



Transcript

Episode #012

**“The one with Blake Mycoskie
founder of TOMS shoes”**

ilovemarketing.com

Presenter: Dean Jackson

Joe Polish

Blake Mycoskie

DJ I'm Dean Jackson. He's Joe Polish and this is the I Love Marketing Broadcast. Hey everybody it's Dean Jackson.

JP And Joe Polish.

DJ Joe this is a little different kind of I Love Marketing broadcast today.

JP Yeah it's going to be a special one and we'll let everyone know why in a little bit 'cos you're going to hear me talk a lot more than Dean on this one. Dean how would you set this up.

DJ Well one of the cool things about you is that you know a lot of cool people.

JP That's just one of the many cool people.

DJ Many of the cool people that I know, I've met through you. So you tell us, set it up. Tell everybody who's our guest today. Our virtual guest and how you met them and a little bit about them 'cos I think it's a fantastic treat for everybody.

JP So this will be a special I Love Marketing broadcast because you're going to actually hear me interview a guy by the name of Blake Mycoskie who is the founder of Toms Shoes and Toms Shoes is really interesting for profit footwear company that's based in California and it also has a non-profit section of it which is called Friends of Toms. But basically the company was founded in 2006 by Blake and they basically sell shoes that for every pair of shoes that

Toms sells, they donate a new pair of shoes to a child in need, typically in a third world country. So I met Blake at Rock The Kasbah which is Richard Branson's annual charity event which I've been taking people to for the last three or four years.

DJ In Los Angeles?

JP It's in Los Angeles and so last year I brought 92 people to this event. We had some pretty cool people. The founders of Beach Body, Bill Phillips. A lot of people in my 25K Group, Dan Sullivan and Telman and a bunch of crazy internet marketers and just super sharp people and so we, through the group that I had brought, it had raised \$327,000 for Richard's charity Virgin Unite and I'm currently the largest fund raiser in the world for Virgin Unite and we do these trips to *0:02:59.4 and all kinds of stuff. So I have a pretty good relationship with Richard and earlier that day, Richard actually came to my 25K meeting and gave a short speech and then did Q&A with the group and so they put me at the dinner table with Richard and Jennifer Lowe Hewitt who was really super cool and I'm with Jaimie and we're sitting right next to Blake, who I didn't recognise at first, but Jaimie's like you're the founder of Toms Shoes. Yes so there we go. Sitting right next to the guy.

DJ A lot of people listening have probably seen him on TV. I think has he been on Ellen?

JP I don't know if he's been on Ellen, but he's been on a lot of things.

DJ Yeah one of those. I know I saw him on TV.

JP He's got a lot of celebrities that are obviously very big supporters of what he's doing and what I think is really neat and a really great marketing angle is, and you'll hear on the interview instead of me talking about what you'll hear, I'll just let everyone listen, but the reason we wanted to share this with everyone for two reasons. One, I think it's such a really incredible amazing way to actually position a for profit company and simultaneously do a tremendous amount of good. They have a one for one method and so like I said for every pair of Toms Shoes that you purchase, they give a pair away and even on their display, like if you go to Whole Foods or wherever they actually sell Toms Shoes at a point of purchase, they have a little hanger that even says on the little hanger with every pair you purchase, Toms will give a

pair of new shoes to a child in need, one for one. Dean I could even probably snap a photo of what the hanger looks like.

DJ When you told me you were going to get that, take a picture of it and we'll put it up on I Love Marketing.com. Let's do this. Why don't we listen to the interview and then we'll come back and talk about it.

JP Yeah exactly. That's what I'm saying. So everyone listen in and I'd love to hear how you're going to take away from this and we'll talk more about it. Hello this is Joe Polish. I want to welcome you to a very special guest that we're going to interview and this is also going to be posted on the I Love Marketing.com podcast and blog for all of our I Love Marketing listeners. So I'm getting ready to introduce you all to Blake Mycoskie. He's the founder and chief shoe giver of Toms Shoes. But before I do that, I want to give you some background on who Blake is. He's the man behind the growing one for one movement. Toms Shoes has given over one million pairs of new shoes to children in need through giving partners around the world. It didn't take long for the world to notice this new approach to business. In 2007 only a year after its beginning, Toms Shoes was honoured with the prestigious Peoples Design Award from the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institute and two years after that, Tom and Blake Mycoskie were the proud recipients of the Secretary of State's Award for corporate excellence presented by Hilary Clinton. So the award celebrates companies that are just committed to corporate and social responsibility, innovation, exemplary practices and democratic values worldwide. While running Toms, Blake is a sort after speaker at campuses and conferences all over the country. He's passionate about inspiring young people to help make tomorrow better, encouraging them to include giving in everything they do, from business practices to day to day decisions. His hope is to see a future full of socially minded businesses and consumers. This unique vision for the future came into focus in 2006 when he witnessed the hardships facing children growing up barefoot in Argentina. He felt the need to help and the one for one movement was born. He returned the following year with friends and family to hand place 10,000 pairs of new shoes on children. Blake has always had an entrepreneurial spirit. He's started five businesses before Toms. His first was a successful national campus laundry service which he later sold and between business ventures, Blake competed in the CBS prime time series The Amazing Race with his sister Paige and Blake travelled the world and came within minutes of winning the \$1,000,000 grand prize. Blake is an avid reader and traveller. He's a young guy and he's doing amazing stuff. Blake, how you doing?

