group with the snowboarder. Is arbitrage dead today? Can you still do arbitrage?

Troy: From my stand point it was never a business that I felt good about to be honest.

Michael: It's not a business where you say you are serving the poor or doing good in the world, you are buying something low and you are selling it high. But it is a business.

Troy: That is how the world works. Look at the whole world of retail and look at the supermarkets, they are buying low and selling high.

Michael: Same thing about the clothing industry. They buy the clothing low, they sell it at enormously high.

Troy: The problem with arbitrage that I identify was that we didn't really add any value in the equation and that was the challenge. I think that was when Google really started to tighten it up. Now I have been in and out of that space for many years now. I still know people in it. There are plenty of people who have come and gone. I still know some people who are doing quite well. Again it is not a business that I focus on, but it comes up all the time. Again like my accounting experience, arbitrage has been an amazing sort of foundation for me, to understand the Internet, to understand search behaviors and click through rates and a whole lot of metrics that we still use today are very relevant today. But again we are away from it. We focus more on natural traffic with a feel of sort of unique content. So it is slightly different model for us today. But it worked at the time and like all things you just got to keep evolving with the landscape.

Michael: So arbitrage dead today do you think? Or are there people still doing it in other areas?

Troy: I do. I know people who are doing it. I'm sure some of your audience are doing it. I won't name names obviously. There are absolutely people who are doing it. The big guys are doing it, the big networks are doing it. They are all sort of moving traffic around. They are buying and selling it. They are always adding some sort of value to the equation. I think it is entirely fine. Buying traffic, ranking and rating content and then passing that through, however they are doing it I'm sure those guys are making a really good income and if you like that sort of stuff it is still a great business. It is just not something I focus on.

Michael: So, Geekdom you sold it to Photon. You stayed on for awhile. You decided to part ways with them, you left, you started a new venture called Geekhub and you took some of your staff with you to the new venture. How is that possible? Anytime I ever do a deal I always make sure that my staff never goes anywhere.

Troy: If I can talk about it, at the top of the conversation we talked about some of the issues that I have had, I haven't really counted them off yet. Let's talk about one, right? So in the Geekdom business I was going quite well with the whole technology plan, the managed service and then I started to see another opportunity which was to basically take that technology and that learned experience and then sort of package it up and put it together in a program. We had many people who were starting to ask 'how do you do what you do?' Teach us to do what you do. So we used to bring people up the street and train them up at the offices as an employee. We grew that company from 12 people to almost 90. 91 I think in a very short space in time. So I started to have this great idea at the time I think. Not so much in hindsight. At that time it was one of those great ideas where I said right, I can package this up and I can teach other people how to do it, and I will put a program together and I'll find someone to come and sell it and distribute it for me. And basically coach people in Internet marketing.

Michael: So this is teaching people how to use your tool to earn revenue themselves. It's a student type program.

Troy: Student type program. So you know out of Photon Group at the time they were a publicist company. I had all the pressures that public companies had. So I was under pressure, we had become one of the biggest contributor to Photon profit at the time. So we had grown unbelievably. And Photon needed revenues for a whole bunch of reasons. So I was called upon to make it happen. So we pushed the program out, probably too early in hindsight. Probably about three months too early. As you do you learn all these things by making mistakes as I have made plenty of them. So we pushed that program out. We could not imagine the success we were about to have. And we partnered with a guy who competed in the seminar circuit for a period of time. And he looked like he was doing a fairly good job and again I've learned some more since then. But he was able to convince Bill about the merits of the price he had and we thought our product was so great that let's let him have a go at it. So he was a huge success unfortunately. Unfortunately I say that. He is a great sales person, one of the best.

Michael: So the biggest lesson learned and people...You know I didn't bring it up and you credit Troy for bringing this up. There were some students that were unhappy with the program because they didn't deliver the results that they were promised by this gentleman that you were talking about. The program itself is no different than a lot of domain investors have known about, have read about on blogs. It's not rocket science, but it is basically someone coming in laying it out for them using your technology that you developed. And so I credit you for looking at that. In hindsight you said that the biggest lesson learned was that the program wasn't developed enough. So when you deal with people you pretty much need to lay out Step 1, Step 2, Step 3, Step 4 because while some people are great visionaries, they can see the over arching theme and some people are great tactical, they can see every step, everybody is different. So you really need a lot of detail. That's what your biggest problem was in hindsight would you say?

