

SHERRIE STOROR

Ep. 16 | Embracing innovation and disruption with Clay Howes.

Show Guests:

Clay Howes – CEO and Founder of ListReady

Overview:

Are you ready to simplify your processes and implement systems and structures into your real estate business? Curious as to how you can do this by embracing the latest tech tools? Want to know how they can help you stand out in your marketplace?

If you're ready to innovate your business, then today's episode is for you! In today's hotseat I have economist, CEO and Founder of **ListReady**, **Clay Howes**. We are talking all about how innovation and disruption can not only help your business grow but help you provide exceptional service to your customers.

Hot Gossip:

My 51-Point Checklist: This is a step-by-step 51-point checklist that takes you through going from off-market to on market to exchange to settled to sold. Get my step-by-step process to follow from social media, managing your CRM, working your pipeline sellers, letterbox drop emails to text messages and videos to send. This will help you build your stock list even in this challenging time. You can download it for free from [here](#).

My FREE Webinar Series: Last year I partnered with RateMyAgent on a 3-part webinar series designed to bring my courses to agents all over Australia. During this difficult climate, I want to support and give back to an industry that I love and that means so much to me so I'm releasing the entire series for free!

You'll get access to these three training courses:

Week 1: Build a Celebrity Profile - Become a POWER Agent

Week 2: Find your EDGE walk away with a killer listing presentation.

Week 3: Be a Social Climber - Social Media Strategies to List and Sell Properties. Access the full training series by registering [here](#).

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Sherrie:

Hello Clay and welcome to the Build Your Best Life podcast. I'm so pumped to have you here!

Clay:

It is amazing to be on this with you Sherrie and thank you so much for the invitation.

Sherrie:

Oh, you're most welcome. And you're coming to us from Sydney today. I'm in Brisbane, got to love some technology.

Clay:

Absolutely love it. I do feel like you've got the better end of the day, sunny in Brisbane, but sunny and beautiful day in Sydney here too.

Sherrie:

It is a perfect day here. But look, I'm so excited to have you on the podcast today. Not only because I think that, you know, you, like me really believe in giving education and quality sort of content to real estate agents and of course made my podcast dreams coming true as the sponsor of the series. But really, I know that you're very rarely in the spotlight and in fact you're somebody who shies away from this and really uncomfortable in doing it. And I had to completely convince you to do it right?

Clay:

Yep you know me well.

Sherrie:

So, thank you so much because I think you've got the most remarkable journey. And you know, I see you as a true entrepreneur in every sense of the word. And I think a lot of people are funny about that term. But to me an entrepreneur is someone who innovates and makes changes happen and brings something to the market that hasn't been there before. And when I think about you, I think that that is the definition of probably what has been your career and your business journey, right?

Clay:

Yeah.

Sherrie:

So, look, today I want to talk a little bit about the ride so far. And you know, how I guess essentially you can build a business from scratch using innovation and then how to really motivate and lead a team. But also, you know, how you could recognise trends in society, in a marketplace for growth. But look, we all love a startup and we all love to hear a startup story. So, let's get into it. You've said something to me in the past, which I think is really pretty cool. And that's, you have a favourite saying, which is "*crazy, is the new order*" So, tell us, what do you mean by this?

Clay:

Oh, right. Well I just think, and it's never been timelier than the time that we are in now where innovation and the expectation that just there's going to be constant change. The chaos is crazy. It's just how we are today. And I think you sparked on something that resonates well with me and that's constantly evolving and incrementally getting better and prepared for each day. And I think innovation in its true sense is that there is no constant and there is no end. It's each day and incrementally getting better each day. And I think my leadership approach has always been with that in mind.

Sherrie:

Oh, I love hearing this because I think it's a message that comes out and it's talked about quite a lot in society about just little bits every single day. And in fact, you know, a lot of the

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guests that we've had so far in the podcast series have been agents that I've worked with. And that has been the whole mentality is just little bits, you know, step-by-step. And then when we look back it's like, wow, look how far we've come, so, I love that you've just said this, but by trade you're an economist and also a chartered accountant. And I think most people when they think of these two terms, think of them as quite boring and unsexy. But for you, obviously this totally turns you on. So, tell us, what is it about, you know, being an economist that you love so much or got you interested in becoming one?