BM I'm doing wonderful Joe.

JP So you're in LA right now? Right around where your headquarters are?

BM I'm actually at the headquarters today. I don't spend a lot of days in the office but it's nice when I am.

JP Now do you truly live on a boat?

BM I do. I've been living on a boat for about three and a half years now. I came back from one of our giving trips and just had this feeling that the people I was around that had very little, were so happy and I think a lot of it comes from the simplicity of their life and so I got rid of my big place and all my electronics and art and furniture and moved on a little sail boat and have been there ever since. And it has been a very great experience for me.

JP You founded Toms Shoes back in 2006 I believe, is when it first came to you and then in 2007 was probably the year that it started to take off like crazy.

BM Yeah we started in 2006. The back story is I was down in Argentina on a vacation and not doing anything philanthropic or charity oriented, but I met some volunteer workers in a café and they explained that they were giving shoes that week to children that didn't have them and that really surprised me. And it further surprised me when I found out that many of these kids weren't allowed to go to school 'cos they didn't have shoes and I wanted to help. So rather than making a donation that would only help them once through charity, I decided what if we started a shoe company. A for profit business where every time we sold a pair of shoes, we would give a pair away and do that in a one for one manner. No percentages, no formulas. Just one for one giving and then that way, we could truly sustain the giving. Every time we sold a pair of shoes, we get a child another pair and another pair and another pair and we started 2006 and we gave our 1,000,000 pair of shoes away this past September.

JP That is fantastic. First off, I love your perspective on charity. I will tell our listeners if you want to get an idea of Blake's perspective on a lot of things, you can watch the original speech at the Clinton Global Initiative and the interview with you and Bill Clinton and lots of really cool videos that are all over the internet. But basically you really believe in starting a business, you can do a heck of a lot more than if you just have a per se, a philanthropic

endeavour or a non-profit. I'd like to get your perspectives on that 'cos I tend to absolutely agree with that, that business is truly the most leverage you have with doing good in the world.

BM Well I think there's a place for non-profits and there's a place for for profits, social enterprises. I don't think that the world's problems can be solved or addressed in the either or situation but I do think especially in aid that needs to be sustained over time, if you can incorporate a for profit business model, it can be much more powerful than non-profit because if something needs to be given over and over and over again, like shoes or like school books, then what happens is if you give donations, you're dependent on those donors year after year after year and sometimes people get what they call donor fatigue and that might be because of economic reasons. That might be because there's a new non-profit they want to support. A number of different things. But when donor fatigue happens, then the organisation of the children that were benefitting from that non-profit, start to suffer. And by being a for profit business, as long as you continue to run your business well and smartly, you have that continual source of funds to fund your non-profit efforts and you don't have to worry about donor fatigue. So I do think that the world needs for profit and non-profit, but for profit is a non-traditional way of incorporating giving in a pretty profound way and something that we've done at Toms and we're very proud of.

JP Well you know the term for Toms, since you've answered this question a million different times is about tomorrow but I've got to ask it for people that don't really know the background. So give a little bit of background on why you named the company Toms and what it represents and what it means to you and what you'd like it to mean for everything you're about.

BM When it first started, my idea was very simple. If we sell a pair of these \$44.00 pairs of shoes today, we can therefore give away a pair tomorrow and so the full focus on kind of making it a better tomorrow led me to call them Tomorrow Shoes. But Tomorrows would never fit on the little tag on our shoes. So I shortened it to Toms and when I did I realised that that was actually really serendipitous because Toms really represents this idea of a better tomorrow and that we can all in a sense be Tom because we can all make a better tomorrow. Through not only the purchase of this pair of shoes, but other things that we can do in our lives and so I'm really happy the name ended up kind of landing where it did. But there definitely is not a Tom. That's one of the most questions I get is who's Tom and it's not a person. It's more of a mentality.

JP How often do you call you actually Tom?

BM All the time. Every day and I answer to it without flinching just because it's been happening so much and it's easier usually you know in a coffee shop or in a hotel or somewhere for someone just to say nice to meet you instead of giving the whole story.

JP That is total comedy. I don't want to date this actual interview at all 'cos I think 10 years from now, people can listen to this and really get a great perspective. You have this thing coming up called One Day Without Shoes. People can see it at [One Day Without Shoes.com](http://OneDayWithoutShoes.com) and what is the cause and what is the purpose behind that and how can people get involved?

