**Jason Hobson Interview Transcript**

**Matthew** [00:00:00] Hello and welcome to this episode of Power Up Your Business podcast. I'm your host, Matthew Jones, owner of Cube Performance, where we coach, mentor and assist tradie business owners, how they can earn more profitability, work less with a lot less stress, and ultimately create a great lifestyle for themselves and their family through creating a high-performance business. Now, in this episode, we speak with Jason Hobson, owner and operator of Perth Air and Power Solutions based in Perth. Now this is a great episode for any tradie business owner who really wants to understand how they can stop working at night, who really wants to understand how, by working less, they can generate more profit, engage their team members more to drive productivity and then ultimately to build better relationships with their clients. Jason is going to provide some great takeaways about how we implement success habits into his daily schedule, and it's not about working on the tools, it's about prioritising time to work on the business. So he's planning, he's preparing, he's communicating, he's reflecting. And these are some of the key components about building a profitable, sustainable business long term, as opposed to what a lot of tradie business owners may fall into what we term the tradie mindset, where it's all about the job, no time to plan and prepare, it's about just doing more. What Jason has done is really slowed down, and by slowing down, he's working a lot less, he's spending a lot more quality time at home, his stress is reduced dramatically, his quality of life has improved dramatically and ultimately as well, his bottom line, and his cash flow has increased out of this world. And it's all about by slowing down, doing less rather than doing more. So this is a great one, everyone really good takeaways here that you'll be able to implement into your business straight away. And really, it's about controlling your calendar and having the discipline and the focus to start saying no. All right, let's get into this one. Love it. Cheers, everyone.

**Matthew** [00:02:34] Jason, welcome to Power Up Your Business podcast, mate, great to have you on board.

**Jason** [00:02:38] Thanks for having me.

**Matthew** [00:02:39] And your story, obviously, based in Perth, mate and commencing the business in 2014. What was the reason firstly to start your business?

**Jason** [00:02:48] I always wanted to start my own business, but it got fast tracked a little bit because we needed extra money. So I got things underway.

**Matthew** [00:02:58] Chasing the dollar?

**Jason** [00:02:59] Chasing the dollar, we had mortgages to pay during the mining crash in 2013, 14. So yes, I got stuck into it.

**Matthew** [00:03:09] Because that was a difficult time, I know, doing a lot of training over, a lot of clients over there, Perth and the business really struggled around that 13, 14. So you had a secure job at that time, but then you thought, you know, well, I'm going to take the plunge and start your own brand.

**Jason** [00:03:23] Yes, that's exactly right. Yes, we had a couple of properties up north, so we needed more money, so I've done what everyone does, bought a van, got a logo and a business card and also my wife.

**Matthew** [00:03:35] And your wife and how good was that, the first week, the first month, the first year, loving life, right? Ticking it off?

**Jason** [00:03:40] Yes, that's it. And I did get lucky because where I reside from; they offered me some contract work, to contract back to them. So pretty much from day one, I had at least 30 hours a week work, so I got stuck into it straight away and started making a bit more money than I was making before.

**Matthew** [00:03:56] So it's good to have that security, yes, that security blanket to start with. So the jump wasn't as daunting.

**Jason** [00:04:02] No. Well, it was until I resigned. But in the resignation writing, that's when they offered it to me. So I walked out with a resignation writing pretty stoked to be honest.

**Matthew** [00:04:11] Definitely a good outcome from a resignation, mate.

**Jason** [00:04:13] Yes, I thought it would have went the other way, so.

**Matthew** [00:04:14] And then evolving over that time, year one, year two, year three, year four, you are getting into year five and building up to around a team of four or five tradesmen and apprentices.

**Jason** [00:04:26] Yes, that's right. I sold out on a thing in my head where I wanted to just grow naturally without sort of slogging Google and SEO and AdWords. And so that sort of just through word of mouth and trying to do a good job. I was putting on one person every financial year, and it went well, but once it got to sort of five people, I was over my head.

**Matthew** [00:04:50] You did a really good job and you have done a really good job of building business-to-business relationships, you know, working with commercial properties and managing those properties and especially around the air and power solutions, given the name right, Perth Air and Power Solutions. But how did you find it? So as you mentioned, you get the five, what started happening or what really started creeping. And once you're over the five, six employees, what was the fundamental change there that you really started to get bogged down with?

**Jason** [00:05:17] At the start, I was doing all of my admin overnight, which worked out pretty well when it was just me and one other guy because I was only sort of half hour, 45 minutes with just a few emails or one or two quotes.

**Matthew** [00:05:32] So you'd be on the tools all day and then try and get on top of the admin at night, which is common, for most of our listeners, that's a common scenario.