Clay:

Well, I was like every other kid that had no clue what they wanted to do. And so, I did everything, I studied math's, I studied economics and then of course, I studied accounting and I definitely am going to tell you I'm not an accountant because I chose to give that up a while ago. And I chose to broaden my perspectives and just learn more about what the kind of new order of the world was shaping up to be. And it inspired me to always think about, macro influences and building towards something that, you know, trends are fairly predictable. And in today's world, the most predictable thing that you learn about, everything is that whatever you thought it was going to be, it actually isn't going to be that. But it's about how you can navigate your way in consideration of change is inevitable. And so, yeah, studying economics was my favourite thing. I actually was somewhat good at it and the way I've always navigated my way through my career, I think I've just relied more upon the kind of influence of having a more broader approach to understanding business and understanding markets and trends and macro influences and where gaps exist. It's what I'm, if you like, I think trained and bred to understand and do something about those gaps.

Sherrie:

Well you certainly are wired in that way. And I think a lot of, for example, real estate agents who are service provided are wired in their way in terms of hunting and gathering leads, whereas you're really wired for finding opportunities and having an aptitude for that. Correct?

Clay:

I think so, so far, so good.

Sherrie:

So, I guess you know, by combining these two, you know, you're really quite unique in the fact that your, what would you say you're a financial analyst and so, you know that's really, set you on the road to becoming a true entrepreneur. So, tell us, you know, what opportunities did you kind of see that, you know, with consumer behavior, which has set you on this path?

Clay:

I think what we weren't embracing was the change of consumer behaviors. And my natural skillset was in financial services. And for me, I saw the banking, traditional behavioral traits of our former generations. They just weren't congruent with where today's generations behaviors were akin to what banks service levels were. And it's not about hating the bank, not at all. It's more around there's an evolving expectation of consumers and we need, we needed to adapt and we needed to move with consumers really, really early. And I think for me that part just led me into a more defined approach to creating something like **ListReady** where it's for the generation. It's for that generation still related back to financial services but in a more consumer friendly, utmost transparent way that is just refreshing for the sector. And that, if you feel like disruption has continued to help build value in the sector that wherever we enter into sector we actually there to build value and to complement existing relationships. So, I kind of like the word disruption, but I think it's meaning, it means something else to myself and others, it's not necessarily removing the old, but actually moving and helping the traditional ways to find new forms of connecting with customers. And that's what we do best,

Sherrie:

Which I think is incredibly powerful because, you know, we talk a lot about the fact that real

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estate is very much stuck in the 80's and we're still doing things the way that we've always kind of done because its always been done that why like we need to, you know, embrace new forms of how to market properties in new forms in terms of how to prospect and so forth. So, I love it and we're hearing this magical word disruption all the time. So, it's interesting hearing you talk about it because of course it does mean something incredibly different to you to most of us in the industry because we hear that word and we're like scared. Whereas to you, you're like running at it. Which I think is, is very cool. But look, let's hit the rewind button and have a look at, you know, your career and what set you on the course to open **MoneyMe** and of course **ListReady** because your whole career has really been about this disruption around innovation, and originally you worked in pharmaceuticals, right?

Clay:

Yeah, that's right. I was an analyst in pharmaceuticals, So still with the clear lens on financial behaviours and fiscal developments in an industry. I definitely wasn't trying to work in the true sense of a pharmaceutical that is, you know, trying to solve and you know, improve people's lives. I was just doing the economics of it.

Sherrie:

Which is a really important part, you know, whilst you weren't necessarily a scientist in that side, you know, when you look at the analytics, I mean that whole industry completely changed in the time that you would have been working because you know, Pfizer came in with Viagra and completely turned the whole world upside down about this little blue pill. So what did you actually see, you know, at that time working in the industry where it was all about helping save lives where all of a sudden this was about wellbeing and actually changing people's sex lives and they were prepared to pay anything for it.

I think I recall them sending around sample test kits for, which was quite the norm. And you know, people would usually happily test whatever consumer product they were, you know, helping build and being exposed to, and that was one I think people chose not to get into too involved into, but other than that, for us it was about just the, it was the realisation that penicillin was something created that was remarkable for our universe. And Viagra was created that became the number one selling product in the pharmaceutical's history, it catapulted a single pharmaceutical company to number one while the others were building, you know, really different lifesaving products. So, it was remarkable to see no one could have predicted that the success rate would be that overwhelming, but hey, it was exciting that's for sure and I think it still is for some others.

Tell us, you then came to Australia and you came here for a holiday. If I remember correctly. And you decided that you liked it. So, tell me, how did you come to start working at Vodafone?

Clay:

So, I had my first interview and, well let's wind back. The UK is amazing, and you get to enjoy a wonderful career. But if you come over to Australia and you've spent a few holidays, here, it gets so hard to leave a beautiful country with such amazing opportunities all around it. You get to embrace a social environment that's so wonderful in so many respects and so it just got harder for me to go back to the UK and continue my, my life there. And so, I decided to see if I could get a job. And I went through recruitment company, I can't remember who they were, but it was one of your just local mainstream ones.