BM Well the great thing about One Day Without Shoes is something we do every year. So it's an annual event. It always happens in April. It's usually a different day every year but this year it's April 5th and it's basically a day to raise awareness for the millions of children around the world who don't have shoes and don't have a choice and specifically, the reason we created it the way we did, was we said you know there are a lot of people that just don't realise how much it stinks to not have shoes. I mean what would life truly be like if you couldn't afford a pair of shoes and also people don't realise that there's so many foot diseases and really big problems that come from public health because you don't have shoes. So we thought what if we asked all of our supporters and friends and fans all around the world in the first world to take off their shoes for the day. I mean most people work in a nice office with carpet or they go to school at the university with the nice manicured grass and so it's not going to be a physical risk by not wearing shoes, but their feet might be a little cold or they might get dirty or they might stub their toe or something but even that little experience, would give them some perspective of what it would be like if you never had a pair of shoes. So it gives them empathy to understand what millions of children are experiencing every day and beyond that it's kind of disruptive. It's kind of rebellious. It's kind of what in the world – why aren't you wearing shoes and when that happens, it is the foster for great conversation about just how we can make the world a better place and so that's another kind of by-product of One Day Without Shoes. We've heard from so many companies now and government organisations even, by not wearing shoes on April 5th or last year I think it was April 18th or something, what happened was that these conversations started at their office or at their university that never would have started before and because of that, some great things came out of it. Great social change, ideas and experiences. So we think it's a great day to raise awareness for the children that don't have shoes, but it's also just a great way to start conversations about what we can do as individuals to make the world a better place.

JP No doubt. I think it's fantastic and you probably don't know much about this side of my business. I have recently launched a podcast which I'm going to post this interview there.

It's on iTunes. It's called I Love Marketing or I Love Marketing.com and we're literally getting 1,500 to 2,000 new listeners a day that are currently at the time we're doing this recording. I'm going to post the interview up on I Love Marketing.com 'cos I think this is awesome and I want everyone to hear about it there but in a nutshell, I really look at what you're doing is great marketing and I mean I've obviously seen you speak and we had dinner together at the time we met at Richard Branson's event, 'cos I'm currently his largest fund raiser and so I know a bit about your company and what you do and you made this comment. I don't even know what video it was but when people buy a pair of Toms Shoes they basically become a story teller because they're not just buying a pair of shoes but they're buying something and they're also simultaneously creating a free pair of shoes for a child or whoever you decide to give it to in another country and I think that's brilliant and I think it's fantastic and you don't do traditional marketing like other shoe companies, but you're probably one of the fastest growing, if not the fastest growing shoe company in the world right now. I don't know if that's accurate but I'd like to get your perspective on what you really do as it relates to building and growing your company. Like the entrepreneurial side.

BM I think the thing is that we all deep down have a yearning as human beings to be part of something and the more your company can allow and engage people in truly being part of something, the more they're going to be equipped to share your brand story. Everyone has a story. It's just a question of how your story is told and retold and at the rate it should be told and that really affects your growth and it's affected Toms' growth and allowed us to be if not the, one of the fastest growing shoe companies out there and it really comes with connecting people to something that they really care about. You can have a story but if no-one cares about it, then it doesn't really matter. So it's really with Toms is because we have a story and you get to participate in a story. So Joe when you buy a pair of Toms, there is a specific child, whether they are in Honduras or Cambodia or Guatemala or Ethiopia or here in the United States, giving a pair of shoes because you made that decision and that is powerful because that allows you to not only leave that store or Toms.com where you bought the shoes thinking I'm really glad I did that. It gives you a chance to say to your friend or your family or whoever, last week I helped a child get a pair of shoes and it felt really good and then they say what do you mean you helped a child get a pair of shoes. Like you went and gave someone a pair of shoes. No, no I bought a pair of these shoes called Toms and because of that they're giving a pair on my behalf to a child somewhere in the world that needs them and that's when the story happens and it's so organic and natural and you are proud that your experience happened. So I think that's one thing that's really important when marketers look at how do they create a story that's worth spreading, then it's something that really engages people on an emotional level, not just on a practical level.

JP When people really look at the people that get behind what it is you're doing, you create a tremendous amount of engagement and bonding and relationship building with a lot

of people that is far reaching. I think it's pretty fantastic and all of this kind of started accidentally right?

BM When we first started there was me and three interns in my apartment in Venice, California and at the time I was actually running another business, a software company. So this was kind of a side project at first and then as it started growing, I recognised it was going to be a real business and we started putting a lot of energy and effort and capital behind it. But what we did initially a lot was just reply to people on Facebook and send twitter messages and post videos on YouTube. So we were just telling our story because that's the only thing we could afford to do and it just kind of took off.

JP You say a one to one model and you want to expand the one to one model and so I would say that you've got some really cool things that you're going to be revealing this year and you can apply this way beyond your shoes, but basically talk a little bit about the one for one model and what that means and how maybe other people can apply it 'cos I know you're a big proponent for that.

