



salesforce



# SECRETS TO BUSINESS GROWTH:

TIPS FROM 3 SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS





## *Introduction*

# SMALL BUSINESS POWER

Small businesses have generated 65% of the net new jobs in the United States since 1995. Numbers like that illustrate best that small businesses don't just "matter," they define and drive the economy. A day in the life of a small business, however, does not typically consist of getting a pat on the back for all this. Most owners grapple with the stressful question of how to maintain and grow their business.

In order to give you a head start answering those questions, the leaders of three rapidly growing businesses agreed to share the secrets to their success. Read on to find out what helped these businesses perform to their maximum potential and sustain impressive growth.

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Chapter 1:

## Joyce Guan

Joyce is the Co-Founder of **Buyers Best Friend**, the Leading Source of Local and Artisan Products for offices, buyers, and brands.

### INDUSTRY

Food and Beverage

### FOUNDED

2010

### GROWTH RATE

Over 500% a year

### EMPLOYEES

25

“We used technology such as Salesforce to efficiently attract new customers, convert them, and retain them.”

-Joyce Guan, CO-Founder, Buyers Best Friend



## Question 1

# THREE THINGS THAT HELPED MY BUSINESS GROW

### #1 Marketing at trade shows and publications.

When we started out we were a bootstrapped startup and couldn't afford advertising. Instead, we sought out publications that would add value in telling our story, thus increasing our brand awareness. We also couldn't afford trade shows and had to organize shared booths with our brands.

### #2 Use the right technology.

We used technology such as Salesforce, custom software, and Google search listings to efficiently attract new customers, convert them, and retain them. The key is efficiency, i.e. we're simply automating what already works — rather than trying to change the behavior of our customers or staff, we focus on simply making them more effective at what they already do.

### #3 Create product diversity.

It's time-consuming to sell business services, and many of our best customers are small businesses, so the usual solution is to offer a "suite" of services around a central theme (sales and marketing in our case). Most of our sellers don't just end up purchasing one service from us, they purchase a bundle of different services. This way the larger average deal size amortizes the cost of sales, marketing and customer relationship management.

## Question 2

# How I Measure My Business Success

### Customer happiness and frequency of referral:

If our paying customers are happy, that means we are providing value at a price that is reasonable. We get flooded with referrals from happy customers, and many customers who check references sign up very quickly. To us, this means that we have a scalable, repeatable business model.

### Revenue and pipeline growth:

We monitor the amount of incoming leads, our monthly

pipeline, and of course revenue numbers. At the end of the day, if the number of people who are willing to pay you increases, you're probably on your way to success and have built something that people want. The amount of money that people are willing to pay you should also go up over time — for us, this means that the average value of a customer has grown significantly since we first started.

### Impact and differentiation:

We carefully track the impact and results we get for our customers — opportunities, deals and revenue we get for them. We also keep tabs on what other companies are offering. We have been very careful to build tools and services that would be difficult for anyone else to offer, putting us in a powerful, strategic position.

“

We have been very careful to build tools and services that would be difficult for anyone else to offer.

”