I got a job interview with Vodafone and they were doing something cool in, in finance and they needed an analyst and yeah, I got the job straight away, which was pretty exciting. And they gave me a visa to you know reside here and I think I'm 15 years later in as an Australian citizen and it's been the most fortunate kind of moment of getting my first job in Australia. I think that 15 years ago I had no expectations of what my life in Australia could probably look like, but it grew tremendously well and I've got two kids, Australian born kids and my wife is a crazy Australian girl, like the most are. It's just been an amazing journey.

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Sherrie:

Oh, I love it. But I think, you know, coming to talk about this time working in Vodafone, I mean this was even a disruptor at that point in time because you know, Telstra was really the big business here in Australia and everybody had a landline and here was a company sort of coming in that was basically looking to take everything mobile and in a really affordable cost effective way. So, I mean you started in this business in 2005, and you literally, I think, you know, you worked your way up, you held every position in the company. I mean, tell us, tell us about that time. You know, in Vodafone where you know, where you started from the bottom and worked your way up.

Clay:

Yeah, I was in finance then I was in different parts of finance. Then I was in sales then I was in strategy, but I actually never moved. Every time I ended up doing something, my old title stayed with me and so at the end of it I had a string of titles that just didn't make sense for any single human and I thought, wow, well that that definitely was an interesting chapter in my life, but it was corrected was at a time where there's traditional incumbents and Vodafone was a cool brand that was building a new way of people engaging with what would otherwise be a boring telecommunications utility service provider. But they funkyed it up. They just did things out of the ordinary. We launched technology, we launched really good value propositions. We changed the order and the market was ready and the people resonated with this fresh looking, vibrant, innovative company. And it was just the most amazing thing to be part of architecting a business model and a strategy that, you know, saw it continuing, continuing to win against the traditional.

Sherrie:

And so it was, but it was really a merger that happened, you know, with Vodafone and Hutchinson for three that you were responsible for that, really kind of changed the course of your career. So, tell us about this particular merger and what you have taken from this particular experience.

Clay:

Yeah, there was a reason to get involved in two brands, Vodafone and Hutchison. The reason that it needed some smarts was that they're two very different cultures, different operating models. Actually, in some regard, slightly different customer attitudes to the different brands. And my job involved, building a single brand in the retail distribution world, building a coherent and cohesive workforce in the retail and partner land. And that was a three-year project that saw us migrate from two independent businesses to become a single unified one team business model that we see today being the prevalent Vodafone brand. And that three a project was certainly an interesting one where you have to a) build strategies for two different customer bases, build strategies for two different organizational cultures, build strategies and communicate to, you know networks of influences like partners and distribution partners real estate play, like the shopping centers, where I think at the time it was the largest change program that Australia had seen and we had probably about, I don't know, 2000 real estate points of presence and we had to build it into something silly like 300 and [inaudible] and trying to, you know, and do that all within a two year period. It became pretty exciting for sure.

Sherrie:

Oh, I love that. So, you know, to me what I've really heard from all of this, is that it's all about, you know, convergence and strategy also staying the course because I could imagine that while she was super busy, it's also rolling out a program with sort of a longer-term goal. It's not sort of something that's a six-month project. So really just embracing that change, which is, which is pretty cool. But you know, after this, this occurred, obviously you felt like, you know, that you wanted a bit of a change and you just mentioned earlier that you saw that there was a bit of an undercurrent for I guess, dislike or trust of, of banks. And so, tell us about what, what you've sort of, you know, seen and where you saw the opportunity was?

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Clay:

Well, if you look back, say six years ago, we were still shopping at high street shops. We're still going to Westfield's and buying the things that we now usually do using you know, stuff on a mobile phone, our apps like the iconic and every others is where our first point of research and also our transactions exist. This similar model with banks where we've got ATM machines and we've got bank branches. We just weren't catering for the contemporary consumers' experience and there was about convenience driven experiences. So being able to have a bank that's open 24/7 transacting, online moving and moving at the pace that you want them to for their product sets. Like an application for a credit card. We wanted to sell for that gap between the cost system is expectations and we're bank service levels were a mismatch.

And so, we simply built a piece of technology. And I like the way I say simply, I think we built, a piece of technology that absolutely didn't exist in the market at its time. And it's still the leading piece of kit in my mind that looks at all the bank functions and consumer behavioural functions and just solves for things in a much more convenient way. And it's not about fast, like in our world, fast has become the new order of slow. It's as close to or near real time as possible. And that's what we wanted to solve for is we live in a generation where now an instant is, is the order and our technology is the only way that can enable instant or near real time solutions. And so it's, it's, it's because of that, that we found a real opportunity to innovate, a real opportunity to appeal to a customer that has changing behaviors and still work in the ecosystem that the banks have always been useful for, but find our voice and value by being the agile business that customers need and still working in harmony with the banks to reach that customer. And that's what our ethos has been and continues to be more and more relevant in today's changing behavioural world.

