

[00:00:02.180] - Aileen Day

Welcome to the Value Driven Brand Podcast, where you'll learn insights on how to communicate with authenticity, deliver genuine value, and create a memorable experience across your entire customer journey, helping your business become a sought after leader in your industry. I'm your host, Aileen Day. Now onto the show.

[00:00:31.430] - Aileen Day

G'day, everyone, and welcome back for another episode of the Value Driven Brand podcast, I am your host, Aileen Day. And today, it is my absolute pleasure to be joined with a very important person who looks after some very important puppies in our capital city. Her name is Rhiannon Beach and she is the founder and owner of an amazing business in Canberra called Pups4Fun. Welcome to the Value Driven Brand podcast. Thank you so much for joining me today.

[00:01:12.350] - Aileen Day

How are you?

[00:01:13.940] - Rhiannon Beach

Good. Thanks so much for having me. It's great to be part of the podcast. I've been listening along.

[00:01:19.040] - Aileen Day

Oh, that makes my heart so happy. That's awesome to hear. Now, whereabouts in Canberra exactly are you for the listeners who might be from Ye Olde Canberra town, going oh represent. Yes, we're located in Phisher in Weston Creek, so we have our headquarters there. We do offer itinerant services. So we do have a sort of private dog park out on the way to Queanbeyan.

[00:01:49.100] - Aileen Day

Oh, I know Queanbeyan is. I remember driving past there. I was actually born in Canberra, but now we don't talk about it often because apparently the hospital I was born in was demolished and didn't end too well for a poor young girl. So yes, unfortunately. But yes, me and Canberra go way back. So, I love, love getting the opportunity to meet some people from the A.C.T. Now, you might not know who Rhiannon is, so let me give you the pleasure of of telling you.

[00:02:28.430] - Aileen Day

Rihanna, Rhiannon, Rihanna. Rihanna is an amazing singer. But Rhiannon, I am not. Bust Rhiannon is an amazing business owner, and I'm going to get her to tell you all about the story of how Pups4Fun came about. But before that, I will let you know. So Rhiannon is the 2013 finalist for the Telstra Business Women's Awards. And at the time was caring for about 80 dogs a week, 80 dogs a week, yes, ooofft, that's a big job.

[00:03:03.830] - Aileen Day

And then growing her business, she has been nominated for Telstra Business Awards, of which she is actually the 2020 small business winner for the A.C.T for the Telstra Women's Business Awards. Congratulations. What an absolute feat, I must say.

[00:03:24.320] - Rhiannon Beach

Thanks so much. It was an awesome opportunity. Both times I've been part of it. You meet so many amazing women. And at first, when I first applied in 2000 or no, I was nominated in 2013, I was petrified because it's obviously a big experience. But it was really, really important because it was a first time in business where you actually get a chance to stop and reflect and work out what you're doing, whether it's right or wrong or anything in between.

[00:03:52.490] - Aileen Day

So I'm really happy to be part of it. That's such a great way to think about it, isn't it? I get the pleasure of writing award applications and whatnot for some of my customers, and I always do say to them, it's a wonderful opportunity just to stop and take a breath and and reflect on everything that you've you've been able to achieve. But it's not even just the Telstra Business Awards that you have been the winner of. You've also been nominated as a finalist for the Australian Institute of Management,

Leadership Awards.

[00:04:35.490] - Aileen Day

Now, can I just say I've dealt with AIM and they are huge. I mean, Telstra's huge. AIM are huge. These are some amazing, amazing nods to the way you do business to be to be seen by corporations like these. How did that come about?

[00:04:57.590] - Rhiannon Beach

Well, I was lucky enough to be nominated by members of the public and and clients and other people. So I was lucky enough to be put in that position, like I said, and then really took it on board to reflect and to to give my all into the application process, because, like I said, although it was quite scary and intimidating and at the time of this, you don't necessarily think you just a dog walker or whatever it might be that you're up in the running for that sort of stuff.

[00:05:31.550] - Rhiannon Beach

But once you start breaking it down and you realise it's not about that, it's about business. It's about how you run things. It's about how you still value your relationships. Yeah. Although is that the recipe for business. So trying to sort of reflect on that and work out what things are doing really well. And it was awesome that have met some amazing people and learnt a lot of things.

[00:05:53.840] - Aileen Day

Yeah, I don't doubt it. What a, what a little cooking pot, a melting pot of amazing brains and just wonderful experience. Now there is apart from the many nods to the way you do business, there is such a great story behind how you even got to this point. Tell our listeners and those watching what it was, how it was that you got to the point of being the founder of Pups4Fun. Well, I guess it sort of started off in what we call in Canberra College or Year 11 and I had, I was studying business and I had a business teacher who we had to do a business plan and did my business plan as I was walking home, sort of got the idea.

[00:06:47.090] - Rhiannon Beach

Saw a lot of dogs behind fences and barking and so lonely, so kind of came up the idea of like a doggie creche or day care centre and then did that, submitted it everything. And my teacher decided to actually enter it into a competition that was the CPA Plan Your Own Enterprise competition that thought so. Yeah. And I ended up winning the state and then also winning Australasia so that I guess that was the first part of the point where I went, oh, actually, it might be worth thinking about this a little bit more.