### Question 3

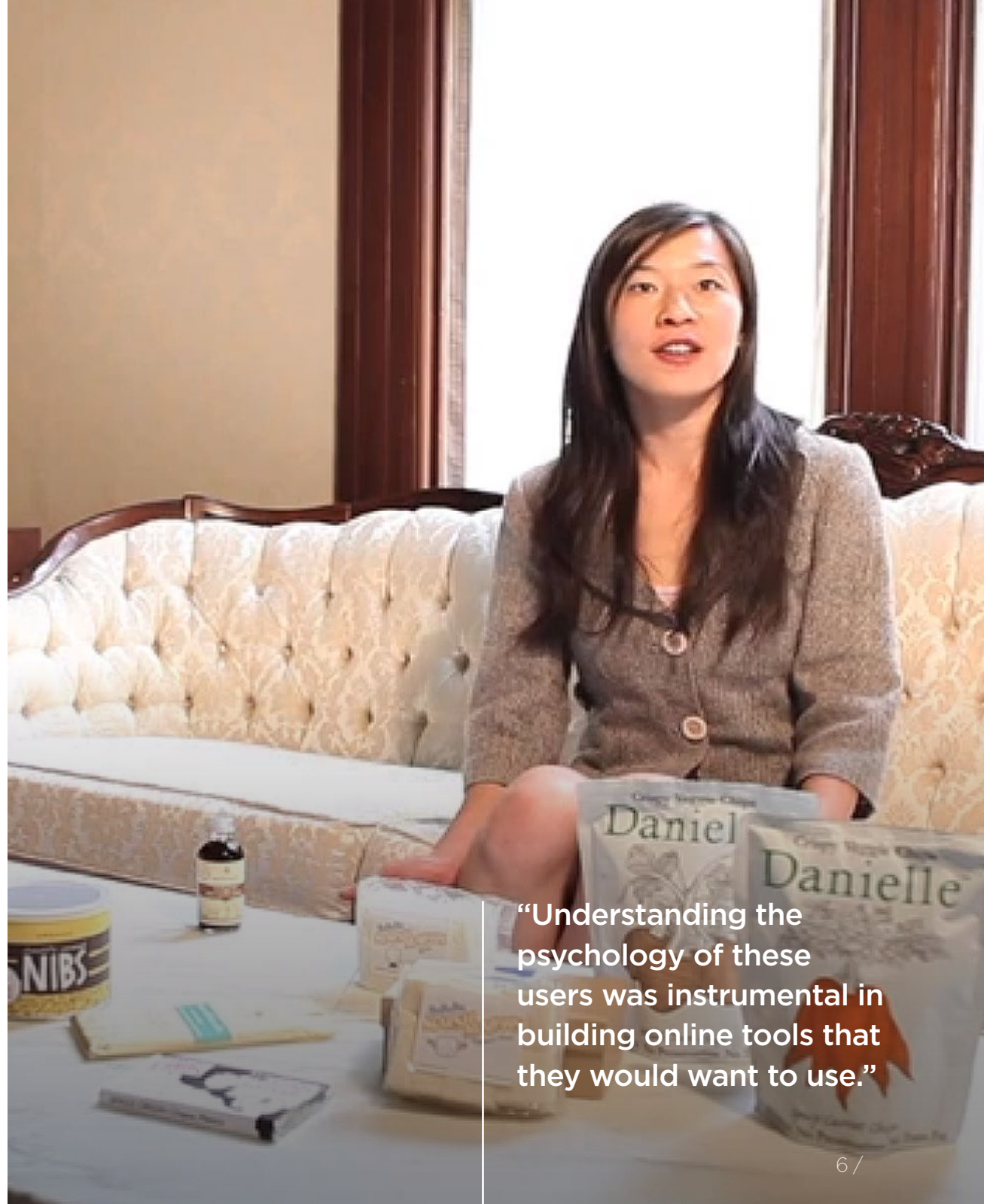
## What's the Best Advice You Could Give Others

Do what you know.

Prior to starting Buyer's Best Friend, I was in sales in wholesale food, so when it came down to building software for the users in this industry, I knew exactly what we needed. Being an insider to the industry and understanding the psychology of these users was instrumental in building online tools that they would want to use.

Run lots of experiments.

End them early, and be ruthless about how much value any activity/project needs to create. Buyer's Best Friend is in "hyper growth" with a million ways we can grow — so we typically expect to see results in 90 days or less, otherwise we'll prioritize some other project that can help us grow faster.



**“Understanding the psychology of these users was instrumental in building online tools that they would want to use.”**



Chapter 2:

## Brian Spaly

Brian is the CEO and founder of mens online fashion retailer **Trunk Club**.

### INDUSTRY

Men's Fashion/Retail

### FOUNDED

2009

### GROWTH RATE

Over 174% a year

### EMPLOYEES

160+

“Apps built on Salesforce1 Platform let us build more personalized relationships with our customers.”

–Brian Spaly, CEO, Trunk Club





## Question 1

# THREE THINGS THAT HELPED MY BUSINESS GROW

### #1 Be agile and try new radical ideas:

We ship out trunks with clothes hand-picked by our stylists and this has been a great success for us. However, we decided to try out a new and radical idea: we added the in-house consultation option. Once guys started coming in to try on the clothes in person, we realized this was a huge opportunity to drive member satisfaction and build a brand.

### #2 Choose the right business location:

We relocated the business from Bend, Oregon, to Chicago, Illinois. Turns out Chicago is a great place to build a company like ours, and it gave us a much greater talent pool to go after, as well as a hearty supply of local enthusiast members.

### #3 Get a few great sales leaders in position:

Sales leaders are essential because they are compensated based on the performance and size of their teams, not just their own sales. This yields solid recruiting and financial results for the company. One quality we look for in our sales directors is that they enjoy helping other people succeed — hire leaders who are great at mentoring, and care more about the success of their team than their own ego.