Troy: Yes but there are so many lessons Michael. When I am growing companies you learn a lot but when your company is sort of in decline you learn so much more. You learn about people. You learn about decisions that you made, or you shouldn't have made, or you made too quickly. I learned a lot. This is sort of what three years ago, four years ago. So we were able to learn a lot from that. I think we didn't anticipate the success. One of the parts



of the program was a coaching program that surrounded the technology. We couldn't recruit coaches quick enough to meet the demand. Yes that was a premium price that students were paying.

Michael: If I read correctly you were charging students \$18,000 for that course? Is that correct?

Troy: The most extreme package. The ultimate platinum was \$18,000. That is always the headline package. Plenty of packages were 2,500. But anyway the premium platinum as you say the package included weekly webinars, coaching and these were geographically set up coaching. Again I had 600 students arrive on our doorstep in the space of about 55 days. We could not handle 600 people. I was quoted once in the media saying that I grossly underestimated what it would take to turn the average person into an Internet marketer. I stepped back from that comment. It is still true. It is not for everybody. I think people see the dream and they see the results that we were getting and they think that is me. They qualify themselves into the program. They hand over the money or they pay the monthly, whatever it is. And then you go about and deliver the service. Then some people they take up an enormous amount of time. And as a coach it starts to become very unprofitable to deal with so much of that one individual need.

So, anyway as I said the program wasn't set up to anticipate the different levels of knowledge enough. The software could have probably been a bit more intuitive. The program could have been certainly more laid out. So I learned a lot about preparedness for the consumer market. It was our first foray into the consumer market directly and you know I carried that program through. We did our best. It was difficult some people as you say Michael were very unhappy with the program. The guy that sold the program particularly. Me, as the CEO, the buck stops with me at the end of the day and I certainly took a few hits.

Michael: Knowing what you know now, you know you are still in a service type business. You are selling software as a service on a monthly basis to customers, but it's not an event. You are not doing coaching. Knowing what you know now would you ever go into another event or coaching or student type business again?

Troy: I say the ability to scale out your knowledge and teach others is great. I think try to make sure that you have got a professional coaching outfit who are organized. And the steam what it takes to teach. I mean I could teach someone face to face. I could teach you for example but I underestimate that you are an intelligent guy. I underestimate sort of the knowledge that you must have before this can make sense. It is no different than accounting. I'm from accounting, I start a program, about 10% of the people actually complete the six year program for them to become an accountant. Now it is no different today in Internet marketing. You have got to figure out debits and credits and left and right brain in accounting. Internet marketing is not too dissimilar. I teach the same two people and get wildly different results.

So I think for me I would definitely in the future partner with someone who is an expert or an organization who is an expert where we could provide the content. They could put it in a way that is digestible and teachable to an end consumer irrespective of their level of knowledge. I think it is still a great business and there are people who do it way better than I did. They might not have the knowledge that we have got but they are certainly way better teachers than I am. So I'd like to partner with those sort of guys.

Michael: That is a great lesson learned. And there are tons of people out there that love nothing more than teaching people that are great at figuring out instructional lesson plans and delivering it and measuring that result.

Troy: There is an old saying, you may have heard it in the states, stick to your bidding. And I think for us we tried to be the sales team, the coaching team, the support team, the technology team and you know we probably skewed one or two of those areas. Which is more of the technology side.

Michael: Right and I haven't heard that before and I'm going to start using it. Stick to your bidding. Alright so you left Geekdom, you started Geekhub and what was the vision for Geekhub at the time?

Troy: I think the vision was to continue the journey. I think we had really hit on something that was available for the market. I started to see an opportunity to really scour the technology.

Michael: So you wanted to continue on with an idea of building a contact management system that was scalable?

Troy: Absolutely but infinitely more scalable than I ever conceived before. So again I had a team that who was very loyal to me. So 50 or the 90 that was there, they were super loyal and super keen and a super energized group, very multi-cultural sort of team from all parts of the world had joined us in Geekdom. I basically deal with the Photon guys. We acquired out a technology that was just like an incubated Geekdom. I acquired it. I had a buddy who was sort of in the events sort of space, one of the largest promoters in Australia. And we got together. And we both got out and we rolled out. Photon was probably happy to see me taking out some of the legacy issues and the students out as well. So I took some of the remaining students with me. I had a personal commitment to see those guys through. So I took them out on one side, took this new technology out, formed the Geekhub with later became Winded Media which is our business.

