



# 10 LESSONS

FROM

10 WORLD LEADING IMPACT  
ENTREPRENEURS

*Learn how the pros launch social  
entrepreneur's businesses*

By: Social Change Nation  
"Make a Dollar AND a Difference"



# Josh Schukman

## Chief Inspiration Officer

Thanks for signing on to Social Change Nation! My mission here is to build a community that supports you as you seek to answer that burning desire within you, to



an impact business that makes a dollar AND a difference



I've spent the last ten years rubbing elbows with some of the awesomest change agents in the world. It all started for me back in 2003 as an AmeriCorps member in Cleveland Ohio, which then blossomed into a life of involvement with places like World Relief, Habitat for Humanity, and the Dave Ramsey Show. Since 2014, I've been running two successful impact businesses with my wife: Hostel KC and Social Change Nation.

**SOCIAL  
CHANGE  
NATION**

I founded Social Change Nation as THE place where the world's leading impact entrepreneurs share their knowledge (via podcasts, webinars, and classes) to help you launch and grow your very own social entrepreneur's business.

*Right now, I imagine you're asking yourself one of the many questions we regularly hear...* How do I balance **PROFIT** with **SOCIAL** purpose? How do I get the funds to build an impact business? How can I find the right mentors? How do I get the time to do this when I'm working **FULL-TIME**? Or, how can I possibly know the next steps to take when there are so many different directions?



Well, fear not my friend :) I went out and interviewed over 100 veteran impact business leaders on my podcast to help you learn from the best. What follows are the 10 most vital lessons I learned from the 10 most impactful entrepreneurs. Soak them in and use them to build and strengthen the foundation of your social venture.

*Josh Schukman*



# Davis Smith

# 1

of  cotopaxi

*“ Make your followers part of something larger than themselves. ”*



Cotopaxi creates innovative outdoor products and experiences that fund sustainable poverty alleviation, move people to do good, and inspire adventure

I recently interviewed Davis of Cotopaxi. Cotopaxi uses the 'get one give one' model. Buy one product = give something to someone in need. Every product line at Cotopaxi is tied to a unique social mission – I personally bought a water bottle tied to a charity: water project in India. Not only is that painted on the bottle, but it had a little card attached to it explaining exactly what my purchase meant. **When's the last time your Nalgene bottle did that???**

## Whatcha got on this, Nalgene??!!

So what are the lessons here?

- Cotopaxi wove me into their story
- I knew exactly how my water bottle purchase was working for good
- Their mission is printed on the bottle, so I see it every time I drink.

People yearn to hear stories. People want to be part of movements they understand and can communicate with others. People want YOU to make them part of social change. So, you want to create a successful impact business? Then follow Cotopaxi's lead and make your customers part of something truly great. (Learn how to better communicate your social mission here!)



Photo Cred. @Cotopaxi Instagram.



Check out my podcast interview with Davis right here



# Vincent Ko

# 2

of  panda

These cats founded the awesome social venture that is Panda

“ Create movements that spark conversations. ”



At its heart, Panda is about Fashion with a Purpose. Panda's promise is that every Panda product will be constructed from sustainable materials that are kind to the environment, and they'll never sell something without giving back to the community.

Panda is a cause based company through which the purchase of sunglasses leads to a vision exam for someone in dire need. Made from bamboo, the sunglasses are sustainable, look wicked cool, and are totally unlike any other pair of sunglasses you've ever seen.

So what do you imagine happens when folks are walking down the street and rocking a pair o' Panda? It starts conversations, and if you don't plan on creating work that starts **conversations**, you may as well stop now. A critical mission for you as an impact entrepreneur is **to get people talking about change**. Panda shows us the way to do this with excellence.

Panda is growing a brand that's **deputizing** their customers to spread the word about impactful business. You'll want to do the same in your business.



Check out my podcast interview with Panda right here

**Bridget Hilton 3**

of **LSTN**  
HEADPHONES



*“Wear your heart on your sleeve.”*



LSTN was founded with a singular purpose: to change lives through the power of music. Proceeds from sales of all LSTN products go towards giving hearing aids to people in need worldwide through our charity partner, Starkey Hearing Foundation.

A lot of companies have a social mission, but (for reasons that I cannot fathom...) they don't tell me their story. As a result, I have to dig through 20 webpages to figure out WHY they do what they do.

Please don't do this in your business... Wear your heart on your sleeve and weave it into every interaction your customers have with you. LSTN headphones does this by artfully sharing the story of how their helping the world to hear all over their website. If that weren't enough - every headphone they sell comes in a box that's branded with their mission + a story telling the customer WHY the LSTN cause is so important.

It worked on me anyway...I own 3 sets of LSTN headphones. I'm gonna be a customer for life because they make a product that's second to none and gives to a vital cause.