**Jason** [00:05:38] Yes. I just needed the cash. So I thought the more I'm on the tools, the more cash I'll have, then I'll just sort out the admin stuff after I've done the work. And it did work pretty well at the start. But once I got to five people, I was doing probably three hours of admin, four nights a week from 7 till about 10 and just doing everything, half-arsed quotes, half-arsed info on the job, wasn't enough for other employees to know what was going on. I just had everything up in my head,

**Matthew** [00:06:09] So pretty much you were pushing things through just to tick a box to get it out. But the quality was obviously low, the planning was poor, quotes were poor, profitability, it was poor, productivity was poor. And when, you know, 10 o'clock at night or 11 o'clock at night, how were you feeling it? Or, what's your mental state like? What are you thinking about business then? And just thinking about trying to do things well at 11 o'clock at night when you're fatigued and you're ready to get up? What time to get up in the morning to get start the day?

**Jason** [00:06:34] About 6:00, 5:30, 6:00 to get into it. And the worst part is it's just so wide that when you go to bed, you can't just switch off and go to sleep. So you're lying there thinking about what you've just been doing for the last three hours, for an hour before you even got to sleep.

**Matthew** [00:06:49] And you know why you're doing it, right? And it compounds and this is why so many people can't switch off. They say, oh, Jonesy, I can't just let go, you know, I'm thinking about business all the time. It's because, like you mentioned and referred to a minute ago, everything's in your head. And when you poor planning, you're not allowing yourself enough time to really prepare and get on top of things. And you are capturing everything in your head, and you're just spinning, right? Now, how is it on the home front too, you know, how was it on the on the family front with that amount of time? And now obviously, like most people, you try to do, okay, great the kids are in bed now i'll really try and rip in. How is that going on from a home front?

**Jason** [00:07:29] I was lucky at the start because I didn't have kids and my wife was pretty stoked. She just got to watch what she wanted to watch on TV.

**Matthew** [00:07:35] A but of quiet time with a glass of wine not being interrupted.

**Jason** [00:07:38] But as time went on, after two years of it, three years of it, it starts to wear pretty thin. And she could say how stressed I am all the time. And I have a reasonably good memory so I remember things, you know, during dinner and write them in my diary or send a quick email off the phone just to get it done and yes, wears thin after a while.

**Matthew** [00:08:02] Well, that's that classic scenario which we talk about a lot. It's about as a business owner, we've got to check out and essentially change hats. So when you finish business, take your business hat off and put your home hat on because ultimately what you do in there, you're home physically, but you weren't present in mind, you weren't present in that time like you would actively listening. You weren't being there like you were there physically, but you're thinking about, your mind was elsewhere.

**Jason** [00:08:26] Yes. You're just waiting for like 7:30 to come around, so you could just jump on the laptop, and just get it done. But you could stop thinking about it, but you might as well just by doing that because it's all you thinking about anyway.

**Matthew** [00:08:38] It's been great having you part of our community and jumping on pretty much the start of 2020. So it took you essentially six years and we touched base. I think some of our training sessions that we conduct over in Perth, I think we touched base originally in 2019 around there, was it 2019, early 2020?

**Jason** [00:08:56] Yes, and I first came across like the podcast, to be honest, bit of a podcaster and listen to a few different podcasts and everyone that had been successful and seemed to have the perfect ratio of working life or had like a business coaching programme or a mentor. And yes, a lot of the other ones I listened to are bit to corporate and cheesy, but I just like The Cube sort of way of doing it, sort of no bullshit, just get stuck in and get it done. So, yes, that's why I sort of reached out and signed up.

**Matthew** [00:09:31] And I appreciate that. And as you were with our programme, it is all about honesty and about accountability and with our success habits and the methodology, it's great. We've got a great track record, but you can have a great track record and you can have all the steps in place, but essentially, it's still up to the individual to really implement it, bind it. And that's one thing that you've done really well, and that's what I want to go through now, really about. And so again, everyone listening, some really going to be key points that Jason's done to really fast track his time management and productivity. So mate, just on that there, like I just want to sort of fast track, so we've gone from a state where you're three hours a night, highly stressed, struggling financially, probably not getting the rewards consistently. And then you've had some good times and some bad times, but not really having that control or really understanding business. Yes, you didn't really feel that you had full control of the business, agree? It was a bit more like the other way around?

**Jason** [00:10:26] Yes. And you'd go to the accountant, they cheer and he'd tell you how good your year was and how good your percentages were against benchmark. But you'd look at your bank account and be like, that doesn't reflect exactly what he's telling me. You just try to figure it all out. But accountants just speak in accounting terms because it's all about the balance sheet, not about profit and loss. It's more just the balance sheet. So they've taken all your depreciation and all your loan repayments and everything into consideration where if you haven't got the cash, it's no good to you really.