I started to move right away from the Geek brain which just had the wrong sort of vibe about it. Some of the people on the team they wanted to break free of those shackles. We had all taken a hit from the previous business. So we started fresh. We had a vision of booting a company where we could roll that good technology to a market that really needed it. We would charge very small money. And we would just get a lot more people involved. It went well this time. We wouldn't be driven by public company budgets. We would do it and we would launch it when it was ready – to our level of satisfaction not because the public company was under pressure. So I think what we were doing was great just a different way of going about it. So Geekhub we made it the way it is now. It had given us that opportunity to innovate a bit more safely, less pressure and we were loving it every day. And that same team is basically still with me.

The coaching business now is relatively gone. We finished out our obligations so those four people went and now we were a team of 22. And every day we love coming here because that is what we do.

Michael: I read, and tell if this is correct, I read in an Australian newspaper that when you bought out the asset from Photon and you started Geekhub, which became Winded Media, the business was bought by Vision Pursuit, which is a wealth creation company run by Michael Burnett, the former head of Listed Wealth Creations Seminar Company Empowerment International which I believe is a publicly traded company in Australia?

Troy: Yes Powernet is was a traded company, and now Michael is back in charge. He has re-privatized that business. Michael who was a pioneer with me at Geekdom so I had become quite friendly wit. Michael had been in that space for a long time. He in fact brings Tony Robbins, one of your guys from the states to Australia. In fact next week we have got Donald Trump here (sorry next month Donald Trump is here). Richard Kiyosaki is here. So Michael is by far the premium promoter in Australia in the event space. He has done amazing events. He gets 10,000 people along and some of these events change lives.

Michael: So the people that he knows, the connections he has, the success he's had, having him on your team has got to be phenomenal, a rocket booster.

Troy: Absolutely. Michael has got the public company experience. He is great at a board room level. He's a smart sort of investor. He understand people a lot more. He has had a lot more exposure to consumers than I had. So I think that Michael is a great mentor to me. He is 10 or 15 years older and he is just a great mentor. And again he knows some influential people here in Australia. Richard Branson and the like. The (Inaudible 0:55:12.8) he had out here last year who has got a great story to tell. So again Michael says there is a need, he industry obviously has its negatives as well. So Michael deals with that. But yes he has been a great support for me and we are certainly better off for knowing Michael.

Michael: That's great. So Winged Media has a few different products if I understand but the main one that you see advertised on DomainSherpa is Protrada. Do you have other products in addition to Protrada? Or is Protrada the evolution of all of them?

Troy: It's the evolution, it's a combination. If we go back a step one of the assets I bought out was something called Parklings. Some of your audience will know Parklings. We have been at some of the trade shows. And the tee shirts and some will know Louise Munck a head of business development, our Danish head of biz dev. So Louise and I have been out there plying Parklings for some time. We have that as a white label product and basically a monetization platform. It builds out scalability, it builds out content rich sort of sites. Again it is a single button upload of the domain. Push the button and it will build out content.

Michael: So I give you 100 domain names, you put it in your system, it parses the words, it figures out what content to put on and it builds out a multi-page website.

Troy: Absolutely and in addition to that we also identify the related keywords that works good for Google. We bring in all sorts of different monetization. We have got CPA, CPL, CPC. So we are selling products from Amazon. We have got auctions from EBay. We have got lead gen. It has a whole different lot of solutions that we are putting into Parklings platform. All we did with Parklings was to build that and do a few deals again with groups. We were already in the space. We already had the customers handled. We had parking companies for example, the ones we talked to in the earlier days.

We partnered with a group out of Santa Monica who was running this sort of space as well. He's gone on and created a couple thousand clients. You know that built tens of thousands of domains in the last 18 months. And I think in the main that is going quite well. I think what we needed to do there was help him buy a bit of quality domains. So a plus of the platform is a plug in with the eNom guys. And we just buy new fresh registrations through that platform. I think a lot about uneducated domain guys were buying hyphenated domains (.infos) anything that they thought was relevant. So we really spent a lot more time to educate their market on what we consider a better quality domain. So through that program, the feedback from our partner out in the states was these guys need better quality domains. They want to start buying in the aftermarket. What can you do?