## Question 2

# How I Measure My Business Success

## Sales Productivity

Sales team productivity is probably the most important measure I focus on each month. To track that, we create leaderboards within our Salesforce CRM instance, and there we track our top-performing sales team members. We pay close attention to the number of leads, opportunities, and deals closed, as well as the deal size.

## Membership Satisfaction

Overall member satisfaction gets an honorable mention. This metric is a lot harder to measure, but we have a solid intuitive feel for it based on a combination of net revenue, repeat purchase behavior, and referral action.

Keeping track of overall member satisfaction enables us to monitor what's working for our members and getting it right for our members means success for our business overall.

“

Sales team productivity is probably the most important measure I focus on each month.

”

### Question 3

## What's the Best Advice You Could Give Others

Don't be afraid to break some glass.

Don't be afraid to break some glass — meaning, it's okay to shake things up, to try to do business differently, be non-consensus, and perhaps hire some people that don't necessarily have a background or track record in the industry.

Also, breaking glass means firing people fast when they are not strong performers — easy to say but so much harder to do.

### The Next Chapter

In July of 2014, department store chain Nordstrom Inc. aquired Trunk Club for \$350 million.



**“Don't be afraid to break some glass. It's okay to shake things up.”**



## Chapter 3:

# Paul Leary

Paul Leary is the President of the Bespoke Collection, a wine producer and lifestyle brand. The company comprises two wine labels and a wine, art and design gallery.