Sherrie:

So for those that haven't heard about **MoneyMe**, you know, can you just tell us how it's different to I guess the traditional banks?

Clay:

Well, you only have to go and try and communicate to bank about getting your credit card and realise that it's going to get to your postbox a few weeks later and you're going to almost feel like you're lurking around your postbox to get it. Well. So, if you apply for a credit card with **MoneyMe**, it's near real time that it goes straight into your Apple wallet or Android wallet and you can transact immediately with it. And then there's an element of a big element of transparency. You'll just never get surprised about fees, charges, repayments and all the things that you kind of expect from a credit card. So that's why you had now pick an alternate solution which is convenience driven. It's near real time and the banks, unfortunately they still Kit it up to help solver solutions for our savings accounts and mortgages. They're not really designed to move with the pace that consumers behaviors have moved.

So, we'll continue to provide better near real time solutions for customers that are traditionally occupied by the banks. It's my view that probably before the close of this year we'll have a credit card solution that is a simple no-brainer. If you put it up against the banks a credit card, you'd almost be bewildered by the difference and you'd pick the **MoneyMe** freestyle credit card as the default option and that's, you know, we're talking soon. I'm talking about before the end of the year, which is a bloody exciting experience for people, including the staff that are working and building and building a new legacy of what credit and products look like.

Sherrie:

Which is super exciting because I think when we are talking about, you know, credit cards, I mean most people in today's world do actually own a credit card, but we have this physical kind of aspect and you're talking about something that goes into your Apple wallet where you use your phone to utilise it a bit like Apple pay. And we're talking about that for, for, for credit card and, and you know, literally talking about real time that you're, you know, applying for this and you're getting approved sort of within, within moments to whether or not you can

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actually, you know, move across and buy that item or you know, move forward with what you want in your life.

Clay:

That's right. And it's not about just speed. That convenience factor is paramount, but it's also about the information that you get given so that you are making the best decisions and making the best decisions for your financial circumstances. And then we also put budgeting controls in there. So, unlike your credit card, when you use your freestyle me credit card, you get an instant awareness of what your repayments are now going to be. And so, you always have this budgeting tool that's just part of the natural use case of your, of your **MoneyMe** freestyle card was the traditional credit card that we use. It's difficult to plan accordingly for what your repayments are going to be, because they just, they just weren't designed for that. They were, they, they just were based on traditional technology platforms that don't compute information and set up repayments so that you're in financial control all the time.

Sherrie:

Well essentially, you're really trying to empower those, you know, people that are using it so that they keep coming back. Instead of, you know, having an element of hardship, which is I think what this undercurrent of distrust and dislike against the banks is. But you know, the business has now been going for what, about seven years? And you know, some pretty remarkable things have happened over this time and you guys have won so many crazy awards. So, you know, break it down for us because what we've heard today so far is that you love tech, that you're in an innovator and that it's all about transparency. So, you know, tell us about these awards and what they sort of mean to you and to those in the business.

Clay:

Well, where do I begin if I take last year only. It was just an extraordinary, year, key metrics for a business were well and truly in check. So, we were up 44.3% in revenue. We were up, 89% of our full year sales results and this was at the half year Mark. But if you put results aside and you think about those rewards that were acknowledged for, they are a bunch of innovative company awards and one of them at the end of the 2019. Yeah. We were named as innovative the year now, which is massive. Yeah. In a, you know, in a, in a very strong disruptive technology savvy market when you get named innovator of the year, and you know, and certainly in the top five in Australia throughout the whole course of the year, it's pretty exciting and it's exciting for the team. But the real work and how it all happened was in an example is we launched **ListReady**.

It's one of the key propositions that you'll see unfold as a household brand name, household brand name that removes a stack or friction, adds mobility into the agent and vendors transactional experience. It offers great value and it's going to continue to offer even more and more value. Then we launched freestyle that first virtual credit account in Australia and then the big successful day beyond the ASX at a time where I think every other business leader was certainly struggling to get over the line. Well, we had a successful day beyond the ASX. And I think that, you know, in a year is a, an example of the stuff that we do and why innovation moves so quickly. And our business model is growing so, so fast. And that I just described was a year going back seven years ago, I architected a workflow and I had the most creative, CTO and I had the most junior finance guy straight out of university and we all co-authored what was the beginning of **MoneyMe**. And now the milestones are bigger, the success rates for customers and the delights for partnerships. It's just growing and growing. There's just no stopping this.

