



SEASON 3

EPISODE 04

[INTRO]

[0:00:05.8] ANNOUNCER: Welcome back to Happy Porch Radio. The podcast for progressive agency owners and web professionals. Season three is focused on the growing number of agencies who are making the world a better place.

We explore what this even means, why is it different from any other agency and how can it be reconciled with the real-world challenges of running a profitable agency? Join your host, Barry O’Kane as he speaks to leaders of agencies who are driven by verify use to positively impact the world around them.

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:43.8] BOK: A leading cause of death amongst males aged 18 to 44 in Australia is suicide. A topic that can be tough to raise with your typical tough Aussie bloke. My guest in this episode founded a nonprofit organization to tackle this issue head on and seven years later, this also sprouted an agency.

William Stubbs and his co-founder have launched the business with a very clearly defined set of values and a mission to not only continue to build in the success of their own foundation but also to use their experiences and skills to help others plan, design, implement and measure campaigns to, in his words, make the world better, better in a real way.

The genesis of Spur:Labs , which is William’s agency is a fascinating story and one that seems so different to the finding of the other values driven agencies I’ve spoken to so far in this season. There is so much in his words that can and will inspire and encourage all of us, no matter where we are on this journey with our own agencies.

Let's meet William.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:01:50.0] WS: My name is William Stubbs, I'm from Brisbane, Australia and the closest to approximation for what I do seems to be a social entrepreneur, which I have many thoughts about and not all of them good. But in short, I have a nonprofit that I've been running with a really talented fellow named Lee Crockford for about seven years now we've been working together, which we started you know, a warehouse here in Brisbane just as a couple of young guys with a few other founders and started working at mental health campaigns to combat suicide in Australia.

Really, the issue that we were tackling is that that if you were an Australian man aged 14 to 44, the number one way that you will die is suicide. So more than skin cancer, drugs and alcohol, heart disease, road accidents. Suicide will kill you more than anything else. For a country that does have ridiculous UV rays and a very strong drinking culture, that to us seemed crazy that we are a very lucky country, but with this huge, unspoken problem.

And a lot of the rhetoric for many years was that you – it's best not to talk about it and was very clinical approach. We thought at the time, "Well, you know what? We should try doing something different," and there were some reports that came out with new advice about how, if you were to start talking about this, this is the way that you should do it. In fact, a lot of the advice that had been there about suicide is something that if you talk about it, it creates more suicides. A lot of that was redacted and actually the new rationale was that the more that we don't address this problem, the bigger it's going to get.

So we started with this premise I think really and particularly for your demographic for this podcast and I think interesting that we applied marketing techniques to our campaigns on a very strong sense and particularly around the concept of social marketing and I want to distinguish that very carefully from social media marketing but rather social marketing. So marketing in terms of behavioral change for social good and social impact. For instance, our very first campaign and I'm not sure how you feel about strong language on the podcasts, Barry?

[0:04:05.0] BOK: It's fine, crack on.

[0:04:07.5] WS: Crack on, I'm talking Irish man after all, this should be fine. In Australia though, there's this very common phrase that as a boy growing up, you'll hear add infinite. It's something that just gets pummelled into your brain which is "toughen the fuck up" or "harden the fuck up". It starts as you kind of hit that teenage years so about 13, you start hearing this thing a lot from schoolmates and even parents and older role models.

What that creates is this culture where as an Aussie bloke, you're taught to be stoic and strong and invincible and that means that if you, at ever any point need help or you're imperfect or you are wounded in some way, particularly in some way that is emotional, it's completely against the programming for you to say, "You know what? I need help, I have a problem." Looking at that and that was the main driver for why men suicide is at a much higher rate than women. We came up with the concept of the campaign called "Soften the Fuck Up" and it was a remarkably powerful message that whenever I mention it the campaign name to an Australian or new Zealander, they kind of have this brief moment of confusion and then a smile goes across their face and they start laughing.