### INDUSTRY

Consumer Packaged Goods

### FOUNDED

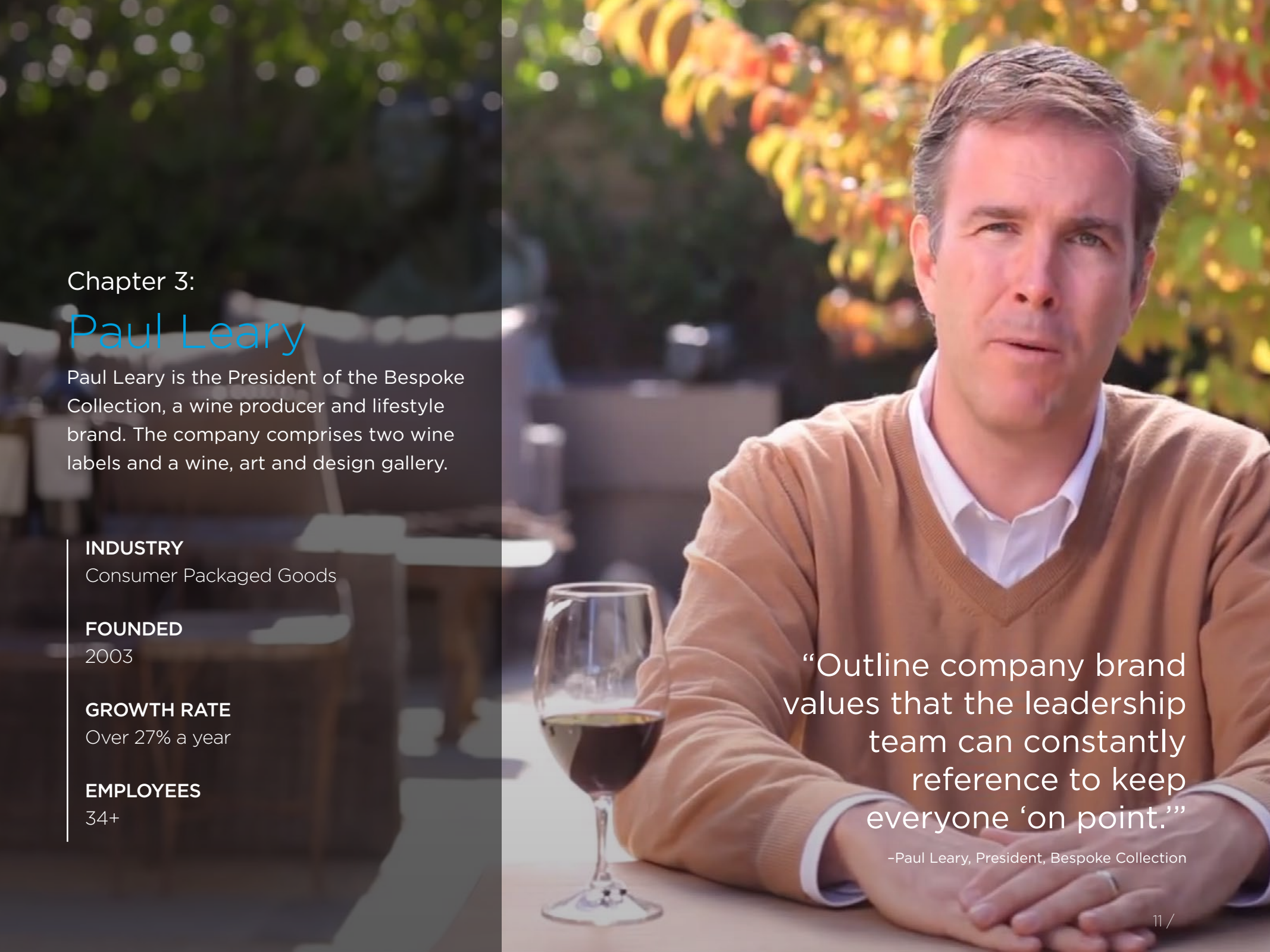
2003

### GROWTH RATE

Over 27% a year

### EMPLOYEES

34+



“Outline company brand values that the leadership team can constantly reference to keep everyone ‘on point.’”

-Paul Leary, President, Bespoke Collection



## Question 1

# THREE THINGS THAT HELPED MY BUSINESS GROW

### #1 Hire the right team

Hire the right set of team members and outline company brand values that the leadership team can constantly reference to keep everyone “on point.” It is difficult to hire “the best” talent early on in the life of a business, so you, as a leader, have to constantly nurture the team to make sure you are giving their full commitment to the brand’s success.

### #2 Created a roadmap

Create a detailed brand marketing plan that outlines the market summary, its needs, trends and growth potential; an outline with the key attributes of each product, a pricing-by-channel outline and an analysis of how your brand stacks against your known competitors. Having a clear roadmap that outlines what you stand for and where you are going is vital for your own self, team members, investors and sales partners.

### #3 Use the right technology

Use of technology to your strategic advantage to create customer and partner loyalty. As a seven-plus-year-old company, we have benefited from not having to transform from legacy technologies. We started with Web- (cloud-) based systems and have only expanded our use.

Salesforce is a critical cog in this machine as we look to connect all of our production, finance, marketing and sales efforts to the force.com platform. It is an investment, but one that is worthwhile for the long haul.



## Question 2

# How I Measure My Business Success

### Employee retention

The retention of team members who create and provide notable value to the organization is extremely critical but often overlooked.

A team member's value should not be measured only by sales revenue value. There are numerous ways an employee can live in what we term internally as "the leadership triangle" and provide stability to a company to help it grow and take care of its clients and partners.

### Customer retention

We use basic and advanced formulas within our CRM

to create a "client scorecard." This algorithm of multiple factors in a client's lifetime relationship with our brands allows us to create customer loyalty dashboards. The dashboards give us a clear view into whether we are creating lifelong relationships or one-time purchases. We strive for the prior.

### Manage inventory

Our ability to turn inventory in a consistent fashion. Being a consumer goods brand with a high production overhead and path to market, it is critical that we closely monitor our inventory depletion trends.

This includes our own warehouse locations as well as partner warehouses and end restaurant, hotel, and retail accounts that purchase our wines.

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A team member's value should not be measured only by sales revenue value.