[00:07:22.670] - Rhiannon Beach

I'm kind of a whole bunch of accountants and business people and everyone that were judging it thought it was worthwhile. So I was able to take that and I got a job at a coffee shop for a couple of months. We used actually to save some money. And then in 2008, I decided to start the business. So I started that. And University at the same time, I just started walking a couple of dogs. And then once I sort of built up a few clients, my business plan was kind of how the business is today, a day care centre, so to speak.

[00:08:03.530] - Rhiannon Beach

However, at that time I was 19 and had no money, no assets, I had no capital. So I was pretty determined to work out how to get there. Like I couldn't get there in the typical way. As my plan said, I needed, however, many tens of thousands and how many hundreds of thousands for fitouts and all that was not going to be possible. But I thought the most important thing was sort of the journey, how to get there.

[00:08:29.260] - Rhiannon Beach

So I just started walking a couple of dogs and building small groups and, you know, looking after sort of four dogs, five dogs, a week in between my studies. And then you just sort of built it up from there. And then once I created the small sort of playgroups in the area where we pick up dogs from their home, take them on group activities, walk and then take them to sort of dog parks. So we just focused

on group the group activities rather than just the one on one dog walking.

[00:08:58.790] - Rhiannon Beach

And then in about 2014, we got our first, like, headquarters location type thing where we opened up our grooming salon and also our puppy daycare. So we were able to before that, we were only able to take all the dogs that could actually do significant exercise and be out all day. So once we opened our puppy day care that was awesome. That was kind of like our little puppy education centre where we really focus on learning and yeah the crucial learning of puppies.

[00:09:32.150] - Rhiannon Beach

And yeah. So I think that was sort of the main gist of it. Starting quite young, I ended up finishing my degree in 2016. So for eight years I did a law degree and also built a business and it was quite it was quite a task, but it was really, really good. And also I was sort of in my mid twenties, I was trying to navigate that whole world as well. There was a lot of sacrifices made and a lot of things that like trips to Europe with friends and stuff that I didn't get to go on.

[00:10:03.980] - Aileen Day

But if it makes you feel better, I did not get to go on those either.

[00:10:09.340] - Rhiannon Beach

I know well, I think it definitely wouldn't change it for the world and and made a whole lot of difference in challenging. So once we started off just by myself and now we're up to our team of 35 people. Yeah. And looking after. So we went from a couple of dogs a week, like you said in 2013, about 80 dogs now we're up to about five hundred dogs a week.

[00:10:35.690] - Aileen Day

Oh my goodness me. Five hundred dogs between how many team?

[00:10:42.460] - Rhiannon Beach

So thirty five, it's all different sections, so we do what we call out and about day care, where the dogs get dropped off and we take them all around. I've been saying at Parliament House and the National Library and the War Memorial, and so they get around like more than I do, more than their owners do.

[00:11:00.080] - Aileen Day

They've got a better social life than their owners.

[00:11:04.000] - Rhiannon Beach

Well, exactly. That's what our owners say, you know a lot of our owners are really hard working, long working hours. And they say this response that all the time that my dog was getting out a lot more than I am. And then we've got a sort of a grooming salon and we do do some group dog walking and then our puppies. So it just depending on which service and and what areas in those sections that the whole team is about thirty five, about twenty nine full time equivalent.

[00:11:34.330] - Aileen Day

Wow. That is amazing.

[00:11:36.280] - Aileen Day

And I really love especially the first time you told me about that story was just this inspired drive then despite the fact that you didn't have the capital, despite the fact that you'd never run a business, despite the fact that you were doing a law degree, despite so many factors that you continued to push through because you could see the value behind what you were doing was just so inspiring to me as well. And it was this concept that nothing was going to get in your way.

[00:12:14.320] - Aileen Day

And that's all I can see is probably one of the biggest drivers behind how you continue to get the nods from these amazing Telstra Business Awards, and Australian Institute of Management and those types of organisations, because they can see that desire to to succeed and to do something for the

greater population and the greater community. And I don't think it's sorry I and for the puppies.

[00:12:46.560] - Rhiannon Beach

So I think it's really important because everything isn't straightforward, whether it be starting a business, maybe trying to build a business or build value in what you're doing or launching a product and it just completely flops or whatever it might be.

[00:13:03.160] - Rhiannon Beach

There's always going to be adversity. There's always going to be a challenge, a roadblock, and it's just about trying to work out the best way to navigate it. There is sort of that point sometimes where you go when you hit a roadblock after roadblock after roadblock. Do you go, like to when when's the crucial point to go? OK, let's pivot and change to something else. Yeah, but I think it's I think if you know what it is and you believe in it and you believe in the value of it, and I think that's some of the things that I've discovered and work towards in building my business, because there were a lot of people were like, oh, that's that's really that's a really cute business.

[00:13:47.020] - Rhiannon Beach

It wasn't really the fact that it was like a serious business. So a lot of my strive between taking on these awards and getting these accolades is to actually build respect and not just so much respect, but validation for the industry.

[00:14:04.810] - Rhiannon Beach

And it's it's pet industry. Its and it is playing with puppies and it is really cute. It's also a serious business that contributes significantly to the economy. You know, employs currently 35 people and services all they puts in all this money back into the economy as well. So I think that's something that I've worked really hard, and especially as being the 2020 winner of Telstra. That was my mission to do it. That's why I really wanted to win, because I really wanted to have that validation.

[00:14:35.200] - Rhiannon Beach

So then bringing it back to what you said about being determined or driven or knowing how to navigate, even though you have no money in your 19 and you get laughed out of the bank when you apply for a loan, I think that's I think that's just something that helps build resilience. And I think that's what we need to do and what we need to experience as business people and not just give up on the first go. Yes.