Because what I love about the campaign is that it incorporates everything you need to know about what we are tackling, what we want you to do and what the end result is in that one line. That campaign we designed it to be very much the antithesis of how it exist up unto that point. If you looked at a lot of the promotional material or the collateral for depression and anxiety, it was black and white pamphlets with, you know, a guy on the edge of his bed with his head in his hands and it said depression across the top. Yeah, not really kind of this other thing you want to look at when you're depressed actually, funnily enough.

To myself when I was 12, I had a really tough upbringing, a lot of illness in the family and a lot of dysfunction, a lot of turmoil, suddenly getting very sick as well when I was about 12 and I missed out a lot of school. It got to the point where I was quite heavily depressed and I don't actually think, I know that none of my family were actually aware of how bad my emotions were or my mental state and around 12, I became suicidal and I became very close to taking my own life.

So it was when I was – jeez, how old am I now? I'm 30 now, it would have been when I was 23, 24 that we started this campaign. We had a long time between when I was depressed in my teenage years to starting this campaign and I was able to look back and think about how I felt and what did I actually really want to look at? Yeah, it was going to be something that was very approachable that was engaging and spoke to me like just a guy rather than a patient. That became the crux of what we did is the very first campaign Spur Projects, which we came out all registered nonprofit organization here in Australia.

Since then, we developed an approach to combatting suicide and alleviating mental illness, that is very much about dissecting approaches. Over the years, we didn't just go with that one campaign while that has won awards and it's been studied by a number of universities, which to me is terribly ironic because we were just a couple of guys that wanted to have a crack at something. The campaign, you know, was great but we realized that it wasn't for everybody.

So we launched a few more campaigns over the years with the different demographics, still focusing on men and then a few experimental things like we've launched two large big data gathering projects including one last year that you use a smart phone app together real time, mental health data around the world. It was an act that we designed ourselves or the UX. The methodology behind it was that we created in conjunction with ANU university and as a result, I think we broke a world record actually in terms of the largest real time mental health survey ever.

About 11,000 people partaking for a week in 105 countries, nine different languages, around 60,000 data submissions that came out of that. So that became a free open source repository of mental health data. You could look at based in profession, age, gender identity, sexual identity, location, activity, whatever you wanted to know, how does that affect your mental health and over time. A little bit of the cool stuff.

The challenge for us that came at the time, Lee and I were really running the organization at this point, original cofounder had gone on to some pretty amazing things. We had a volunteer team that have a range of open credible skills that we're able to kind of borrow and steal different projects and purely based on passion and occasionally buy them some burgers. But we never succeeded with crowdfunding or corporate sponsorship or anything.

[0:09:24.2] BOK: You were doing all of this while also working in another – your own income, it wasn't coming from this? You're doing a sort of on the side?

[0:09:33.3] WS: No, we've never been paid a salary by the nonprofit, we have – I think in about the six or seven years running, we've probably had less than \$50 grand come through the account and that's mostly from a couple of fund raising campaigns that we have launched called Get Silent, Get Heard where we modeled it on 48 hour challenge, if you are familiar with that campaign.

We said, "Well, what was the analogy for depression and anxiety then? Well, it's silence and not talking about it." We challenged our followers to not talk for 48 hours and have their friends and family sponsor them to do that with donations going to us to continue to run our campaigns. If you're somebody like me, you have people lining up to want to pay you to shut up. It was pretty successful, I think we have in the first year that we ran it, we raised \$20,000 just from our followers wanting to help out.

But yeah, we never — and continued to actually, even this week, there was a couple of grant applications that came back with a negative. We've just never been successful with that and I think, my suspicion is that we are kind of the, you know, in a classroom, I'm not sure if you had this growing up, but there was always that kid in the corner who is off doing their own thing, not really following what the teacher was telling them to do and you know, there was probably like some sharp implement they were using to craft some really weird gadget they were working on or something.

That's kind of us as an organization and so, you know, we use strong language deliberately, we use that as a tool to engage people in a particular way. We do experiments that haven't been done before that people don't want to help pay for but they're happy to take the results of. Interestingly, last year, in a federal election for Australian government, one of the tenants actually endorsed us officially and she came out saying we've done amazing work and that if they won the election, they were going to give us a half million dollar election promise grant to do with as we wish and help us kind of really get established probably. They didn't win unfortunately, so we were back to kind of running it, yeah, alongside our day jobs.