BM Our one for one model in starting the shoes is really simple. You buy a pair of shoes, we get a pair of shoes. People need shoes. You need shoes, great. I get a lot of companies ask me how can we apply this to our business if we sell a service or if we sell a product that people don't need in third world countries and I think what the beauty of one for one is it's very simple and easy to understand for the consumer. It's very easy to share the story as we just talked about. But the real secret of one for one is not in shoes for shoes. What it is, in my opinion, and this is just my thought, it's in bringing clarity to what is happening on the philanthropy side when a purchase is made. So before we have had percentages and formulas and this percent of this and this goes to this cause and this cause. I mean it never was clear. So I think what my advice to other companies is look you might not do shoes for shoes or a one for one like that, but if you can say if we sell X, we're going to do Y and that's very clear and simple and easy to understand. I think it really has the power to get your customers and your fans to be that much more loyal and that much more excited about that purchase.

JP So I'd love to ask you some of your thoughts on your entrepreneur experience. Obviously you've had some real good background and successes prior to this. You started I think four or five different businesses including the laundry service that you actually sold and so I'd like to get some of your insight perspectives and maybe entrepreneur lessons that you've learnt building and growing companies. Maybe one on managing teams and then we'll talk about managing money, maybe managing yourself. Just some of your business lessons and

advice you'd give for entrepreneurs which are predominantly the people that would be listening to this interview.

BM I think the whole thing for me is, whether it's managing teams or leading people or growing a business, at the end of the day as a leader, the most important thing is just to be a human being. And I know that's like the simplest, easiest advice ever but the truth is if you really think like how you would want to be treated and treat people that way and when you make mistakes you honestly admit them in front of the group and take your ego out of it and just really be a human to people and treat people like humans. All the business stuff and politics and issues tend to kind of go away because so few companies treat their employees like real humans. Even the companies that have "great cultures" and have amazing benefits, they still after a certain size, start treating the people like numbers or names on a sheet of paper and there is nothing worse for motivating people in moral than that. So the thing that I try to do, even if I get limited amount of time in the office as I do now, is when I am in here, really spend my time with people talking to them. Not just about what they accomplished last month or what the next deal is but just how they're doing and what's going on in their life and what's going to make them happier. Business is so crazy and fast and running, I don't get to sit around and do that very often, but if you do that once a year for someone, it can make all the difference in the world.

JP How much time do you actually spend working? I mean you kind of have a pretty interesting life. You travel a lot. You live on a boat. You seem to do a lot of fun stuff. How do you really approach business and keep it growing and keep building it at the same time and not go insane?

BM Well I think for me it's all about, and this another, seems like a cliché, but it's all about having great people. From day one I was always travelling. I was never in the apartment even when that was our office and last year I was probably only in the office 40 or 50 days the whole year. So for me it's about having a great team. About using technology wisely 'cos you can be anywhere in the world and do a call or a Skype call or what not and then just really trusting people to do their jobs and know that by giving them a lot of autonomy, they're going to make mistakes. They're going to do things that you wouldn't have done. They're going to design something that doesn't look as good as you would have designed it. It's only going to be about 75% or 80% as good as or what you would expect and want it to be. But 75% or 80% with zero effort of my own, is a lot better than 100% with 80% of my effort. So that's kind of in my philosophy since day one and now the company's grown a lot and I haven't really been here but I've been able to preserve the culture and keep things going just by focusing on certain things and really letting the department heads and people really lead based on what they feel and know is right.

JP You've given away over a million shoes and you're impacting a tremendous amount of people. How do you price and the cost of the shoes so that you not only maintain a margin and continue to grow and build your business, but also contribute to all the social good that you're doing. How do you approach that? How do you make the decisions?

BM I think it's kind of as you said. We just make sure that there's enough margin in the shoe to do both of those things, to continue growing the business and to give away a pair of shoes every time we sell a pair. It's funny because this is an interview kind of about marketing and that actually is the secret source of Toms, is the reason we can grow a business and make a profit and give away a pair of shoes, is because we spend little, if anything, on traditional marketing. All of our marketing is done virally and through media, through Facebook, through twitter. You name it, we take advantage of it. So we not on billboards like most shoe companies. We're not sponsoring athletes like most shoe companies. We're not doing TV commercials like most shoe companies. We build our business and so that's a tonne of dollars, millions of dollars a year that we're not spending that our competitors are and that's how we're able to do the giving and grow the business.

JP And I think it's a function of people pay attention to what it is you're doing because of the by-product of what you're doing on top of running a for profit company, is you're producing a tremendous amount of good. I sort of have an issue with some of vocabulary that's used in non-profit. And I speak from experience of doing a tremendous amount of my time is spent helping foundations like Richard Branson and recently the Make A Wish Foundation and so I'm around a lot of "causes" and people wanting to raise money and there's terminology like giving back. Entrepreneurs should give back sort of thing which I don't really agree with that sort of statement. Giving back implies that you actually took something from somebody. If you're running a business that's creating jobs, creating value in the world, you're doing a tremendous amount. You don't owe the world anything 'cos you're already giving the world so much and then if you tie it into something like you've done, it's almost like double whammy. Not only are you providing jobs for people, you're creating value, producing in this particular case shoes for people, but you're also doing this incredible amount of good and that's why I always believe that being a do-gooder and wanting to go out and do good stuff in the world, is completely different than good doing. Well you've actually gotten and just produced good stuff and so that's why I really wanted to do this interview with you and share this message because I think you're a great role model for so many entrepreneurs that really want to give back and seeing how a guy like you has actually figured out how to really do it and impact. You're not doing a small thing here. What you're doing is very significant and I can't imagine how many lives you're going to touch, even 10 years from now based on the momentum you've got going. So having said all that, what are some recommendations that you can give for entrepreneurs as

they venture into, not only profitably running their businesses, but tying it into just supporting causes, solving social and economic problems, things that you've done. What could be some of the best tips you could give people to do something like you're doing or how they can align themselves with people like you to just to some super cool ninja stuff.