Sherrie:

I love it. I love it. But it is nice to be sort of acknowledged for those things and you know, to be seen, Okay, well we are making a difference in sort of society. And I think, you know, when you have helped over, you know, half a million Australians and you've secured, I wrote, you

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know, half a billion dollars' worth of all of funding through the platform. I mean, these are huge, huge, huge numbers. But you know, the company obviously didn't start with what you've got a hundred employees now?

Clay:

Close to.

Sherrie:

Yeah. So, I mean, it wasn't always this big sort of, you know, juggernaut that's winning all these awards you had to start somewhere. So, let's talk about those startup days. And you know, you mentioned there that you had, you know, somebody who is extremely experienced in Microsoft sort of developer and then he had somebody straight out of uni and you know, tell us about that sort of, that time where you started the company. I think there were three people that were in the business. Tell us about the journey and how, and what your mentality was. The hiring of, of the right team members.

Clay:

It feels like just yesterday that we, we're three people trying to create a solution that now, certainly, near, a hundred employees are still working towards, with the same Gusta and the same spirit for innovation and the same cohesiveness. And by the way, you know, that was what the first person, the second person, the third, the fourth or fifth to sixth high as the seventh, eighth and ninth, they still all there. And they are the foundation of our business. And it's amazing you know; you use the world in power. It's amazing what you can do when your leadership technique styles are just simply about empowering people's creativity and empowering their natural ability to do something wonderful and great. And, and that's, that's been there the way that we've built a team, the hiring of really bright people, but the people that were able to be on unshackled if their past experiences were not too indoctrinated by, you know, traditional ways.

And what we found from was hiring really inspired, bright young minded people was an easier way for them to realize what opportunities were in front of them and not be stuck with, things that, you know, we're trained in us in a legacy way. So, we, we built a culture around, culture being inclusive of people and their respective ideas and backgrounds and their respective experience levels. And we continue to build that culture of a cohesive, one vision, really clear with what we were aiming to achieve. And that that's been, I think the success of, whilst we're near a hundred people, it feels like a three-person team. There's no person employed in our company that hasn't got a voice in that I personally don't know. And I think that that, that can be 200 people. It just, it won't stop for them for the short term at least.

Sherrie:

Wow. So that's pretty, that's pretty massive. And I think your point there about, you know, combining new fresh approaches that didn't have any unbiased sort of opinions with those that were super experienced, you know, would have been quite an interesting match in the, in the business. And I'm sure that there were times where that was really exciting and I'm sure that there were times where that was quite frustrating. But obviously it's come together and it's, and it's worked. So, you know, a lot of those people who were with you at the beginning, like they're actually shareholders in the business now, aren't they? Absolutely. So, what, what do you think that has, has empowered them in terms of, you know, giving them shares. Do you feel like they are believers in the business so much more than just being employees?

Clay:

I'll tell you what's so fascinating is people find it hard to realise what value is until it's really obviously in front of them. It's amazing. We are humans and we don't really know what a value looks like, as an example. I don't think he'll mind me mentioning it. But James was the first employee of **MoneyMe**, and he got off at the first set of employee share options that may have meant something to him but really hard to materialize. What does that, what could that actually mean? And fast forward, you know, a few years later and we've got a 27 or 28-year-old that is above belief of the value that he's a) created for the organization. But how that

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relates to his own personal value and how his own personal bank account just, you could not reconcile that over the short period of a career having started a career straight out of uni and that's been replicated not just with the first person but many, many people.

And it's got to the point of a little bit strange now where if I'm not working hard enough, James and the others are now pushing me to say, what am I doing that is going to create more value because it means something to them now. So, we've got this whole model that's just changed. We don't have a leader trying to inspire people to do the right thing. It is now inherent. They are shareholders of an organization. When they crossed the lease line in our office, they are bringing their a game. And if anyone around them is not on their a game, trust me, they quickly become a A-grade a game people. And that is just infectious. We choose to not work from home. We're a tech cloud-based organization, but we choose to walk across that lease line and feel inspired and motivated. And that's what creating and sharing value does. You know, stop holding for your business owners, stop holding onto staff, empower your staff and reward them. They will soon become the leaders, the natural leaders of your, of your world.

Sherrie:

And you know, this is a really important point because we do see this so much, especially in the real estate industry where people are constantly pushed down instead of being, you know, pushed up. And to hear you talk so passionately about that and you know, the growth that your business has had in such a short period of time because you have actually, you know, given a sense of ownership to everybody who's there, they want to be there. It's not that they have to be there, it's a job, like it's, it's now their passion.