The twists that happened here is that Lee and I have been picked up by a consulting firm, a management consulting firm here in the city of Brisbane who had lost a consultant to suicide. They wanted to – I think just do something about it and feel like they almost like a catharsis I suppose of getting involved in it somehow. They worked with us for I think six months maybe. In that time, helped us structure some things a bit better. Really progress towards being a better organized organization and in that time they actually said to us, “Well come work for us. Come be consultants, don’t ask questions about what that is, just come and do it and you’ll figure it out.”

We did and it was a great organization in the sense that they gave us the freedom and understanding to know that it wasn’t our life working for them. We have this other passion project we’re working on. What happened as a result of working there for three years is that Lee and I found a couple of things. One, in order to really take this, what is essentially an altruistic marketing and design organization to the next level, we needed to really talk about funds seriously.

Not to be able to have to use annual leave time to go and be at conferences and present our work, but actually do this as a full time job. The second thing is we’ve kind of looked at how the firm we were working for was running and go, “Well, we wouldn’t do it that way, we have some ideas of how we would do this,” and we’ve always I think been that way and the third thing was, we started getting approached by some large organizations. The largest telco in Asia pacific for instance made us their foundation ambassadors and invited us to mentor their nonprofits, you know, a program where they took in nonprofits and help them to figure out how to be more designed, thinking oriented and more innovative.

There was also a large advertising firm that I probably shouldn’t name, but they took us out for lunch and picked our brain on a campaign which they later won as a result. We went, “Oh shit, we actually know what we’re doing. We’re pretty good at this. Maybe we should be doing this,” and I remember talking to Lee and I kind of pitching this idea of — we have Spur Projects, which is our none for profit. What if we created Spur:Labs, which would be a sister company that would take everything we’d learned about how to create really compelling and impactful social marketing projects, take everything we’d learned about how to measure the impact of those

projects and everything we'd learned about how to utilize experimental technology projects to create impact and do it for other people and charge them for it.

And, if we were doing that, it's kind of a win/win/win because we would be doing the work that we're really passionate about anyway, which is creating a positive social impact in the world through clever design, thinking technology, and creativity. We would also be able to use some of those funds to fund the work that we are really particularly close to, which is our Spur Projects mental health work and it would actually benefit people anyway. I'm a really big believer in that concept of find a way for your business to do good in the way that it does business, not as an accessory to doing business.

That idea kind of brewed for about a year, we got really busy with launching the app project last year, a bunch of other things and other projects we were working on. Then this year, it just kind of came together as, "You know what? We really need to do this." So we launched – actually, I went to Germany in June for the G20 as a young entrepreneur delegate and a representative of my city to Berlin. Came back, we launched Spur:Labs officially and hired an [ex-Ogerly] managing director who wanted a chance to work for us as an adviser, and as he put it, feed his soul which I thought was a lovely way to look at it.

Then I went back on a plane to Denmark to partake in a United Nations innovation lab for two weeks so I kind of left Lee with, you know, running the company. But I wasn't complaining. Since then, we have built a really compelling, I think model of — how it works essentially is that Spur:Labs is owned by Lee, myself and a third share by Spur Projects. So it is owned by the nonprofit itself, which was that was really important to imbue the company with that sense of altruism as it is designed to fund our work, our positive impact work.

Secondly, in the charter for the company, a minimum of 5% of revenue, not profit or revenue is put directly into Spur projects and before we pay anybody in the company, 5% is taken and put into the nonprofit and then 20% at least of employee time in Spur:Labs is given to Spur Projects to continue those campaigns.

[0:16:47.9] BOK: That's really interesting. You've sort of not rather than just saying that that's going to happen, you've built that into the, legally I guess. I'm trying to find the right frame word to describe that.

[0:16:58.9] WS: I'm not sure if it's like legally in that, what would happen if we didn't do it? It's more that from a constitution perspective. So we would be considered not following the constitution of our business as a director for instance if we weren't upholding that. It's very core to the culture of the company. We created a strong framework for what we do and how we do things, what we believe in and one of those things is that very much at the heart of it, why did we start this company?