[00:15:00.300] - Aileen Day

Oh, yeah. You know, and this this is a story that I love coming back to around a man who gave up, gave up digging for gold because the tunnel was getting far too long and what he was giving up was becoming far too much. And he still hadn't struck gold. He still hadn't struck gold. And then you know there's this image of the the mine that he had dug and he had quit three foot away from gold. Yep. Yep.

[00:15:36.520] - Aileen Day

So for me, that is always something in the back of my mind or the front of my mind. Even when I feel like to to just stop and just give something else a go, I'm like, what if I'm three foot away from just that little bit further? Exactly. You've just got to go that little bit further.

[00:15:57.010] - Aileen Day

Just one more podcast. Just one more Go Live. Just one more program. You know, just just three foot away from gold and you're never going to know unless you just keep going. And I think resilience ooofft, shivers. If as business owners, we haven't learnt some serious resilience this year you never will. Exactly. Go get a job, get out of business, because if you haven't learnt resilience through what we've just gone through in 2020, you're not gunna. Harsh, but it's fair it's a fair comment. Resilience, it is the key to so much.

[00:16:38.880] - Aileen Day

Now, that is an amazing story. Thank you so much for sharing it with us, because I think I love giving

listeners the opportunity not just to even learn more, but just to see what drives another human being is just so fascinating as well. But this is the Value Driven Brand podcast where we talk all things creating value and driving value within your brand. And the reason you are a guest on this podcast is because you have done exactly that and who best to learn from than the people in business who lead the way in creating a value driven brand for themselves so that they can help us do the same thing and learn how to do it for our own brands and businesses.

[00:17:32.240] - Aileen Day

So we are very lucky. Rhiannon has got so many amazing, amazing points on how she has, over her career created Pups4Fun to become what is now one of the most celebrated brands in the A.C.T. But I, for the sake of timeliness, have to ask you to cut them down to a few. So she's going to give us her top three tips on what she does and what it looks like to create a value driven brand. So what's the first tip that our listeners should pull that pen and paper out for and take note?

[00:18:17.780] - Rhiannon Beach

Yeah.

[00:18:18.650] - Rhiannon Beach

So I guess just a bit of background. When we are looking towards our clients, our clients, we see our clients as our number one client and then internally our staff, because we're being a service based business. And so when we're running the business or we want to do is create that value, like you said. So trying to create the brand, create the value. So there's a number of things that we normally do. We only have about five to six, as you mentioned, I'll only go three.

[00:18:48.710] - Rhiannon Beach

But my top one is providing a, giving something a customer, giving the customer something that they don't know that they want. So this is kind of what drove me to starting the whole business and had that drive between not giving up. So at that stage, there was no dog daycare in Canberra. There was probably about two in Australia, I think one one in Richmond and maybe one in Brisbane. So it wasn't a service that anyone even knew existed and they didn't.

[00:19:23.330] - Rhiannon Beach

So they didn't know that they needed it because it wasn't really there. So being able to where as I am looking at different markets, looking at America and looking and understanding the pet industry and also understanding the growth of that industry, I also realised that that was something that was really they did need it. They just didn't know. So I had to work at how to communicate that to them. So I think that's the biggest thing, is trying to really understand what your client or your customer needs that they don't know that they want, because they can't tell you.

[00:19:58.550] - Rhiannon Beach

They can't you can't give them a feedback form and they say, I need this because they don't even know it's there. So we do that. Obviously, the whole concept of my business is based on that, but we do that in lots of different ways. So we always offer like for example, we would like a bath and bolt service, which is like a bath and towel dry for our day care dogs that go out during the day. So we started offering that because the dogs are coming home pretty dirty.

[00:20:25.850] - Rhiannon Beach

We'd managed to do big renovations on our park to minimise mud and all that. But they're dogs are still having the most badass time. And so they're coming back a bit dirty so we started just, you know, offering just a bath and we'd only do it, we couldn't do it for every dog and we couldn't do it all the time. But once we started doing that, then we offered a service which was like we call Scrub Club, so they can join the scrub club and get unlimited bath and bolts so their dogs always clean.

[00:20:56.660] - Rhiannon Beach

So they didn't really know it was an issue. Like they're like, oh, it's a bit dirty, but until you go back clean, you're like, oh, I can't have it back dirty again. Yeah, they didn't even know it was something they didn't really know it was something that they actually wanted or service that they would take on until

we offered it like that. So yes, that was something that we did for them. We offered that membership.

[00:21:17.420] - Rhiannon Beach

So that's a way that they could benefit from something that they didn't even know existed. Essentially.. And so that's what we always try and do, is always try and look at ways that we can offer something that they are not sure of. There's lots of different things being service based. Our clients are extremely busy they're, a lot of them are public service or high end private sector, work long hours, especially around when parliament's sitting, budget time. So anything that we can do for them as an extra just adds that value.

[00:22:03.310] - Rhiannon Beach

So something that we can appreciate, just even appreciating, knowing that it's school holidays soon or budget, you know, parliament sitting or something. So they know we're already predicting that the upheaval in their life. So we're able to say, OK, it's, you know Parliament is sitting. Would you like an extra service next week? The whole thing I've been meaning to email you, you know, like I've been meaning to email and ask you about that.

[00:22:30.880] - Aileen Day

So, you know, oh, my God, that is so amazing and so simple.