Clay:

Absolutely. This is their passion. These guys are working on weekends. They wear their **List Ready** t-shirts going out for dinner. Oh, stop it! They literally are. It's, you know, and it's visible. It's on their Instagram. They're taking it home. They are so proud and passionate about the value that they are creating and the disruption and for good that they are all in.

Sherrie:

There's no stopping this. So tell me during this time, because we see this happen quite often, you know, in all styles of business where, you know, business starts to gain traction and then all of a sudden there's a lot of hiring going on and then we might see that, you know, this business might, might fail or might have some, you know, some misgivings. So, you know, during this time you must have had to pivot pretty quickly and transparently in order to make everything come together and work. So how have you done that?

Clay:

It's about that concept of being agile. Businesses have to be agile. And if you're not pivoting in the time, we haven't built continuity plans and we're strange events can happen, it's going to be harder to pivot. We are the earlier part of our makeup, we wanted diversification in our funding structures. We wanted diversification in our distribution, we wanted diversification in our product sets. We want to diversification in our customer profiles. And we built that to be a bit more of a resilient business. And in times like this, unless there's an entire collapse and 25% of the population are unemployed really, really quickly, as in, you know, in a really quick moment, then we're pretty resilient. And that's because we've built a continuity plan in the makeup and architecture of our business model and **ListReady** is one example where what we were missing was the homeowner.

We wanted to reach out and be relevant to homeowners and other than being the obvious, and that's being a mortgage provider, which perhaps could be a solution that we sell for customers, but it's about finding value and a solution for that home owner and the new distribution model that's not just digital. And we sought after the real estate agent and we wanted to solve a problem for them. So in the end **ListReady** was born, because we saw the opportunity to have a homeowner and a new distribution through the real estate agent and

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that **ListReady** solution that we've got today is going to continue to evolve and be more and more relevant to those both those parties.

Sherrie:

Well, I'm really excited about **ListReady** because I suppose working as an agent, we all know how important vendor paid advertising actually is, but there really hasn't been a solution that has covered renovating that's covered, you know, marketing that's covered, you know, styling and preparing the home for sale. So, you know, you start to talk a little bit there about how this was born out of, you know, almost all these agents coming to you and sort of saying, hey listen, we've, we've got a problem here and you know, you who loves innovation and disruption said we can fix the problem. And I think that's really, you know what I see, I think that we have a number of, you know, of applications and businesses in this industry now that are making things so much easier for our sellers and so much easier for our agents. Now **List Ready**, is kind of one of those, so you know, can you just break it down for us for those who may not have heard of **ListReady** because it's a relatively new business and you know, it is a part of the **MoneyMe** group. Can you just tell us a little bit about that company and the concept behind it?

Clay:

Yeah, sure. So, our pure ambition and if you like, our mission is to create value for both the vendor and the agent. And we will see success already being described by the people that have the earlier adapters and adopters to a stronger and better VPA solution for their businesses and their clients. But we'll continue to evolve with, with them. We'll continue to increase the use cases. We'll continue to drive the cost of our business model and pass on the savings onto the vendors. And if you like even may, perhaps even the agents. But right now, what we've created is a mobile centric sales solution that just a no brainer for the vendor. And we do it in a way that is absolutely transparent and we, we were brought in to solve for a few parts and the few parts was a better solution, a more transparent solution, a Fairer solution and the technology fair solution.

And that for us is just, that's the ethos of the **MoneyMe** business model. And so, we thought, absolutely we can solve for this because that is exactly what we are trying to do. And I think that opportunity is growing at the pace of, I've never seen a, I've never seen a business take off this fast in any market before. I was part of the Uber launch in the Australian market. I was very close to the guys who enabled that launch and **ListReady's** launch in the Australian market. I can tell you categorically has been faster than the take up of Uber in Australia. It is growing at alarming rates and we love it because we're inspired. It's refreshing and we are delivering on the objectives. And that is to create value for both the agent and the vendor in a way that's transparent, in a way that is absolutely akin to what a technology enabled solutions should look and feel like.

Sherrie:

Yeah, well I mean the business, it is relatively new, so it's what, six, seven months old now and you know from when you launch, but you've only just started, you know, registering I suppose agents and agencies. So, you know, tell me about the traction that you've gained in real figures because this is really what we want to know. We want to go with somebody who is tried and tested, and we know that others are doing it and it's making an impact in their business.