We could have gone and done a bunch of different things, we chose to do this company and the reason we chose this company is what includes that we're funding the none profit work that we do. So it was actually funny when we closed our first client which is a hospital group, quite a large one here in Brisbane and very excited to get some money coming in the door as you would be. We had that initial kind of chat about, "Well, at what point does that 5% to the nonprofit kick in?"

We had to kind of quickly check in, we both agreed, "Yes, you know, it has to start from the get-go. If you – I believe if you set yourself that goal or that belief in what you're doing, it needs to be there from the very beginning and there's a phrase that we have, we have a lot of mottos. One of them is beginners you wish to proceed and so we couldn't – I don't think set this expectation that once we hit X amount revenue, well then we'll start that funnel. It had to be from the very get go. Even if we had \$50 bucks for you know, I don't know, a 10 minute consultation, we'll still have 5% straight away.

[0:18:40.8] BOK: So that's what I think is interesting that you're — I guess my question about sort of building that into your constitution, building that into the core of the company that you're creating other than saying, "Oh, we're going to do this or we want to do this or one day we'll do this," but actually it's really built into the framework.

[0:18:59.1] WS: Yeah, I particularly, over the last couple of years. A lot of the consulting work that I did prior to launching Spur:Labs was for government and corporate and I became

increasingly disenchanted with a lot of the business world in the sense that I've done a lot of work with the Silent Community and consulting on you know, how to grow a Silent Community and how to empower Silent founders, which is of course very Vogues right now.

Combining that with the innovation lab I went to in Denmark where I was working with a thousand other change makers I would say in air quotes, that have been slipped through this program, there was large, huge corporates that were looking at social impact investment.

This belief has really formed in my brain, quite strongly that business is broken, it has been broken for a number of decades and what's happened is entrepreneurs, though I do hate the term, used to start businesses to have freedom, because they didn't want to work for somebody else and they wanted to create something that didn't exist and they wanted freedom. What's happened since over the last couple of maybe 20 years, maybe a bit more actually probably more is that we've shifted from that to people will start companies purely and solely to make profit.

I know many people that probably sounds rather obvious and well yeah, why else would I start a company? My argument is rather, if you look at Henry Ford for instance, Ford Motor company. He's a great example of an entrepreneur that didn't really care so much about making money as success and making something worthwhile. Money is just a tool in order to get there. But he was very conscious of what impact he was having and in fact, there was time when he built an entire town through his employees to work in to make sure they had appropriate housing, it was close to the factories, so their commute wasn't long, that they were looked after.

I think what I've noticed is that there's a rise of large corporates where they'll start, they become successful, they have a bunch of money and a bunch of success and then they go, "You know what? We should create a foundation," because if we create a foundation, it's good for us, right? That's corporate responsibility and it's wonderful, so he created a foundation façade to it. We've gone kind of the reverse and we've created a foundation or a nonprofit and then created a full profit company off the side of that, which leads back in to the foundation. That might not work as it's not been very long and it might crash and burn, but it's on the way of showing how you can do business and it meant that core to what we do, every time that we work with a client, we're delivering value to them by doing the rate that we do.

Whether it's improving their market awareness where they're ethically produced product or it is helping them to measure how effective their social impact campaign is or whatever it is. We're adding value to them, to the people that they serve as well as we're adding value to the non-profit work that we do and hopefully saving lives. Additionally, and not to kind of go on a rant about business and why I think it's broken but one of the cool things that we set in our charter was that Spur:Labs will only ever work on projects that have some positive impact and that means that if an oil company said to us, "Work with us, here's a million dollars rebrand us." We would say, "No thanks". If they said, "Here's a million dollars to rebrand us as an ethic oil company" we would say, "Sure, absolutely. That sounds great. But the only way to be that is to actually be ethical and so we are going to help you figure out how to do that." So it has to be ethical or positively social impact piece of work or otherwise we just won't do it.

[0:22:53.2] BOK: And do you have a clear definition of work what you mean by positive and we're ethical or is that something that's more based on a case by case?