[00:22:36.130] - Rhiannon Beach

Yeah. Yeah. Well, I think that's the thing. If you focus on your customer and you focus on value, these things are not complex and they're not expensive.

[00:22:46.090] - Aileen Day

It's not expensive at all. No, it's not.

[00:22:50.020] - Rhiannon Beach

You don't have to go on a million dollar tool or whatever it is. You just have to understand it and work out the best way to sort of provide that value and give them that that bonus. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:23:05.380] - Aileen Day

Oh, my God. I love that. And just the simplicity of it. But the impact that that can have and and even for you listening your business, what is it that you can go and considering your customers, what could you make easier in their life that is happening maybe outside of your business? As Rhiannon just said, you know, yes she's in Canberra and Parliaments a big thing for a lot of the works in Canberra. But, you know, that just makes all my brains like juicy and excited.

[00:23:46.870] - Aileen Day

I wonder what I can do and think laterally about what my customers might be experiencing in their own worlds that I can do to help make it easier for them.

[00:23:57.340] - Rhiannon Beach

Yeah, well, that's another one of the points that way is our biggest thing is being more convenient than your competitors, so and make it easier for your clients. So that's everything. So things we do, for example, like that. But also looking at like I like to be organised. I like to know what's going on. So they put in we have another membership program we've just launched is what we call our VIP grooming membership. So that's a membership based program where we offer clients 12 months worth of bookings for their grooming appointments.

[00:24:31.780] - Rhiannon Beach

So that means they get locked in, secured at their preference. They don't have to worry about booking in and trying to fit in, especially around Christmas. So at this point, we're booked out sort of March next year and we're already booking up to March 2022 currently. So we're just releasing all our programs. So that is something that we can do. Yes, it's a lot of work for us in the sense of trying to put that.

[00:24:58.570] - Rhiannon Beach

But it's also a benefit for us because we've got appointments locked in and secured. So it helps with staffing, it helps with regular income and helps with loyalty. So then what being able to do that is just so what we had we actually had a bit of a situation with our VIP's. We had more clients that wanted us to have that service. So we just offer that for free. That was just you get if you if you want to book with us, we give you 12 months worth of appointments for free.

[00:25:29.860] - Rhiannon Beach

However, because we had we're working so good at building value by doing things like being convenient, checking in with clients feedback. If they haven't been in in six weeks or eight weeks, your dog's due for a haircut. So anyway, we've done all these things to the point where we couldn't necessarily we were booking out ten to twelve weeks ahead. So what we wanted to do is really ensure that those people got their high level of service continued.

[00:25:58.870] - Rhiannon Beach

So we released a annual membership fee. So for \$99 they can actually join the VIP club. They get all their appointments, they get unlimited nail clips. They get a couple of baths and bolts, they get an upgrade blueberry facial each time.

[00:26:14.920] - Aileen Day

So price wise. I want a blueberry facial. It's very good.

[00:26:21.280] - Rhiannon Beach

It's really it's actually makes such a difference because dogs, especially the the oodles and the bearded ones. They're usually quite smell, so it's really it's actually really good. So we've provided \$400 worth of value, which is something that is not necessarily costing us huge amounts. So it's upgraded shampoo, a little bit more expensive shampoo, a couple of free baths and obviously the administration time to do that. So it provides the client four hundred dollars worth of value, for ninety nine dollars, and it also provides the a level of a bit of exclusive, exclusivity.

[00:26:55.700] - Aileen Day

I was struggle with that word too.

[00:26:58.760] - Rhiannon Beach

So it enables them because we couldn't offer that necessarily to five hundred clients. So we released it and within 24 hours we'd already hit two hundred. So we finally released it to our current clients and we have hit like three hundred is probably where we're capping, so we haven't actually advertised it on Facebook or anywhere else. We just sent our current clients an email. So that was really a positive thing because that was security and convenience for them and so and that gave them a preference over other clients.

[00:27:33.830] - Rhiannon Beach

So we wanted to focus on the clients that we already had. So rather than someone coming in off the street and then making a booking and then cancelling it, the person that's had their appointment for 12 months that kept their appointment and held their appointment and not changed it, they should get preference and priority. Absolutely. Yeah. So we sort of one of the things that we do currently, obviously now we're completely booked out till March. So we do have run a cancellation list and even simple things like instead of them having to call up us, tell them that we booked out and take their details.

[00:28:09.080] - Rhiannon Beach

We just managed to put something as simple as a form on online. So they're able to just click a couple of buttons, it logs to us. And then it's also easy for us on the other side, because if we do have a cancellation or for some reason, we can squeeze a dog in. It's there, the information's there, so it's convenient for them. So our biggest thing is really working on building that element of convenience for the client. If we can do it for them, we will.

[00:28:33.110] - Aileen Day
Yeah.

[00:28:33.890] - Aileen Day
And I love that you've also tackled some pretty serious business challenges that occur for just about everyone in business, which is cash flow. And and although I will never profess to be the finance person, what I will profess to is knowing that 100% of businesses, especially start-ups, struggle with cash flow. And when you can come up with strategies that deliver value for your customer, but then ultimately help you win as well, because your customer needs you to stay in business, right, they need you to stay in business, they need you to be profitable so and do it well.

[00:29:20.720] - Rhiannon Beach
There's no point just because otherwise they're going to get a crappy service. If I'm just pulling it together and just scraping shit together so to speak and not being able to perform well or my my staff are too far under the pump.