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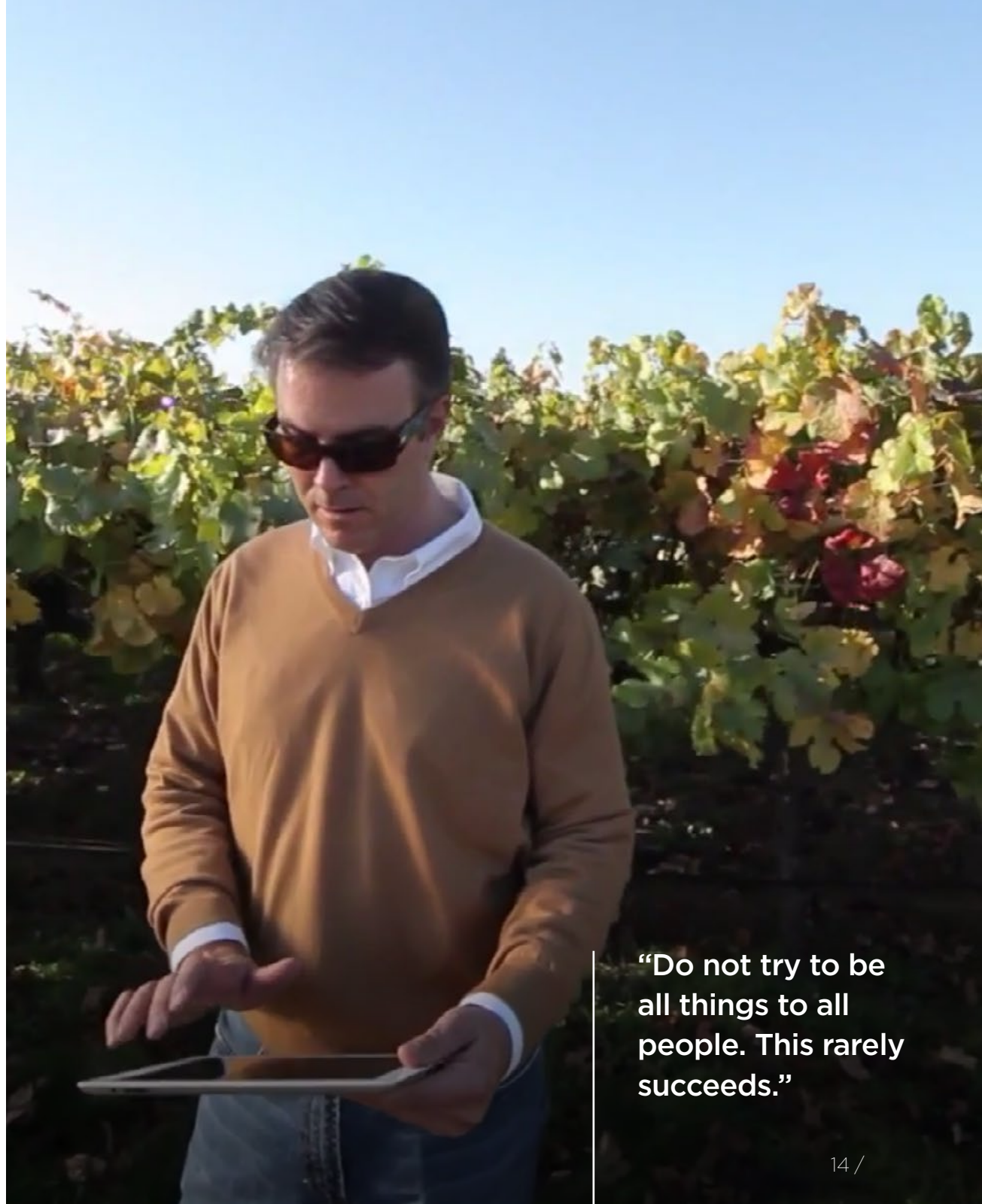
### Question 3

## What's the Best Advice You Could Give Others

If you plan to grow your business, be prepared to inspire others to believe in you and your company's mission.

This is absolutely the most important factor. If you do not have your team members' buy in, you do not have a foundation on which to build. Make sure your business has a succinct focus on its products or services.

Create milestones of success that you and your team can target to achieve. Once you reach them, celebrate briefly and move on. As Coach Krzyzewski of the Duke men's basketball team is known for saying, move on to the "next play." Never get caught up in your own successes or failures. Keep pushing forward.



**“Do not try to be all things to all people. This rarely succeeds.”**



# SALES SOLUTIONS THAT WILL MAKE YOUR BUSINESS MORE PRODUCTIVE

If you want to grow your sales and establish a transparent sales process, you need an easy-to-use Customer Relationship Management system. Salesforce allows you to store customer and prospect contact information, accounts, leads, and sales opportunities in one central location.

**32%** Improvement in win rate.

**40%** Increased sales productivity.

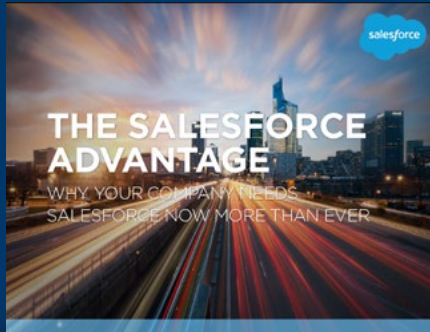
**32%** Increase in sales revenue.



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THE CUSTOMER SUCCESS PLATFORM