[0:23:02.7] WS: That's a very good question and I always hate it when somebody asks me that because it is evolving. It's hard because somebody posed to me the other day, "Okay but what if that oil company had no interest in being ethical in its practices but it donates \$5 billion to women's education in developing world?" So by helping them do more business you are helping other people down the line and that's a really tricky one and so I have to come back to this concept of direct social impact.

So if an example would be Tesla Motors. On the surface they are a wholly for profit company right? And they produce these luxury cars that I adore and I would love to have one and hopefully one day I will, but I absolutely do not need. I don't need a car and many of us actually do not need cars but we're told that we do. However by creating the company, Tesla, every time they do sell a car hopefully that means one less fossil fuel based car being on the road.

That is a direct social impact whereas working with a company that let's say, yeah produces fossil fuel based vehicles and it produces as a result a hundred million times of carbon dioxide comes out of those vehicles every year and they donate a \$1 billion to women's education in developing world. Does that seem like a fair tradeoff? It's really hard but it comes down to for

me by working with that particular client am I in doing that work moving a needle forward? Or is the needle being affected by several steps that I have no direct control over? And if the answer is the later then I probably shouldn't be involved in that.

[0:24:58.1] BOK: Well that actually is a theme that is coming up a lot in this series is this challenge to define what the criteria's of the type of work that we do in the oath of the agency that is using our professional skills or whatever the values driven part of that conversation is. Your answer there just tied back to something you said earlier as well about, I can't remember the exact phrase but about the business like it being inherent in the business rather than an out the door side thing from a business. I thought that was an interesting way of phrasing or way of describing it too.

[0:25:31.4] WS: I'm increasingly of the opinion that we really need to redefine the term entrepreneur and the understanding of what business is, right? And as I mentioned, I get called a social entrepreneur and I actually really struggle with that but that's the closest thing that I can think of to describe easily and quickly what I actually do. Off the back of the lab in Denmark, there is a third company that we are setting up which produces a scalable tool for refugee support.

That won an award in the lab and it seems like a really cool idea. So they're prototyping that and setting it up and so I've inherited from my dad who was an entrepreneur a sense of wanting to build things and I am good at building things but for me, it has to be about building something that makes the world better and legitimately better. Not just easy to order a coffee kind of better but actually better.

What I've noticed though is that when we call somebody an entrepreneur these days, particularly since the rise of technology in Silicon Valley and everything, there was a really, really great quote by one of the early Facebook engineers, Jeffrey Heimbach I believe who said he quit Facebook and when he was asked why he quit he said and I am paraphrasing but "we have the greatest minds of our generation figuring out how to get you to click ads faster," and to me that is a really good example that we have become so focused on squeezing more money out of everything that we are doing. Rather than thinking, "How does this actually affect the world?"

Now the flip side of that is money is fine. Money is not evil, I like things. I am a minimalist personally but I do like nice things and so I'd like to buy a Tesla one day but I firmly believe that as we are approaching a reality where we have increasingly hugely disastrous occurrences in nature and if you look at in Mexico having the earthquake this week and hurricanes on sou the United States, we have a serious problem to face.

And the fact that the world has consumed much more than it should have, we have created a culture on where in the west one particularly, we want much more than we should actually have. To fix that, we need to redefine our only consumption but business and business means not be about, "Hey business entrepreneur guy, you figure out how to make as much profit as you possibly can and be damned how you actually do it that's irrelevant".

So if you're going to steal somebody's data, if you are going to take money to dump oil in a lake, if you're going to produce t-shirts that – an average cotton t-shirt takes 3,000 litres of water to produce one t-shirt and throw them into H&M and see how many you can sell and those you don't sell, slash them and dump them in a trash pile somewhere, that's not working and it's clearly not working. So my view of what and I'm going on a rant, right? I apologize.

But view of what, if we are going to be sustainable as a species on a planet moving forward is that business is an extremely powerful tool and so it needs to be redefined to mean that you make profit by improving the world legitimately improving. The trick is that's really hard to figure out.