[00:29:32.870] - Rhiannon Beach
And that was the other thing to do to COVID. The reason why we couldn't offer as many grooming services is because we have to socially distance more so we would have less groomers in the smaller space. And and so rather than upsetting people, we went, you know what? We're giving you an opportunity to be our people. So it's probably going to get to the stage where it might be only only membership, only Grooming, we may not actually open to the public.

[00:30:00.710] - Rhiannon Beach
So that's something that's I'm not aware that's happened yet in Australia. And that's something that I would like to do because I think it builds a brand builds a loyalty and adds value. Exactly the things that we're talking about.

[00:30:17.990] - Rhiannon Beach
Yeah. And we want the thing is, although clients want high quality service from us, we also want high quality clients. We want to be able to have clients that help us deal with us. And so we want to be it's a two way street. So by being able to do that and sometimes. Something like handing over a nominal sum helps that filter out the people that may be not loyal, that change their appointment 50 times a year and cancel all the time, and then they don't show up or whatever else that is.

[00:30:53.200] - Rhiannon Beach
And you go, you know what? I could take three lovely, beautiful clients that do nothing but provide great value. And if we can provide great value to them. And so just by putting a nominal fee in there, then it's just it's been able to distinguish that between those clients. And we were just amazed because all our clients have just jumped on board and we've been really, really happy.

[00:31:14.380] - Aileen Day
Yeah, that is so fantastic. And then obviously goes to show that even though you've charged them now a membership fee for something that was in the past, a free service, but not sustainable, they still realised that they are onto a good thing. And you and I and I thought about it after our conversation the other day where I was like, you know what, it's okay to ask for more money when you were doing this? And we provided a lot more value.

[00:31:48.010] - Rhiannon Beach
So although

[00:31:48.610] - Aileen Day
You give more. Feel free to take.

[00:31:48.610] - Rhiannon Beach
We offer the 12 month. Yeah, yeah, that's it, like we offer the 12 month appointments for free, but we threw in the baths, the nail clips and now the real organisation and all the other value, the facials and

the upgraded shampoo and stuff like whitening shampoo, some of our clients would be paying the extra for the add on anyway. So. Oh, this is great now. So I don't have to worry. It's just the one fee and it's just that and I can just not have to worry about it.

[00:32:17.910] - Rhiannon Beach

So and I think that's the other thing that's adding convenience, you know, looking at a lot of people do online reminders, but also feedback to every new client we contact to see how their dog went, whether they were interested in rebooking and just really trying to get that feedback in. We also have moved sort of automatic billing, so direct debit. So that was a really big thing that we moved to with COVID. That's actually being just amazing for our clients because they just don't have to think.

[00:32:48.150] - Rhiannon Beach

They don't have to come in when they're running late for work and line up with all the other people. And at the moment, what they do is they just throw their dog off, there's always a staff member there to take the dog and then they can just run off. They don't have to worry about booking this in or doing whatever because then they have an account, they can go oh, you know, he needs some shampoo. Can you throw that in or can you do his nails today or what?

[00:33:10.560] - Rhiannon Beach

And you don't have to think about or do I have this amount of money or do I have this on my card? So that's really something that added to that convenience and has actually helped grow because we've made it more convenient. So rather than people going, oh, I won't do it because I can't remember what's on my account and I have to go into NetBank and login and all these sort of stages, it's just like just do it, because I know it comes out on the one day every week and I can check later.

[00:33:33.060] - Aileen Day

Yeah. So yeah, convenience is really that is that is brilliant.

[00:33:38.640] - Aileen Day

I mentioned on a LinkedIn Live recently that it breaks my heart when I hear customers recoil at how hard some businesses make it to give them money. And I've said if you are a business that makes it hard for your customers to give you money. What are you doing?

[00:34:08.160] - Rhiannon Beach

Well, and this comes out of a bit of my pet peeve. I can't comprehend if I contact someone, whether it be I.T or someone building a fence or doing whatever, I've had experience or a fabricator. And I'm like, that is your job. I understand accounts isn't your job and marketing. I mean, when you're small, business it all is but when the service that they're trying to offer when their offering is so bad. And you I just it it just blows my mind because like I said, although our job our business is a dog business and it's to look after the dogs, but really our business is a people business to look after the owners.

[00:34:52.770] - Rhiannon Beach

They said they work hard, long hours, and they feel guilty. They feel really guilty. So we need to be there to like make it so they alleviate that guilt but also offer something to them. So I think being able to look outside is not just what you do, whether it be a trade or whatever the business you're offering, but to be able to do what you're offering and do it well. And like you said, when it's so hard to pay people and and I mean that in the beginning, it wasn't always easy.

[00:35:22.230] - Rhiannon Beach

I've learned along the way. It's not like I just grew up in that one day and it was just fixed to that some mistakes. And because I used to invoice people and they were like this is just so hard and I have to remember to pay to my bill. And and I was just like, I'll just take that off you and I'll just take your money and they're like please. I thought people would be really, you know, not wanting direct debit and going into your account, you know, but no, that's what people want.

[00:35:47.790] - Rhiannon Beach

They don't want have to pay an invoice every week or every month or whatever else. They just want it

done for them. So, yeah, yeah. I think it's definitely some the best for our business being a service based business. I would say that's like the most important.

[00:36:02.250] - Rhiannon Beach

So you know, looking at not only giving them something that they don't know they want, but then making sure that they just it's so convenient and easier to do so they can just throw money at you.