#### Ways to wear your heart on your sleeve:

- A handwritten thank you for customers
- Videos featuring you in service
- Stories of people your cause impacts



LSTN HAS HELPED MORE THAN

**22,000**

PEOPLE IN 9 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING



Check out my podcast  
interview with Bridget Hilton  
right here

# Tyler Merrick 4

of



*“Make your product or service the star of the show and your cause the supporting actor.”*



Project 7 is a specialty gum and mint brand dedicated to bringing great flavor back into your day while at the same time giving back to 7 areas of need. Their motto is: Great Tasting and World Changing.

No story, no amount of passion, and no flashy marketing will make up for a product that sucks. And Tyler should know...his company Project 7 scored a major cause based partnership with 7up by staying true to their products. Like any entrepreneur, you must still deliver amazing quality that smashes that of your competition – that in combination with a social mission leads to rabidly loyal followers and healthier margins. Learn from others how to start building by clicking right [here](#).

## Solid Social Mission + Solidly Constructed Product = Social Venture Success

“Take your customers on their first date with your product, the second date’s your cause.”

Tyler Merrick of Project 7



Check out my podcast interview with Tyler right here





# Zac Holzapfel 5

of  MISSION BELT CO.

“ Don't be afraid to sell yourself. Remember, where there's no MARGIN there can be no MISSION. ”

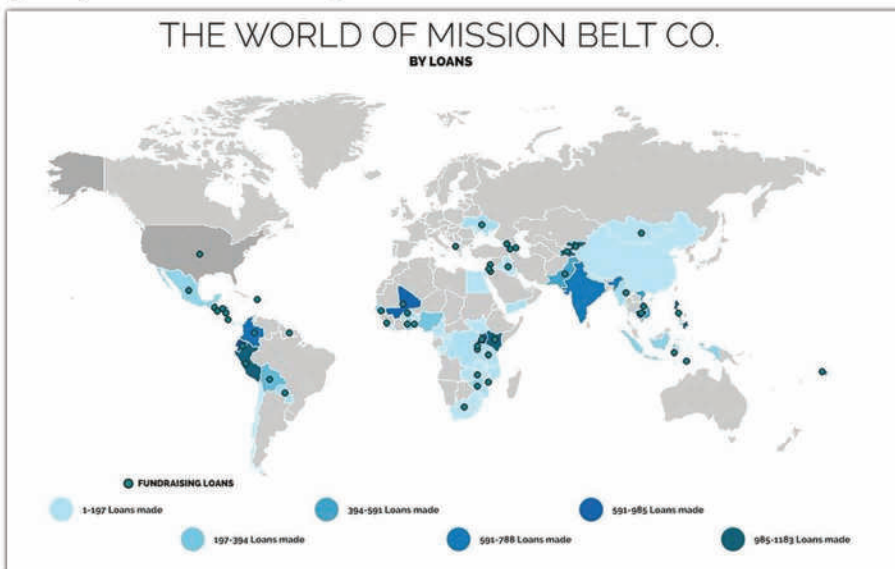


Mission Belt's Mantra is: Buy a Belt - Feed a Family. They have a 'no holes' belt that is revolutionizing this age old fashion accessory and comes in a variety of awesome styles. For every belt they sell, they give \$1 to Kiva which can then be used indefinitely to make microloans to entrepreneurs in the developing world.

The best cause based entrepreneurs sell their businesses' impact. Now, you must do this from a genuine and authentic heart, but you shouldn't ever be afraid to market the change you bring to the world.

So, as you build your business: **don't be afraid to sell your social impact.** Wear it proudly and WEAVE IT INTO YOUR BRAND. Your customers will be stoked to know that their involvement with you is part of something larger than themselves.

But don't just take my word for it... Mission Belt pitched and got majorly funded on the hit TV Show 'Shark Tank' so I'd say they're on to something...



 Check out my podcast interview with Zac right here



# Haley Besheer 6

of  *Make a Difference Intimate Apparel*  
MADI

“Nurture your impact partnerships - they'll be key to your success.”



Madi is the only lingerie brand attempting to make a difference in ALL areas of the underwear industry. They make stylish lingerie out of sustainable bamboo and give one of the most under donated products (underwear) to domestic violence shelters.

Hayley is an absolute rockstar at creating cause based partnerships for her business's social mission. For every pair it sells, MADI donates another pair of underwear to a women's shelter that needs it. This is only made possible because MADI has focused from day one on building strong relationships with the people running those shelters.

In similar fashion, you should be hyper focused on creating partnerships with the organizations that are already making a massive impact on the social problem you want to combat. Link arms with them and let your success contribute to theirs. Need a place to start making those partnerships? Check out ['The Impact Biz Bootcamp'](#).



Check out my podcast interview with Haley right here





# Jared Angaza 7 of **ubuntu revolution**

“ *Start local, then go global.* ”



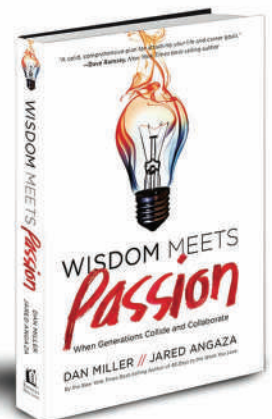
Jared's company, Ubuntu Revolution, creates perspective altering experiences that foster human connection, imagination and love.