BM Well first off I just want to congratulate you on recognising the phrase "giving back" is a very problematic one because it does insinuate that you've taken something and I always struggle with that too because a lot of people say you do so much to give back and I'm like well we're not really giving back. We're just giving. So I appreciate you making that distinction 'cos there's very few times that people recognise that. In terms of entrepreneurs, I think the best thing is align with something you're passionate about. So don't just give to give and I think that's kind of enforcing it and what happens is sometimes you feel like a company's making money and that now it's time, well we need to give back. We need to do something for the community and the truth is if you should only do something if you really care about it. Don't just give money to give money. Give money 'cos you're really excited about something that is kind of important to you and then when you do that, you're giving a lot more than money. You're giving your passion and all that. So that's just kind of my main thing. Is people should not necessarily look at giving as something that they need to do or have to do, but just find what they really care about doing and then go from there.

JP I agree and I think entrepreneurs miss so much of the mechanism in solution to really doing the most good in the world and most entrepreneurs that I know, I think a lot of individuals have a flawed perspective of what entrepreneurs really do and capitalists really do. I'm a big proponent of capitalism. I'm not a big proponent of corporatism. I'm not in any way, shape or form implying that big corporations that pump massive pollution into the world or sell crappy food or sell products or services that hurt or kill people is a good thing in spite of the fact they're making money or not. I'm about people really creating value and going out there and using their ability to use entrepreneurial principles. The definition of an entrepreneur from John Baptise say in the 1800's said an entrepreneur is an individual who takes resources from a lower level of productivity to a higher level and whenever somebody does that in a non-profit or a for profit, they're doing tremendous amounts of things that are good in the world and like you said, get involved in it if it really matters and really impacts you but this is really a call out and an acknowledgement for entrepreneurs because I think they're the ones that really have to put it all together. They have to put their butts on the line. They have to risk things. I think you even sold your company in order to finance the start-up of Toms, correct?

BM Absolutely. I think you're exactly right. One of the things about being an entrepreneur is you take risk and you do something to create more value and making money is a good thing. It creates jobs. It provides security to people. It's critical, especially in America. Small

businesses is the heart beat of our economy. So I'm all about entrepreneurship and capitalism and all that. So I agree with your statements a lot there.

JP This may sound like a weird question but I want to give you a set up. You spoke with President Clinton, you spoke at [TED]*0:33:09.9, you've been to the White House, you've met with Obama's senior administration and so a couple of things. One, what's the most secretive thing that you've learnt from all your experience and the second is, what's the most impactful thing that you're learnt?

BM Man those are big questions. It's hard to do those online in a telephone interview. You've got to think about them. I think the most impactful thing I've learned and maybe it's secretive too because it's not talked about a lot, but the most successful people in the world, we'll define success in this phrase as financially successful 'cos that's what entrepreneurs typically look at in most cases. But the most successful people I've met and I've met a lot of really successful entrepreneurs, every single one of them started, whatever they started they became so successful out of passion and not out of wanting to make money. Money was not ever part of the deal and it was always what am I passionate about. What thing in the world do I not agree with. What service is not offered to me that I want. It was always a curiosity and a passion that led to great successes, fortunes, business, philanthropies etc. It was never if I do this, I can make a lot of money and I think that's really important especially for young people who are thinking about what they want to do with their lives. So many of them go to school, then go to business school, then get the internship at the investment bank or whatever, because they're on a pact to make a certain amount of money and unfortunately not only has it robbed them of their happiness and joy and maybe fulfilling a passion, but I don't think it ever gets them to the real success that all these other entrepreneurs have attained. So that's probably the most important thing or the most not talked about thing that I've noticed in meeting all these amazing people.

JP I think that covers both secretive and impactful so thank you. So just a couple more things and I'll get out of here 'cos I know you've got a busy day. So thousands literally in the next couple of days are going to hear this interview and hopefully one day hundreds of thousands and I'd been stoked if it was in the millions of entrepreneurs will hear this interview and what would be the most valuable thing for them to hear from you. Meaning, what do you want them to know or do it you could have a shout out to all the entrepreneurs out there?