[00:36:18.750] - Aileen Day

Show me the money.

[00:36:21.930] - Aileen Day

Exactly right. So what's your third third handy hint?

[00:36:27.240] - Rhiannon Beach

So, my other I mean, it's the focus of customer service, but really focusing not so much on getting new customers, but focusing on keeping the current one's. So that's where we focus a lot of that time, although we've got like I said, we've got all these processes where we with new clients, we have learnt as well, because we were focusing on so much of our current clients that maybe we weren't doing as well at making sure the new clients were getting feedback or follow up.

[00:36:57.450] - Rhiannon Beach

So we do that. But where our priorities, it cost a lot of money to go and get a new client, a hell of a lot of money. And you've got to really understand the lifetime value of your client. So, you know, we have clients who spend between five to ten to fifteen thousand dollars a year. So if I can just look after one of those clients, two of those clients, 10 of those clients, it's a hell of a lot cheaper than trying to go out and get a new one.

[00:37:26.110] - Rhiannon Beach

So really, I think understanding that lifetime value and what you can do by offering those other things to make it more convenient, everyone needs new customers differently and you never want to shut that out. But really appreciating the ones that you've got, there's no point in looking and being blinded by all the ones that you have there that are probably not getting the level of service or the right product that they need or the right service they need. Because you're so blind sided about chasing someone else's client and then all the next best client that you think that you need.

[00:38:01.530] - Rhiannon Beach

So I think that's really important and just understanding. That value.

[00:38:07.550] - Aileen Day

That speaks to me so much, I use the example of so many businesses, just to be blunt, shits me to tears that. Let's take, for example, Foxtel or Telstra or an insurance company or bank to, you know, hundreds and thousands of businesses do this every single day in this country. And I'm certain around the world where, you know, they they care more about the acquisition of a new customer than they care about the ongoing loyalty of their current customers.

[00:38:49.070] - Aileen Day

And he's he's a really amazing stat that if you were to increase your customer loyalty, so by loyalty, I mean a customer comes back more than once to shop with you, you have the opportunity the proven opportunity to increase your profit anywhere between twenty five to ninety five per cent and loyal customers every day of the week in every single industry and sector of business spend more than a new acquisition, sometimes three to five times more.

[00:39:33.530] - Rhiannon Beach

So I can definitely agree with that because I mean, we didn't get from four or 80 clients to five hundred by chasing new clients. That's not how we got there. We don't advertise. We have we have a website, we have a Facebook page. But we don't actively we don't have funnels. We don't have any of that sort of stuff that we probably should. But the reason why we've built that and it's got to that five

hundred is because we're building a brand and it's providing value by looking after those clients and those clients or customers or whatever you want to call it.

[00:40:08.270] - Rhiannon Beach

We call them Pups4Funsters. They're advocates, they're like, you know, they live and breathe the business. So they are far more beneficial to us as marketing than us putting in some sponsored Facebook ad on that, some sales funnel that can do whatever, not knocking that. And that depends on what you're doing is it's very it's got it's place and everything. But for us, we've been really lucky to have that. And the advocacy and like one example of where our clients advocates we had in 2018, the A.C.T released a animal welfare bill.

[00:40:47.600] - Rhiannon Beach

So their intent was to help animal welfare and there was a lot of changes. But one particular change was just to limit the number of dogs that were allowed in public places. So obviously that had so per person. So they're limiting the number, I think it was to three dogs per person or something. At the moment, there's no limit how many dogs you can have in a public place. So we were lucky enough what we were going to be affected by that.

[00:41:13.460] - Rhiannon Beach

If that happens, no more trips to Parliament House, no more trips to the war memorial on Anzac Day when they're dedicating the day to the dogs or whatever. So now, lucky enough we didn't actually find out, unfortunately, into them through the. We found out through the media, but luckily it was still open for consultation. And so we had hundreds of not only just clients, but people that we'd met because we worked in the community for sometime before we got our private dog park with members of the public.

[00:41:44.210] - Rhiannon Beach

So we have all these people that just jumped on board writing submissions and explaining how it would negatively actually affect animal welfare if these hundreds of dogs a week were then put back in their backyards and not being able to come out with Pups4Fun.

[00:42:00.140] - Rhiannon Beach

So they were like you know, and they did it not because we asked we we we mentioned once that came out in the media, but we didn't ask why they jumped on hundreds and hundreds. So the result that part of the the bill was not included. They understood that the detriment would be far worse than any gain that we're trying to make. So we were able to continue to operate as per usual. And and that was I couldn't have done that by myself. I couldn't I could have written one submission.

[00:42:37.790] - Rhiannon Beach

But there's no way and there's no amount of like. The value that I put into those clients to build them and understand that lifetime value has them now come back to help us. And you couldn't pay for that sort of support. So to have an advocate like that, that people would stop what they're doing, it didn't matter how busy they're busy people, whether it was so that time is not a thing, but they would find the time because they felt so strongly about it to do that.

[00:43:09.220] - Rhiannon Beach

And you just you just couldn't ask for anything better.

[00:43:11.530] - Aileen Day

So and there is no way the new acquisition customer would have the care factor for your brand to take the time out of their day. And maybe there might be an outlier here or there, but consistently

[00:43:31.120] - Rhiannon Beach

They have don't understand it yet. They haven't they haven't gone through the process of being part of the family as we are, even though we're now we're looking after five hundred dogs a week, not 80. We still want everyone to feel like they are one of five.