Clay:

Yeah. I think for us the numbers of **ListReady** is, whilst they are amazing, we're a business that has had, you know, we're second on Deloitte's fastest technology growth lists in Australia. So, for us, the growth and numbers are, if you compare **List Ready** to **MoneyMe**, they, you know, they are dramatically different, but they, but they are exciting for this industry. So, at December we reported that we had over a thousand agents onboarded and signed up with **ListReady**. I think it represented about maybe 200 agencies. But, as a single agent there might be, you know, a few actual agent places underneath them. So, the numbers are a little bit odd to kind of comprehend. But think of it this way. There are a thousand agents signed up

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and that was in the space of about two and a half months from the start. We transacted and I, I'm unable to report the, the stats because being a public company, we've got to be a bit careful about how I provide information. So, but I can tell you that actually I'm not sure what I can tell you.

For an organisation that has already transacted more than a million applications for credit products that has had more than 400,000 customers run through its platform. That had credit demand in the last six months of more than 830 odd million dollars **ListReady** is already a makeup of that proposition. So, it's already making its mark on, on the results. So, it's not small by any means. It's incredibly fast and it's a proposition that we certainly are going to invest a lot in and it's certainly going to be where our focus points and attention is to provide more use cases for the real estate agents.

Sherrie:

Well, I must remember when, you know, when I first heard about **ListReady** before I'd met, met you and Roberto and a few of the others. I was so excited because I'm thinking this is exactly what this marketplace has been looking for. We have actually wanted a solution and finally it's kind of here. And so I'm very careful not to make this sound advertorial, but I, it's kind of hard not to when you believe in, in something and, and just know as an agent that this is something that we've needed. But I suppose for me, when we talk about that sort of, you know, traction, you know, what we find is agents is that were quite, you know, you, you hear about disruption and innovation and we, we, we run the other way, right? So, you run towards it, we run the opposite direction.

But really, you know, this is so simple to use. And I, I know I've, I've done it a few times where it's literally an application form. You're sitting in, in the listing presentation with your sellers. You grab your phone; you complete the online form. It literally takes a minute and then funds literally are approved within a couple of moments and the money hits the agency's trust accounts pretty much straight away right? And there's no fees to the agent, no hidden fees because you're all about transparency. But you know, it's then a matter of, there's so many times when we're sitting with the seller and your heart just breaks for them because they may not have the funds, they might be asset rich, but they're cash flow poor. And you know, most people actually want to do other things with their money anyway and it's tied up with their home. So, you know, the fact that ok, they don't need to dig into their pockets for marketing or for renovating and you probably saw this when people were applying for loans for renovating properties and landscaping and so forth.

Clay:

Yeah, that's right. They were actually coming to us in any case and we thought, well, why come to us when we can actually go to you?

Sherrie:

So I think, you know, what's so unique about this is the fact that it's, it's simple for agents, which let's face it, that's a massive tick, and then it goes into the trust account, but also too, it helps with a) getting the property sold, but b) actually delivering that exceptional outcome, which we hope is truly a premium price, which is what we're all talking about. And this is a really common theme that's been running right throughout the podcast series. It's actually how you can truly level up your skill set as an agent and how you can build your best life by harnessing your real estate career to give you a great life outside of real estate. Now, vendor paid advertising has certainly been one of those, one of those themes along with a few others, such as building a celebrity profile. But this is what I get so pumped about. So look now understanding that there's this huge growth, what do you think, you know, the future is, you've talked about some other products that are happening with **MoneyMe**, but for **ListReady**, I mean, what does the future look like knowing that it's growing so incredibly quickly, you probably don't know how to really keep up.

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Clay:

It's so fascinating in the early parts, which was not that long ago, we would be encouraging agents to embrace the change and it's considered disruption, but it's not. It's just enhancement and a toolkit to help both the agent and the vendor. It's required a few salespeople really inspired people to communicate to agents. But I've actually been so inspired by the adoption rate of the agents and their ability to navigate to a whizzbang model that I've just, it's, it's, it's inspiring. So, I, I'd say the agents are actually really early adopters and I think that they are able to grasp the new changing order really, really quickly. But here's something that's happening. The vendors are now asking for **ListReady**.

That's what's happened with, and it's no surprise if you're at real estate agent day a) and they're offering **ListReady**, which is the most easiest solution to invest into your house for advertising and landscaping to then get the better sale outcome, It's no wonder why they're asking the agent next door for **ListReady** because that's a massive motivating factor. It's not just naturally about do I have the cash to spend, it's around how can you afford not to invest in your property and make it the best sale outcome that's possible.

Sherrie:

Yes, well, it's your greatest asset isn't it, so capitalise on it.

Clay:

That's right, you know, spend \$5,000 or \$10,000 and you're going to get at least 10-fold on your money no matter what you do with it.