BM I think the most important advice, and I do speak a lot to entrepreneurs and it's something I really love, is the power of starting small. I think a lot of entrepreneurs both in the

just purely for profit capitalist sector or social entrepreneurs, they look at the big enormity of starting a company and they think of hundreds and employees and office space rent of \$10,000 a month and all these big things. But the truth is, all the great companies, all the great causes, they start with something really simple and manageable. I mean our goal was to help 250 kids get a pair of shoes and for a few thousand dollars I could start up an organisation that could do that. So we didn't set out to sell a million and give away a million pairs of shoes or to be a fast growing company. We just set out to help 250 kids. So my best advice I could give anyone listening is start small 'cos small is where you figure out all the mistakes you're going make. Small is what becomes beautiful and what becomes potentially big. So don't get overwhelmed with the enormity of the problem or the idea or whatever, but get it going by starting it small.

JP And then the last thing I'll ask you is I believe it's true that one of your favourite quotes is Ghandi's "be the change you wish to see in the world"?

BM Absolutely.

JP So what change do you really wish and hope to see in the world while you're here on the planet?

BM I think probably the thing I spend a lot of energy now talking about is, and that is business and philanthropy don't have to be mutually exclusive. The more businesses incorporate giving into their model in a tangible transparent simple way, the more good that can happen. We can't just depend on non-profits and the government to solve the world's problems. Whether it be climate change or kids that don't have shoes or kids that are getting malaria. We can't just hope that a few of the extremely wealthy individuals and charities and governments do that. We've got to take it into our own hands and I think the change I want to see, is more and more businesses not seeing charity as just a tax write-off but as a real business strategy and a real part of their culture and the more that that happens, I think more amazing things are going to happen in the future.

JP Where do people get Toms Shoes? I know lots of stores sell them and you do have a website and all that. So first of, if people have never bought a pair of Toms Shoes, where do they get them?

BM The best is to go to Toms.com because we have the largest selection there and if you don't want to buy them on our website, you can put in your zip code and we'll tell you what retailers are closest you to so you can buy them there. But Toms.com has all the sizing information and we have a great customer service team that you can call or email or chat with to get your sizing right but Toms.com is probably the best place and then for One Day Without Shoes you can go to One Day Without Shoes.com and you can find a local event. You can host an event. You can be part of the barefoot challenge with your company. There's a lot of ways to get involved and I hope people will join us. Our goal is to get a million people barefoot this year. We had 250,000 last year and it's looking really good so far.

JP And you know I'll tell you at a later date about the ten times planet I'm doing with Dan Sullivan and we're going to actually feature this interview when we put that out to the ten times planet folks. It's all about supporting entrepreneurs and as it relates to doing good in the world and I just really appreciate you taking the time to talk about this. Again I want to acknowledge what you're doing. It's not only an incredible success story that produces a lot of good in the world, but I think you're a huge encourager for many people by basically reinventing a philanthropic sort of model that I think is in desperate need of innovators like you that can come in and just do what you're doing and have such a big impact in the world. So thank you and any famous last words?

BM Thank you for having me on and helping get our story out there. We really appreciate it.

JP You're welcome man. So thanks everyone. I'd love to hear the comments on I Love Marketing.com about this and go to One Day Without Shoes right now, if it's before April 5th and get yourself involved for the entrepreneurs. Do it with your whole employees. I'm doing it with my whole company here at Pyrana and I think it will be awesome so thank you Blake.

BM Great. Thanks Joe. Have a great day.

JP Well there you go. What's everyone think of that? Pretty neat stuff. Blake is a pretty cool dude.

DJ What was your big take away from having that conversation with him? I've got a couple of pages of just notes and sound bytes here but what your take from spending that time with him?

JP Probably that I talk too much but beyond that the big takeaway and then again I already knew this about him which is one of the reasons that I wanted to interview Blake is that I'm a huge supporter of using entrepreneurs in order to do good in the world and I loved how he responded to my comment about giving back. The term "giving back" and what I have to say is that I really got that original thought from Dan Sullivan. I didn't come up with that on my own. It's through numerous conversations that I've had with Dan Sullivan, the founder of Strategic Coach where this whole concept and this whole notion of giving back as if you're taking something from somebody and I loved the fact that he agreed with it. I know that Blake is in a situation where he wants to obviously have as many organisations and people support what he's doing and rightfully so and I think that he should because I think he's an incredible entrepreneur and there's a lot of people out there that really want to guilt people into thinking they need to go out and give something away and my whole thinking is if you're really a successful entrepreneur and you're creating value, you're doing good marketing, you're giving so much and so to tie it into something where for every purchase someone makes, you're going to actually give a pair of shoes as an example, I think is brilliant. So I love the fact that he agreed with my ...

DJ Well I had never heard Dan Sullivan say that until you and I were together with him just a couple of weeks ago. But now it makes so much sense. When you really think about it, we haven't taken anything.