Ubuntu is a South African philosophy that represents our interconnectedness with humanity and the cosmos. We are designed to thrive through interdependence.

This is probably the one key that I see us social entrepreneurs struggling the most with. We want to spark big change, and shift the direction of the world. So, we naturally try to engage in world bending projects very early on. This is understandable, but the end result usually is not positive. We overcommit, burn out, or worse still – alienate our supporters.

Don't do this. Your roots will grow strongest where they are deepest. Start in your local community by building up networks of people who will support you as you embark on this very challenging mission. These are your first change agents - they know you best and will be there for you when the inevitable setback gets you down.

Jared Angaza knows a ton about this because he's been sparking grassroots change since he was old enough to hold a pencil...he's a close personal friend of mine and wrote a book that changed my life. It's called **Wisdom Meets Passion** and you should totally check it out if you aspire to run an impact business.



“Your roots will grow strongest where they are deepest.”



Check out my podcast interview with Jared right here



Kyle Parsons

8

of **indosole**®

*Build a community of customers.*



Indosole crafts a beautiful line of sandals and shoes that repurpose old tires to make a durable sole for their shoes.

Remember how I said earlier that you need to make people part of something bigger than themselves? It is here that you shine with this by turning your customers into change agents.

Indosole has an incredible story about turning junk tires into amazing footwear. They're not bashful about it on their website, their marketing, or on their products. As a result, their customers aren't just customers - they're raving fans who are part of a movement that gets them great shoes AND contributes to environmental sustainability.

Let your customers become a vital part of your community and you will have brand loyalty like you wouldn't believe.



Check out my podcast interview with Kyle right here



# Evan Delahanty 9

of  **Peaceful Fruits**

“ *Challenge Entrenched Ideas.* ”



Peaceful Fruits is a social good, snack company, that uses natural wild acai from the amazon rainforest to produce delicious organic snacks.

Evan went live on the hit TV show Shark Tank and actually had the guts to go toe to toe with Kevin O’ Leary (aka “Mr. Wonderful”) on the merits of impact business. O’Leary is a well known naysayer of social entrepreneurship and Evan stood up to him in front of millions of TV viewers to prove that profit AND purpose can coexist.

The most exciting part about social entrepreneurship is that we are a community of for-profit companies who are challenging entrenched ideas about *what business should stand for.*

Companies, now more than ever, seek to **make a dollar AND a difference.** And millennial consumers are holding businesses accountable for their social impact. This combination has led to new class of impact businesses that measure success by the *number* of lives changed.



# Brittain Kovac 10

of



*Use your raw goods.*



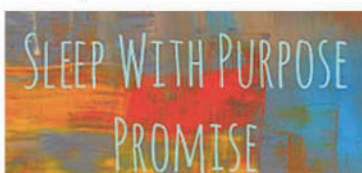
Hostel KC is a hip hostel right in downtown Kansas City, Missouri. It features a super cuddly cat as the resident 'ambassador of happiness' and you can "sleep with purpose" knowing that for every 300 beds booked, Hostel KC will build a home for a family in need in the Caribbean.

Brittain was stuck on a problem that most impact entrepreneurs face... she had this unquenchable thirst to launch her own venture, but something like a Hostel requires a building and buildings cost into the craptions of money that she didn't have. So what to do?

The answer struck her like a ton of bricks when she read Jared Angaza's book **Wisdom Meets Passion** (remember how I mentioned that book in #7? You've seriously got to read it). In that book, Jared talks about the fact that God doesn't give us finished products for anything we create. Rather, he gives you the raw goods you need and it's up to you to offer them back up as a finished product.

Brittain didn't have a massive building, but she did have access to a 900 sq. ft warehouse space that with a little TLC became the perfect launch pad for the hostel. She scrubbed it up, dressed it up, and deputized her former pet cat, Walter, as the resident "ambassador of happiness" :)

A year after the 'raw' launch, Hostel KC was crushing it with a 5 bed space. Over 400 guests had paid to stay there, 1 home had been built for a needy family, and Walter had cemented his place in the Hostel KC brand.



So, are you missing out on a 'raw' launch because you think you need more than you have? Where do you think Brittain would be if she had waited until the time and money were "just right" to launch? My guess is, she still wouldn't be launched today.

Your time is NOW. Think about the raw goods you have and how you can put them together to offer up something amazing to the world.



Check out my video interview with Brittain right here



## Josh Schukman

Chief Inspiration Officer

**Hey, thanks for taking the time to read this!**

If you've made it this far, you're already a well trained 'Change Agent' in Change Nation! We could totally use your help! We'd love to have you help shape this community, so if you want to guest post on our blog or interview someone you will be welcome here!

Email me directly at [josh@socialchangenation.com](mailto:josh@socialchangenation.com) for ways to get more involved – and stay tuned for the latest updates and newest podcast interviews.

*Peace out, and keep it real!*

*Josh Schukman*