So we had to innovate. We already had some ideas ourselves. We had already started to buy our own portfolio just to understand how to make the technology work better. And obviously better quality domains were getting unbelievable results for the Parklings technology. And then we went about to look at the aftermarket. So then we started to really interface with Go Daddy and all those partners, Name Jet and Snap Names. And just started to look at what opportunities they had. And where the challenges were with their existing platforms. And what the feedback we were receiving from people who did or did not participate on those platforms, obviously Go Daddy auctions is huge. Lots of opportunities there. And we went about working on how to make it better and easier and provided extra data on the way as well as a monetization platform for consumers.

Michael: And it is quite impressive. So you know I'm not a domain flipper. I built companies on domain names. I love domain names. I think they are like property and I love property but I don't buy a bunch. I don't flip at all. And I think I have sold one domain or a couple of domains.

Troy: Well done Michael.

Michael: But as I research the industry, because I am trying to open it up to people that don't understand the domain name industry, it is incredibly difficult to try and figure out how Go Daddy auctions work versus Name Jet auctions versus Snap Name. And to be honest I've only figured out one. I'm not going to tell you which one it is. But I got into your system and your system allows me to actually put in my criteria from searching for job type domains, searching for property in the city that I live in and I want to look at that city domain name. It allows me to search across all the different platforms in one location. Put in bids, have it managed, it is pretty sweet for people who haven't looked at it. Is your system the only system that does that?

Troy: I'm not sure who else is doing it. I mean as far as I'm aware there are a couple of other small groups, I think there is Domain Face. The guy is actually an Aussie involved there out of the U.K. I think they are doing something in this direction. I've had a small look at their platform and I think there is some great stuff that they are doing in there. And sent that project to

them after we sort of built out and we sort of looked around to see who else is doing it. And you know I think they have done a great job. They have been running for a few years longer than us in that space and doing quite well. I think their team is a bit smaller. For us it's been about how to take that upper level up five levels. So the data is one thing, being how to use and sort and filter and making it easy so the expert domainer or the novice investor can come in.

We try to take this platform I may say for domain facers looking more at the traditional domainer just providing hard core data. If you don't really know what you are looking for I think that is a challenge personally. So we are trying to open the market up much wider. I mean sheer traders, wealth creation seekers, new domainers, existing domainers from Frank Shilling down I guess can look at the platform and see value. And we have got a few expert domainers on. We didn't get it right first term and I'll be happy to say that, we didn't get it right. We got it pretty good but there are some things we need to do and we are still fixing some things. But we bring very fortunate to have some very polished of opportunities with these other platforms. They all want to open up a platform, they all want to start selling domains to a broader audience. I think anyone in the domain space the common theme, I said it last Domain Fest, how do we grow and sell more domains to more people rather than just to each other? Frank and Keller are doing very well but the average domainer I think, they have land banked, they have taken the risk, they have seen the opportunity but now what? So we are going to facilitate to getting more buyers who can buy and sell and it becomes like share trading like day trading.

Michael: Make the market actually liquid.

Troy: And that is included. I seen a comment on your blog, or someone's blog this morning about some estimated value of the domain industry and someone's comment about liquidity. And I think that is what it is all about: liquidity. So for us, like your analogy to property it's about finding a good property helping people to buy effortlessly, on all different platforms, and then what to do while you are sitting on it waiting to sell it. So that is where the monetization platform plugs in. So certainly no one that I have seen is always thinking that that holistic kind of life cycle. Obviously Rob and the

guys at Epik are kind of down this space in some way. That I think work with these big platforms like Go Daddy and Name Jet and Snap and Sedo, let's not forget Sedo and Afternic. You know some great opportunities to get their domains out to a new audience and I think our technology can help.

Michael: What part of your technology are you most excited about? There is so many different parts. Your technology allows you to filter all the auctions and you have got fantastic filters. I can't remember the exact numbers. Like 21 or 25 different filters you can set up to find the exact domains. What is that number Troy?

Troy: It is at 27 now.

Michael: Twenty seven filters for finding them. You can actually set up rules so that you can sell a domain name or list it for sale on EBay or other auctions for x dollars more, or x percent more as soon as you acquire it. You can put in the rules so that you don't have to stay awake at 2:00 a.m. when the auction actually ends and you can have it bid for you five minutes before so it doesn't delay. Fantastic ideas. Integrated in. And then you can actually build that website which me as a builder I love that idea. And so it is soup to nuts. It goes across the entire spectrum of people that are investing in domain names. What part of it is most exciting to you personally?