JP So the cool thing about his model is that he's not reliant upon donations because once the donations run out, you have to go and get more. So what does that put you in the position of. You're either asking, begging, requesting, hoping, crossing your fingers hoping the economy's in a good position where people will be able to give money. Whereas in his particular case, he has grown Toms Shoes dramatically through a recession. Why? Because it's a for profit business because you've got products and services people want 'cos you're establishing a market need and the coolest thing about what he's doing is that every time someone wears a pair of Toms Shoes, they're not just wearing shoes, they're actually doing something valuable. I think it creates an emotional experience of contribution in the user and buyer of his shoes, as an example, and he's going to be coming out with something really cool soon that is not shoes but everyone can just keep that as a secret and see what that is. He spoke at South by South West this year and kind of hinted to it.

DJ I think that's an interesting concept that tying the business right into a cause like that. Are there other businesses that do that same kind of thing? I seem to remember something about Tom Newman or Paul Newman sorry, Paul Newman with his salad dressings. Anita Roddick with the Body Shop.

JP I would love to say I could speak to him to really know the story more but I just know loose pieces of it and if I start talking about it, I'm probably going to say it out of context. Look at what we do with the stuff that we've done with Make A Wish. You take Bill Phillips years ago. I gave Bill Phillips an idea that he ended up using to distribute a video called Body Work for contributions and donations to the Make A Wish Foundation so that started going really well and he ended up doing the book Body for Life years ago and he gave 100% of the advance to the Make A Wish Foundation and fast forward to today, over 550 wishes have been granted because of that and he became the single largest individual contributor in the world to the Make A Wish Foundation and we're good a good friend named JR, who's a former Make A Wish kid who actually helped and assisted in giving me a couple of the questions to ask Blake for the interview that everyone just heard and me, you and him recently met at Strategic Coach headquarters in Toronto with the CEO of Make A Wish in Canada and we're talking about taking information and knowledge and sharing it with entrepreneurs and people and part of those end of going to make donations to help grant wishes for kids.

DJ Should we talk about our idea for that?

JP Yes go ahead. You start.

DJ We were there with the CEO of the Make A Wish Canada and we were thinking about how could we do something with I Love Marketing to benefit the Make A Wish Foundation and so one of the ideas that we had was doing an episode of I Love Marketing podcast where we auction off a guest spot on I Love Marketing where we would talk about the winner's business and do a full episode where we do basically a consulting call or a coaching call for the winner's business and do that as an episode of I Love Marketing. I think that will be a fantastic idea.

JP Yeah I think it would too and it would give us an opportunity to engage with a lot of our listeners and those of you out there that would love to have me and Dean publicly diagnose your business. Come up with either help you reach an opportunity or eliminate some sort of challenge or problem that you're having so you can either make more money or ...

DJ Or apply the things that we've talking about specifically to your niche or to your business. It would be a lot of fun. I would love to see in the comments if that's something that would be interesting to people.

JP And if it interesting, we can literally have a bid, the highest bidder for a donation to the Make A Wish Foundation and then we can tie it in and so that's just one way that we can actually use our expertise and knowledge and marketing. We can direct it and we can actually do something for the Make A Wish Foundation as an example. Now having said that, you can pretty much tie this into a lot of different causes. We have been talking, me and Dan and Dean about the Ten Times Planet which is right in the initial stage but we want to actually create a system of process for entrepreneurs that want to either eliminate some sort of social or economic problem and use entrepreneurship as the solution and we take marketing way more seriously than I think many people do.

DJ Do you think?

JP Yeah but what I mean by that is this isn't just a way to make money. Some people are like let's just build a business and sell more stuff. No this is like everything. If you had a child that needed a kidney and you could write a compelling letter and all things being equal you have one family that needs it and another family that knows marketing and understands it more actually has a better advantage of their child getting a kidney. As crazy and as unfair as that may sound to some people, it is the truth. Marketing gives you power. Marketing gives you options. The marketers and sales people directed in the right way are saviours to so many people. They identify needs. They know how to communicate. They get doors opened that cannot be opened any other way and so marketing is a very significant and important thing and the reason I wanted to interview Blake, is because I want people to see through an effective model. Not only can you build a multi multi million dollar company that allows you to live a really great wonderful lifestyle and provide lots of job, you can also do tremendous amount of good in the world and the deal is if he had to give all of his money away, as if per say giving back, like some people say, how much of an impact would he make compared to him going out and doing what he's doing now. And see here's what even more funny about it, because he's doing such cool stuff, we're literally giving him all of this free advertising and telling people go buy Toms Shoes.

DJ Well that was one of the two things that he said that really caught my attention, was that same thing that they don't spend any money on anything that normal shoe companies would do like billboards and big ads and all that kind of stuff. Because they've got a story worth spreading.