[0:28:55.9] BOK: Yeah that was going to be my question and so a lot of that makes – and some of those decisions are very clear cut, "Should I dump this oil in that lake or not?" But in terms of the much more mundane smaller decisions you are making like for example should I work for this client or not? Or how should I promote this campaign or how do I make sure that I am getting paid, me and the team are getting paid and we are earning some sort of profit while still not compromising these values?"

And how do you bring that rant that you just had, which is incredibly inspiring? How do you bring that down to the day to day?

[0:29:32.7] WS: That's a lot of questions too man, that set me back. Where do I start? And yeah, I mean the obvious thing I would attack there is you've got to live, right? And you've got to eat and you've got to pay the bills and I am saying is that I know as a 30 year old white dude who is straight to his gender living in one of the wealthiest countries in the world from a good education and I had no partner or kids and so I'm coming out from a very, very much place of privilege and I totally appreciate that. It's not as easy to go on a rant like that with somebody who is just trying to get by.

That being said, I think it's important that people like me have that sense of privilege to say those things. You know I went through a big transformation in the last few years of letting go of things and realizing, "Oh I am going to buy that thing that I want to buy." I got rid of like 80% of my clothes and now I have a spreadsheet that tells me exactly every item I have and if I ever need to get something, I have calculations of how much I actually need it.

I think one, we need to be more comfortable with having less. That does mean high quality things because you want them to last long but having less things and so things like we have agreed and spelled out is what we only probably work from car wrecking spaces for a very, very long time but it didn't last forever and I do think that is the way the world is going. You don't need to have your own studio in most cases. You don't need to pay the rent for an entire building in most cases.

It also means you have to create a collaboration opportunities and so on. The flip side to that is, yeah you're going to have sometimes where you are going to have that really high questions of do you work with that client or not. I wish I had an easy answer to that. So far yeah, well I mean no. So in spite projects, big in mental health organization with very little funding. We have been approached about three times by alcohol companies wanting to give us.

Just like, "Here is a 15K check, just put our name on something and do with it whatever you want to do with it" and every time we said no. After much consolidation and beating our heads against the wall, we went back and said, "No, thank you. We appreciate it but we can't really do that" and the reason being that I have nothing against having a drink but as a mental health organization, being aligned with alcohol probably isn't on brand.

And so there had been times where I wish that I could have said yes to that and I have no doubt that there will be times where Spur:Labs will have clients or potential clients knocking on our door asking to work with us where it doesn't seem like an obvious moral decision to do that. The only other thing I would SPUR: about that is I'm a big believer in taking people on the journey that like that analogy of the oil company wanting to be ethical. There is a big shift happening in social impact investment. So all of venture capital's firms and now actually looking at social impact bank investment and so sense startups as being a goldmine really.

In France recently there was a major superannuation fund or retirement fund essentially that set aside 10% of it's investments for you. It would be in social enterprises social impact areas and it was opt in and they were overwhelmed by the number of people on the records that said, "Yes I'd like you to use 10% of my retirement savings to invest in social impact causes," and I think people including companies do want to do good, it's just that you have to show them how to do that and they can do that and it's not hard and that's the biggest thing is no matter how easy something is to do, it's always easy not to do it.

So in the event that if anybody I suppose is on a similar path or wanting to do something similar and I will only work with ethical moral companies, you'd be surprise I think particularly now in the changing climate that we have how many companies are willing to explore that option of "okay well how do I actually do better? How do I do good?" And fortunately that is one of the things that we do offer as our services is actually figuring out how you can do things more ethically, in a more positive social impacts sense.

I did go on a tangent so if you have other questions that you had?

[0:34:05.2] BOK: No that's really good, you did address the questions really and then you went neatly on to another topic that I wanted to touch on just before we finish up and that's the future of Spur:Labs and you're touching on things like what you're describing there as the opportunity that you see and being part of that change that you are describing. Is that the future that you see for Spur:Labs or do you have a very clearly defined future or do you still just on the journey?

[0:34:30.2] WS: Yes and no. Lee and I talk about it a lot and you know to be fair, we're very early on in the process, well in one sense. In other sense, we've been doing this for seven

years. It's just that our only clients were ourselves and society I guess in a broader sense. What I've noticed and one of the reasons that Lee and I actually do work so well together as a team is that we are very similar in our values and personalities but also extremely different in our skillsets.