Sherrie:

Well we try, it comes down to what's happening in the market, but you're exactly right. So, you know this has been a really interesting podcast today because we've heard about your journey and how you know, as I said, you really are a true entrepreneur and I'm so grateful for you being a part of it because as I said, I had to convince you to do it in the first place. I know that you are very anti speaking of yourself so, thank you Clay. But also I'm keen to know you know more about what the future holds for you because what I have also come to know is that you are a good person and somebody who's also a family man and you spend half of your time, well what, four days a week working in the office as you've just talked about in Sydney, but your family actually lives in Newcastle. So, you know, tell us about how you built that kind of life in the, in the two different locations.

Clay:

It's fascinating today where you kind of got to be in many places at once and you've got to do a good job everywhere. And it's about those increasingly increasing expectations. And I think my life has reached a balance where I've got an amazing organisation that's doing amazing things and I've got an amazing family that that's growing up you know, in front of me. And I feel like I'm, I'm involved in all aspects of my life without neglecting any, I'm pretty sure my wife has a different view, but that is, that's, that's mine that I'm convinced about. But I think, a selfish speaking about me, I think the leader that I was two years ago, it's different to the leader that I am today and, you know, changing world with changing influences, you know, I've had to adapt.

I think everyone else is adapting to innovation. For me, innovation is leadership, innovation where rapid change is the increasing expectations. I find the balance of having Newcastle, which is interestingly one of Australia's fast forward smart cities and I was driving behind a driverless bus the other day and I didn't expect that to be a new car, so I expected it to be in one of the major capital cities. But low and behold it's over here. It's pretty cool and I find the capital markets do exist on Macquarie street, which is where our Sydney offices are, be on the doorsteps of the financial services and it's all about being connected to people. Even though we're a technology driven, cloud-based, mobile solution, the capital markets still want to see, feel and be tangible. So, Sydney is important. Newcastle was really important both from a personal level but actually the, that fast forward model where people and the talent that we have to build into our businesses.

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And that model that I described, which is really an early Australian talent. In this race for talent, we've established an office which we are very, very happy to have, which has recruited really bright, talented people that would otherwise feel a little bit weird going and traveling to Sydney for their careers. But actually, really like to reside in there in their hometown but have a cracking job opportunity. And so, we're winning in this race for talent, right positioned right next to the university for obvious intention and I think that balanced approach that I've got is, is exciting. Watching kids grow, dropping them off at school, going to work, speaking to financial services markets and I don't know, trying to inspire people has been exciting and then I get to talk to people like you, it's amazing.

Sherrie:

Oh, thanks Clay. So I love this concept because it is all about building your best life and you've basically built the best of your life when it comes to, you know, what powers you and what excites you in the business world, but then also looking after your family and making sure that you're connected in that kind of community with them. And I should mention that your wife also works in the business too, right?

Clay:

Yeah, she does.

Sherrie:

So, giving a shout out to **Belle**.

Clay:

She keeps me grounded, absolutely.

Sherrie:

I love it. So, look, if people want to follow you and want to continue on your journey, knowing that you're not a massive poster and somebody who likes to keep underneath the radar, but how can people find you?

Clay:

I think I'd say, you know, pop me an email. I'm certainly going to be more attentive to that, but definitely find me on LinkedIn. Forgive me if I take a little longer than usual to respond, but when I say a little longer, just might not be instant. We're still pretty fast on communicating back. But I'd love to hear your thoughts around how the product is meeting your expectations, how the product could evolve how we can assist in more use cases and not just for **ListReady**, but where technology solutions and services might enable and not disruption, but just enabled progress.

Sherrie:

And this is the part that I, I feel, you know, so excited about that you're a business and who you are as a person and the others that are in the, in the company. It's not just about, okay, we built a product and now like we're happy we're going to roll it out and make money. It's actually about No, how can we solve the problem and how can we in fact better it and better it and better it time and time again, and it is about speaking to people and getting feedback. So that's the part that really excites me. But certainly, you know, from everything that I've heard and used myself, I'm totally a fan, which is hence why I chose to partner with you guys in the, in the first place. Cause there were a few choices. But look, you know, Clay thank you so much for being a part of the build your best life podcast. I've so enjoyed having you on board today.

Clay:

It's been an amazing part of, you know, our progress to learn from you Sherrie and you, a massive advocate for the agents who are massive advocate for change and you can see the opportunities that you know are emerging in the property sector and we'll follow you really avidly and support you along the way. And if there's anything that you know, your audiences

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would like to hear from us through you, please shout out, we are going to follow and, and, and be part of your, your charge with a whole lot of Gusto.

Sherrie:

Oh, aren't you sweet, well, you heard it, you heard it first. So, if you want any feedback, you know, feel free to send it through to me, but I know that you do have an amazing communicative team. So, Clay, thanks so much again for today.

Clay:

Thanks Sherrie.

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