[00:43:46.090] - Rhiannon Beach

One of two, they're only ones. Not, so not really. And then those new acquisitions, we make sure that we still nurture them so that they can get to the point and build up, but not to focus on trying to go out and get them when they're there. If they come in our door, we will nurture them and we will look after them, but not trying to trying to look after who's already in our door, who's trying to be loyal, who's fighting to book in, joining cancellation lists, you know, wanting to be in there and wanting to have services and who's barracking for us, so to speak.

[00:44:17.380] - Rhiannon Beach

And to be able to change and influence legislation is pretty bloody epic for advocates. So if you're building a brand, I think that that's an adding value. If you can add that sort of value to your clients, whether they become advocates like that and have that sort of power, then I think that there's nothing better than you know than what you can do for them.

[00:44:39.760] - Aileen Day

That warms my heart so much. I love that.

[00:44:43.510] - Rhiannon Beach

Warmed my heart.

[00:44:44.410] - Rhiannon Beach

I've just cried and cried. I couldn't believe that so many people would actually be so passionate because it's my passion. And the thing is, they jump on board because it's not just my passion, it's my team. Like, I have just the most amazing team and they believe in the brand. We've built the brand so strong that it is not Rhiannon, like half the people don't even know who I am these days. But that's because it's not my brand.

[00:45:07.840] - Rhiannon Beach

It's the Pups4Fun brand. So they have so much trust in the brand, whether it's myself, Dallas, the operations manager, Rachael, the services manager. They've all been there for a long time, but they have the trust because of all these things that we've done by making it convenient, adding value and really predicting their needs. They know that it doesn't matter who's behind there or who's behind the desk or who's answering the phone, it's the brand. So really making these things is really core to building that value driven brand.

[00:45:40.120] - Aileen Day

And look at the outcome when you do.

[00:45:44.140] - Aileen Day

Yeah, you can change legislation. Yeah, yeah. That is absolutely phenomenal. And apart from anything, creating advocates is really what it's all about, because when you do create an advocate, your acquisition costs go down again because there is no better way to find new customers than to have them be referred on to you from an already loyal advocate of your brand and your business.

[00:46:16.780] - Rhiannon Beach

So we get that in government departments. It's insane, because obviously a lot of our clients are, you know, public servants.

[00:46:25.420] - Rhiannon Beach

So we hear we get a whole group of new little dogs because that one's told that one and then they go and they jump on the parents page and they're like, this is my dog and this is my dog and Pups4Fun. And so we're not selling it, they're selling it. They go to work and they're selling it for us.

[00:46:41.700] - Aileen Day

Can I just tell you, that is the goal. You know, in in in business, we we have ways of measuring that goal of the referral.

[00:46:58.660] - Aileen Day

And one of the ways is called net promoter score. And and basically we described that as if someone is a detractor to your business, they are at the barbecue basically shit canning your business and everything about you. And if a neutral to your business, which in my experience can nearly be as dangerous as a detractor, they are at the barbecue and you don't even mention like you don't even care. They so meh. You know, I got what I expected and so I should and

[00:47:37.690] - Aileen Day

so they should but the advocate is the guy or the person at the barbecue is like, oh, my God, my dog is so exhausted, these Pups4Fun, people have run him ragged, he gets to have a better social life than I do. And everybody goes, oh, yeah, who's that? Where are they? What do they do? Have they got openings? And that is what you want as a business owner. You want people to be your advocate.

[00:48:09.880] - Aileen Day

You want people to be talking about why they have to experience you the way that they experience you.

[00:48:18.520] - Aileen Day

And I love, looove hearing stories about businesses that have pulled that off and work so hard, but smart to continue, always making sure that that stays the case as well. Do not rest on your laurels, morals, laurels, whichever one it is.

[00:48:38.680] - Aileen Day

Don't rest on them. Yeah, keep moving.

[00:48:41.740] - Rhiannon Beach

The thing is, these these people, these clients are amazing. And I think it's just not that we're doing anything exceptional except for nurturing them. You've got to look after them. These people are great. These people like I said that they're advocates anyway. But if you abuse that, then they probably people that are, like I said, going to be detractors or very vocal in a different sense. Yeah. So, you know, so you want you to look after them because they're amazing people that do share it and and they are passionate and they follow your brand.

[00:49:14.080] - Rhiannon Beach

So I think that that's the most important thing is to to build a brand that someone wants to be associated with, that someone wants to say, well, my dog goes to Pup4Fun and we get that all the time. And then a show off, oh, look at his photo, look at him from last week. And it's this whole talking around the water cooler and the having a coffee. And that's the sort of the brand that we want to build and have the desire to to be a part of it.

[00:49:41.650] - Aileen Day

Yeah.

[00:49:42.100] - Aileen Day

And you have and my my hat goes off to you. It truly makes me so happy. Apart from anything, I've now got a new case study to go off and talk to everybody about so. I've certainly through doing this podcast had the opportunity to start a neat little connection, a collection of of really amazing businesses to go and show the rest of the world hey it is possible. Look at all these people and how they've gone and done it.

[00:50:13.090] - Rhiannon Beach

So, sorry. I know that you were going to jump in. I was just going to say one thing with building the brand and doing. That so we're not just offering a service like obviously, you know, I've been working with the government to develop codes of practice, we're working with Skills A.C.T, to get on a lot of qualifications on scope.