So Lee is an amazing creative idea and he would come through these ideas that honestly I have no idea what he's taking to get these ideas. It's incredible and on the flip side, my skill has always been in systems thinking and figuring out how things put together, figuring out how strategies work and looking at the big pictures of opportunities and so in that sense, there seems to be a strong element where Spur:Labs excels in the design of projects and campaigns that create social impact.

As well the more nuts and bolts behind the scenes of looking at how you actually measure social impact and how affective you are and an example of that is actually just this past week, we were engaged by a brand new campaign in Australia for domestic violence and we are working with them to figure out the branding of that campaign, who their target market should be, what exact impact they are trying to have by raising funds and then what they should do with those funds.

And that includes looking at across the breadth of Australia, what are the domestic violence projects that are happening, how effective are they and what gap exists that you could use those funds to solve as well as looking at things like what are the core drivers and contextual factors around domestic violence, why does that actually happen and so you'd rather pick one saying, "Here is the thing you probably should focus on". On the flip side, does that work at what are the complimentary piece is WWF has engaged us for earth hour to do some metric analysis around if they're using Earth hour to create a particular awareness to the public, how do you actually measure awareness and that's a whole area that we are particularly passionate about and it's a great that we have adopted as a motto which is that anybody who designs your awareness couldn't figure out how to design interaction and so I see the future of Spur:Labs at the moment as being those two core things.

Creating really compelling projects and campaigns for those that don't have these skills and helping those that are running those campaigns to make sure they're actually having a really big

impact and knowing what impact they are actually having. How big Spur:Labs get, we want to make this something where we have a number of employees, we want to keep it a small studio. I have no idea? it could be broken in a year and I'm might come asking you for a job, Barry. I have no idea.

Only time will tell but I would say in many ways, I feel like we have stumbled upon something that the world is ready for. The response we've had from people has been amazing and people have been genuinely excited not only to work with us but a number of comments. I personally find it that when we are developing an idea, you can gauge pretty quickly if it's a good idea by how people respond to it and the people that heard about our story and come to our launch, or any of the talks we've done have gone, "Oh my god I wish I had that idea." Or, "I want to be involved in that in some way,"

I think and I hope, actually that you'll see more agencies or studios like us cropping up that are insistent upon only working on particular projects and are invested in creating a better well for everybody by the work that they are doing and if that does happen then that's bloody awesome.

[0:38:28.4] BOK: I couldn't agree more. That is in fact the whole premise of me doing this series is to speak to people like yourself who are going through this journey and discovering a studio or agencies, however we describe ourselves and they are focused on this and I think it is growing. It is interesting and the similarities as well as everybody coming from different places and different backgrounds and different countries it's a fascinating conversation journey so far already.

[0:38:53.4] WS: And I think it's a great idea when I heard about the podcast I thought, "Hell yes, this is exactly what we need to highlight that you can do things this way." There was a foundation that I was speaking with recently and doing some amazing things and I said, well why haven't I heard of you? We don't want to blow our own trumpet.

We had to kind of give over that attitude because if you don't show people, even if it's imperfect, we're still figuring things out. But if you don't show people what thought you'd had about how to make things better, then you might not inspire somebody else who could have been inspired

and made their own change in the world. So I think it's an absolutely great idea of what you're doing with the podcast and I'm sure it's going to be a hit.

[0:39:37.9] BOK: Awesome. Thank you for saying that. And also, really thank you for your time today for this interview. I really appreciate that. What you're describing with the offering and particularly around that measurement stuff of what Spur:Labs does is, I think, going to be a mind-blowing and valuable and I cannot see you looking for a job in a year.

[0:39:57.6] WS: Well, hopefully. But yeah, it was a pleasure to rant at you across the world there for a short few minutes. You're asking things that I'm very passionate about. So yeah, it's been a pleasure.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:40:13.0] BOK: You can get all the links and notes from this episode on happyporchradio.com where you can also find out how to send us questions, feedback and get involved in the conversation about this series. If you enjoy the show, please share with anyone else who might enjoy it too. Thanks for listening.

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