**Matthew** [00:11:01] We are speaking with Jason Hobson from Perth, Air and Power Solutions. Now, if you'd like to earn more, work less and create that high performance business, just like Jason, please request a strategy session with myself. Happy to have a one-on-one conversation with you to see how we can assist you, improve your business and ultimately your lifestyle. Just go to our website www.cubeperformance.com.au and click on request a strategy session button. Look forward to speaking with you. When you haven't got the time to really understand the business like you didn't at that stage, and you weren't sort of pointing in the right direction. And look, as a business owner, you don't know what you don't know, but if you don't make the time and get uncomfortable to really understand it, you will never know. And the key thing around it is that you're getting information from the accountant, which is logical. Yes, it's about compliance, it's really about ATO and tax, but it's not helping you as a business owner. It's not what we call management accounting, and you need to invest the time into that. And also, it's not the sort of thing you're going to do at 10 o'clock at night.

**Jason** [00:12:05] No, not when he's telling you how good you go and you go, oh yes, I am going good.

**Matthew** [00:12:11] You're going great. I'll see you in 12 months, hopefully still surviving. So what do I want to do? I just want to just quickly fast track and some of the results now and then we'll get into the how we've done it and then what you've implemented and what you've done really well. So in terms of essentially over the last 12 months, everyone, just like, you know, Jason's net profit was essentially about a four out of 10. Now it's an eight out of 10. So now it's really about not about just turnover has increased, but it's all about driving that efficiency. Stress level was high, now it's very low. Confidence in the future was a three, now it's an eight. Team ownership has increased considerably from five to eight, even though and again, you've done a good job with your team over a number of years. Family life, that's a key from five to an eight and then the overall financial position, cash in bank understanding the numbers, financial intelligence five to an eight as well. So we've really pushed that spectrum, or that dial from where you were at a low state to a much more of a high state, much more in control state. And it's what we're seeing, obviously in this year's financials, in this year's P&L, so 2021, 2022 financial year to date. First five months has been cracking results, right, which is fantastic. One of the key things, and this is where I want to really in this podcast is around that time, blocking what we're doing, it's about making sure we control the calendar. Just talk through some of the key things that have really started to set you free and improve that work life balance. Does this work through? And obviously, we talk about time blocking in the calendar and other aspects of that. But talk me through some of the things that's really burden for you to drive change.

**Jason** [00:13:45] The main thing is getting off the tools and, in the office, but just being in the office, twiddling your funds and getting distracted, it's not really the whole idea of being in the office. So I've got a bit of a spreadsheet which has what we call success habits, which are all time blocked out. And it's just a weekly thing where I try and do the same thing every week. But obviously we're tradies so things come up that are urgent or people think are urgent. So the whole thing does get changed around at times. But every week I do get the allocated time done for each task. So whether it happens on a Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday or Friday, it's getting done every week. So that's the main sort of part of it.

**Matthew** [00:14:31] Jason's really referring to there which part of our methodology, which is key, is our success habits, and we'll touch on those specific success habits in a minute and making sure it gets locked into the calendar and working through that time blocking spreadsheet. So over Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, what are the key times you've got to be in the office working on those success habits and when it's locked in, correct, Jason, you've got to make sure it gets locked in. It doesn't automatically get shoofed to the side. It's a priority. You've got to try and plan around it and hence this is where it's at. We call those rocks. A rock means it goes in the calendar, it doesn't move unless it's an ultimate emergency, obviously. But it's about reinforcing your effectiveness and prioritising your calendar, which for a lot of tradies, this is where we've got no time, it's because he got nothing locked in. So they're pretty much the whim of everything that's around them. Everything appears. Everything is urgent and appears important. That's where a lot of time is wasted. A lot of hours are wasted, where what we're about is less is more, you know, we don't want to do overtime, don't want to work weekends, and we do that by being really diligent with our time blocking and calendar. And you've done that really well, mate. It's easier said than done, right? A lot of people, and this is where I really credit to you in terms of your diligence and the dedication you've gone to locking in your calendar. Give it a run, just talk through your regular week that you've got in the moment. Just talk through it, just say the success habits, what you've got locked in sort of each day.

**Jason** [00:15:57] So a normal day, I sort of I'll sit down and look at my diary and plan the day or I think I'll have to do for the day along with my little Excel spreadsheet here. Then I go through all my emails that I've got from the night before, flag everything, it has to be flagged and write in my diary what I have to action further. And then on Mondays, I generally try and do all my site visits and quotes. So that's basically the day, which I cross over to my diary.