Troy: Obviously the one stop shop element is tremendous I think. And our vision is to become that centralized aggregation point so that all the big guys, the brokerage services on one side, content providers, maybe work with the guys over in domain media in some form. We have our own alpha network bringing in those content in. All quite cool from beginning to end. I think the thing I am most excited about is the thing that you haven't even said yet Michael is the mobile platform that we are building. So if you were able to participate from the bridge from an iPad or a mobile and filtered down to the domain, place the bid, get some sun, and then watch that interactively win or lose, up the bid, watch us bid on your behalf, watch us review your maximum when it needs to be reviewed and not before. I think that is awesome.

So I think setting up these actions as you say, that are predetermined steps, that is all pretty cool. At this stage the feed is most exciting. Today the



domains that we have in the platform, so it is over 5,000,000 now. We have analyzed more than 11,000,000 domains. They are coming off the production line every single day. So that is pretty cool. Getting these technologies to the average guy, the average consumer, share trader and the like, that is pretty cool. It is no longer you have to be in the know. I sort of look at our technology akin to the share market when you had to know your own broker to put a placement to buy a share and then all of the sudden it is online. And the accessibility to the average person becomes so much better. And I think for us to access giving to the average person I think is tremendous.

Michael: And the beauty of any technology is removing all the complexity and making it simple. That is a success that 37 signals as it is seen, any successful software company. You mentioned early in the interview when you start a business, you learned in Murdoch and GRV, when you start a business you need to know who you are going to sell to, or at least who the likely opportunities are to sell your business. So I was going to come back to it now that we understand what your current business is. Who are the opportunities? Who do you think might be interested in buying this technology platform that you are building and at one point in time might somebody be interested?

Troy: We are happy to announce, Michael we had an investment group come in. The leading VC guy in Australia, Mark Carnegie, so Mark is a founder here in Australia in investing. His group took a position in our business. That is exciting. Cashing dividends out for the team, it is a great endorsement. That is a couple of weeks behind us now and we have sort of moved forward where we have imbedded that and that is growing. So now we start to think about who we are putting this business for. As I said we are great at building companies and innovating but we think there is better people out there, much bigger than us, with bigger resources can think better about sustainable management and how to really take it to that next level. And there is a whole bunch of people in that space.

If you think about the two things that we are building predominately one is an audience and a wallet. People who are looking to buy a domain, good price, make sensible investments and trade them on. And then the other side of it we will start building in parallel a very large publishing network, where we

can control the monetization and the content on those sites. So you start to think of who the big players in, who wants to talk to guys buying domains. You know that as better than I do there is a lot of big players in that space. Brokerage services again, there is a few big players in the brokerage service. Particularly in Germany for example. And then looking at the content side, again there is demands and the like. And then the publishing side. That can be from AOL to Yahoo. People try to monetize content and monetize audience. So it is any one of a dozen players that I could name off the top of my head. But you could probably think who they are. There are some big roller players in the parking space. We have some of those guys. We have had conversations with those guys.

And I'm not looking to sell. It would be silly at this point. I think we are a couple years away from it to be honest. And we have had a very exciting triple digit growth year on year. And I think we can do a triple digit growth again going into next year. Our revenues will be well into eight figures which I think is pretty exciting. And I think we can really grow the business quite well.

Michael: It is a phenomenal story and I love hearing a progression of opportunity to opportunity to opportunity. Clearly there were setbacks. I appreciate your honesty in talking about those Troy. None of us achieve success without setbacks in life. I want to invite the audience if you have a follow up question for Troy please post it in the comments below and we will ask Troy to come back and answer as many as he can. If people want to follow your activities Troy, they want to follow you personally or what is going on in Protrada, what is the best way to do that?

Troy: We have got the blogs. That is at Protrada.com. There is a blog there that I think keeps you up to date. We have got Facebook groups, that is /Protrada.

Michael: So people on Facebook they can fan you and they can get updates on everything going on there. Are you on Twitter too?

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Troy: I'm on Twitter personally, TroyRushton, we have got Protrada on there too. So we are out there and social media is part of what we do and we have a lot of communication points. So people can find us.

Michael: Excellent. Troy thank you so much for taking the time and coming on the show and I wish you every success.

Troy: Thank you Michael. All the best.

Michael: Thank you all for watching. We will see you next time.

Troy: Bye now.

**Watch the full video at:**

<http://domainsherpa.com/troy-rushton-wingedmedia-interview>