[00:50:32.800] - Rhiannon Beach

So we're trying to make a difference in the community as well. So when our clients actually say that, they go, oh, not just my dogs, happy and show this, that whatever else they like and the team whilst doing all that are actually trying to make whether the industry or education or the actual rules and regulations around it. We're trying to build that as well. So that helps them see it being valid and see really being able to advocate for in more than just my dog loves this and it's more of an ownership to them because then they can have when they have involvement in it, like I was part of that part of that legislative change I was part of.

[00:51:17.890] - Rhiannon Beach

And not because obviously the animal welfare was a positive thing. It was all a great intent, it was just a bit clunky, the thought of it. So there's no bad feelings about that. But they were really proud that they were able to possibly have an impact on the animal welfare legislation, which was actually pretty cool.

[00:51:32.470] - Aileen Day

So what a beautiful alignment to to help them feel better about their community through your brand.

[00:51:40.620] - Aileen Day

Oh, so some many feels I love it so much. They are some amazing insights. And as I mentioned, Rhiannon has got so many more. Well I keep thinking, how can I extend past these podcasts? And one of the ideas that I have is to go back to live streaming on Twitch, which I was doing earlier on in the year, just as a fun isolation thing and starting a new talk show called Let's Talk About CEHX, C-E-H-X, for those customer, employee and human experiences for those who are listening and wondering where the hell this just u-turned.

[00:52:34.000] - Aileen Day

But if we get to that point, Rhiannon, I would love to have you on the couch to talk about the customer, employee and human experience even more when it comes to Pups4Fun. If you're interested. Absolutely that'd be great. Some people are freaked out like, no, no, no, no, no, no, it's OK.

[00:52:57.700] - Aileen Day

That's off air. But before I let you go, I want to have a quick thing. So everyone listening in by now would definitely know. And if you're a new listener, welcome to the podcast. And if you don't know every guest that I have on the podcast, I ask them to let me know what that one song is that gets them pumped up for anything. And do you remember the song that you told me Rhiannon? Oh I have a lot of trouble because I'm a music person.

[00:53:35.680] - Rhiannon Beach

So it depends on my mood whether I'm I was tossing up between Zarude Sandstorm and so it was Praise You by Fatboy Slim.

[00:53:45.760] - Aileen Day

It was Praise You by flat fat, flat, fat. Well, the transcript creator is going to have a field day with me, Fatboy Slim. Correct. Now, if you don't know, what I do is I take every guest's song that pumps them up for anything. And I add it to the Aileen Day official guest playlist on Spotify. So, Rhiannon, thank you for your contribution to our Spotify playlist.

[00:54:19.330] - Aileen Day

And you can get your hands on that Spotify playlist at the Value driven brand dot com. And in each of the podcast episodes, there is the link to to hook in and check it out. And also when this goes live, you will be able to find obviously your this podcast on valuedrivenbrand.com/podcast-series and all of the wonderful ways that you can connect with Rhiannon. And what I would definitely do is if things that she's discussed really kind of hit home with you, such as creating beautiful packages.

[00:55:09.280] - Aileen Day

She talked about her VIP membership packages and whatnot. Go to her website and just look at how she has put those together. And by all means, if you're a puppy owner or dog owner in Canberra, you

need to look her up while you're at it and get on board for what is an amazing experience, not just for the puppies, but for the owners, for the puppy parents. But I would certainly encourage you. If creating packages for your business is something that you know intrinsically that you need to get done or it could create a better value proposition for your customers.

[00:55:55.770] - Aileen Day

Have a chat with Rhiannon. She has so much experience when it comes to understanding what it means to give your customers something they didn't know that they needed. And her contact details will be available on the podcast post as well. So for me to you, Rhiannon, thank you so much for joining us today. It has been an absolute pleasure to keep learning from you and getting more insight into how you have created your own value driven brand. And I can't wait to just continue watching that journey continue and grow from Melbourne, hoping to get to Canberra early next year.

[00:56:43.560] - Aileen Day

So that will be exciting.

[00:56:45.630] - Aileen Day

But thank you so much for joining me us.

[00:56:47.390] - Rhiannon Beach

Say hello. Absolutely.

[00:56:49.440] - Aileen Day

I'm going to take an anti histamine before I do, though.

[00:56:53.430] - Aileen Day

It's bad at the moment. I'm annoyingly. I'm annoyingly allergic to dogs, but that doesn't stop me. No, I love them.

[00:57:04.800] - Rhiannon Beach

Thanks so much for having me part of the podcast. It's been great and I think it's really good to have a podcast like yourself, like yours that can show people and guide people through the steps and what they need to do to build a value driven brand.

[00:57:18.690] - Aileen Day

You're definitely allowed to come back.

[00:57:21.930] - Aileen Day

And and can I just add that all of those things don't really cost money. Know they're so, so great. So many great tactics that don't need to cost the earth to to get where you need to be to give your customers what they need. So thank you so much for those amazing insights.

[00:57:41.530] - Rhiannon Beach

No worries. Thanks so much.

[00:57:43.350] - Aileen Day

Well, for me here, it is the end of this podcast. But I want you to make sure that you go off to valuedrivenbrand.com and check out the links to get in touch with Rhiannon and learn all about how she delivers value in her brand.

[00:58:01.990] - Aileen Day

And apart from that, get out into the world as far as you're allowed to travel. 25ks if you here in Melbourne right now and make sure that you create value for somebody else in your life, because what goes around comes around.