JP Now what's even more funny is for genius network interviews which I want to tell everyone on I Love Marketing, is a lot of my genius network interviews that I've done, this gave me kind of a neat idea of taking either the entire interview or parts of genius network interviews that I've done 'cos I've interviewed some amazing people, and me and Dean will occasionally have some commentary about them, but also any of the interviews that I think would be really useful, we'll post some of them up on I Love Marketing.com for people to listen to and this will be the first announcement which I'll probably make 'cos I'm going to make most of my genius network interviews that I've been selling for years, I mean over a decade. I'm going to make them free. I'm just going to put them out there and make them free to people so people can continue to learn and grow from them and I've done a couple of great genius network interviews with Dean and now this is the second person in the "shoe business" 'cos I did a genius network video interview with Tony Shay the founder, well not founder but I should say he's actually CEO 'cos he actually came in as an investor and then became CEO of Zappos and then sold it for over a billion dollars' worth of stock to Amazon and the two common things between Blake and Tony as it relates to shoes, is Blake of course uses it to actually give shoes to kids in need and pricing them in a way that allows them to do that. Whereas Tony focuses on insane customer service. 24/7 you can call Zappos and he even said it's not about the shoes, we just needed an excuse to deliver customer service. Which he calls happiness in his book. What other thoughts did you get Dean?

DJ When you asked him 'cos it's very similar to us, that he travels and not always in the office and stuff and he is growing, not just running but growing a business and one of the things that he said was that in order to do that, he had to get comfortable with the idea that his team are going to make mistakes and they're not going to maybe do things exactly the way he would and that you've got to learn to be happy with 80% of what it could be if you were to do it yourself and I wrote down the numbers. He said you've got to be happy with 75% to 80% without my effort which is better than 100% with 80% of my effort. 'Cos right now he has that willingness to let the team figure things out. To let the team do things their way with a broad direction without micro-managing or having to put his own stamp on things, allows him that freedom to focus on the big picture of the business.

JP One thing that that reminded me of is the Ronald Regan statement about leadership where I think the way it goes is that Ronald Regan said what leadership is, is where I read a letter from a staff writer that I read and I knew I could write it better, but I sent it anyway.

Meaning that it was good enough and that's kind of the whole thing. You're better off having the 80% than getting nothing at all and that's why I think Blake is a really good leader in that respect and I think it's really encouraging which I did mention in the interview that I think he's just a great example of someone to model and look at and I hope everyone gets involved in One Day Without Shoes on April 5th.

DJ Talk about that a little bit 'cos that's kind of a neat thing. Let's put that video up on I Love Marketing.com too.

JP So if you're listening to this on iTunes, then go to the I Love Marketing.com website and watch the video. Last year they had over 250,000 people go a day without wearing shoes and the whole point is to have people experience for a day, probably nowhere near the type of conditions that the children that they're actually giving shoes to, go through every single day of their lives until they've shown up and given them shoes, is to have people just really get involved and go a day without shoes. So we're doing it at my company and people all over the country. I have no idea how many people will do it this year throughout the world but like I said, last year he had 250,000 people do it.

DJ Yeah we'll probably do it over here too.

JP It's just really cool and what's neat about this is from a marketing standpoint, look at all the people that get engaged in this and that are thinking about what he's doing and what his mission is.

DJ Why aren't you wearing shoes.

JP Look at all of the conversations that it starts. We've got a bunch of different ideas Dean that we've talked about that people can do for events and causes and I certainly do my better your best contest and there's all kinds of things that I create engagement with my clients and things that you do with your clients. I would just love for people having listened to the conversation with Blake, what comes to mind. How can you apply what he said to your business. How does the one for one model work for you and any great feedback and comments that anyone has for Blake, I will certainly take the ones that would be useful for him to hear and send them over to him. And those of you that do One Day Without Shoes, you can go to the

website also, One Day Without Shoes.com and participate in that. Let us know after the fact. Come back to I Love Marketing.com and please comment on the comments with this particular podcast 'cos I'd love to hear what everyone has to say and what it means to them 'cos I think it's just really innovative and it's really cool and it's doing a lot of good stuff in the world.

DJ I'd love to hear what other people are doing with their businesses. I know a lot of people have a heart for a lot of different causes and I hope that this has been inspiring for people to maybe give them some kind of idea that I can do a lot through my business.

JP And I will say this about capitalism and it may sound redundant and there are some things I'm going to say a lot, but Dan Sullivan first said to me, I don't know if he originally came up with this, but the only problem with capitalism is that it was named by its enemies. Capitalism in its purest form, is simply collaboration between individuals exchanging value for money. Value for value. It's not some big corporation taking advantage of some underprivileged person or lording their powers of capitalism over someone. It's called that at times in movies that are made by idiots that actually try to call something capitalism when it's not, which is what Bob Burg even told me is corporatism, which is a big difference between capitalism. But real true capitalists do amazing things in the world and most of the contributions in production that I see being made in the world in very large and impactful ways, are being done by capitalists and by entrepreneurs. So I'm a big supporter of it and that's why I did the interview with Blake and that's why we're sharing it here and that's why we hope that you go out and benefit from this and that it helps you in your business and that's what I have to say.

DJ Well that's great. It really was. Thank you for sharing that. It was a great interview.

JP Thank you so much and look forward to hearing and seeing everyone's comments and also keep your eyes peeled because we have got some frigging awesome I Love Marketing podcasts that are coming up here and keep glued to this.

DJ Very exciting in the next few weeks.

JP Everyone's going to be like wow. How did you get this person on. Thanks everyone.

END OF TRANSCRIPT