**Matthew** [00:16:26] And just to clarify there, like so that Monday all starts, obviously very clearly on the Friday before. So you've already locked all the site visits in, agree? So, you know, exactly come Monday, you know exactly where you're going before Monday hits.

**Jason** [00:16:40] Yes. I try and sort of plan the day. So obviously we're in Perth so, start North, work my way South with the site visits or client meetings or whatever has to happen. So I do all that Monday. Then on Tuesday, a full day in the office, start the day the same way, plan my day, do my emails, and then go through and do all the quotes from the previous day from all the site visits. Well, a lot of the times have already won the job, but it's more doing site measure, putting all the info on to the job for the guys, which is something I was originally hopless at, but you still sort of go, look at the job, takes the photos, not put the photos on our AroFlo, not putting more info on our AroFlo, just keep it all on my phone and in my head so the guys are always calling me, which frustrates me, and it frustrates them just as much. So that's sort of a Monday, Tuesday. But then we sort of get more into the success habits on Thursday, Friday, that's when I try and get through them. I sort of run through them, I got it here.

**Matthew** [00:17:44] Yes, you go through, just list them.

**Jason** [00:17:45] Simple thing, approval of the timesheets on Wednesday morning, bookkeeper checks for all supplier invoices are on the jobs and I can close out all jobs I can and then invoice for a couple of hours, then I do payroll, then I'll do my homework for you.

**Matthew** [00:18:03] Which is a priority, right? Make sure you don't fall behind.

**Jason** [00:18:05] That's exactly right. You have made me accountable, so I'll get in trouble if that's not done. So I'll do all that. Thursday morning, I'll start by trying to have like just two hours to refining the process. So something that not necessarily annoys me, but more annoys the techs from me not being organised or something that should be done that isn't done. So try and do one thing every week or every fortnight. And then I plan basically next week and try and order all materials that need to be ordered for the following week.

**Matthew** [00:18:39] So that's on the Thursday. Was that the Thursday?

**Jason** [00:18:42] Yes. Then on Friday morning, I try to leave it free because again, we're tradies and your day gets full from phone calls, couple of days before. But I always go through cash flow forecasting and chasing off money that's owed me on Friday mornings, which is pretty simple. It's just resending statements or checking people have actually received an invoice if it's overdue, and things like that.

**Matthew** [00:19:06] And if you need to make the call, then you can make the call.

**Jason** [00:19:10] Make the call. Because I'm mainly business-to-business, everything is 30 days from end the month. But one of those, over the last year, people will try and drag that out to 45, to 50 these days, which is pretty frustrating. But sometimes your hands are tied, so you just got to do what you can do. But yes, that's a basic week. Doesn't sound like much, but it feels like.

**Matthew** [00:19:31] It was that quick, right? And when do you touch base with the team?

**Jason** [00:19:34] We have a coffee every second Monday, which is non-work-related, which is good. And then I did have two guys, Chris and Dave, which were sharing a supervisor role with Dave's just moved back to Victoria. So Chris is doing it solely now, and we're busy at the moment, like every tradie. So we're just trying to iron out some creases to get more structure around that.

**Matthew** [00:19:58] Because obviously you need to factor in at least a weekly meeting with Chris to debrief, especially around the processes.

**Jason** [00:20:05] Yes, I do have a weekly meeting with Chris, but I'm trying to get it so he once the job is actually live, he manages the job then so he can do the site measures and he can organise it with the client and he can order the materials. But we're just in a little bit of a crossover period at the moment, so we're figuring that out.

**Matthew** [00:20:23] Well, that comes back to that Thursday morning where you're working on the process refinement. They're the processes that we're talking about.

**Jason** [00:20:30] I'm always just trying to make a new word document or a spreadsheet or something.

**Matthew** [00:20:34] Or video.

**Jason** [00:20:34] Yes. Or video, just to make things easier.

**Matthew** [00:20:38] So that's a key element for every business owner. We're trying to that process refinement so you can actually effectively delegate to someone else so you don't get the calls. And this is where most people, because they don't control their calendar, because they're not time blocking, they never spend time to actually improve processes or they say, haven't got time, Jonesy, that's great, I haven't got time. So you continually answer the phone, right? Answer the phone from people like you mentioned before, you're getting calls from people that piss you off, piss the other person off as well. Overall, now talk about and again, this is that less is more, now that we've implemented it, just for everyone, Jason has really done best practise. We really use what Jason is using as a time blocking, as definitely a guide, a template for everyone in our community to use and use as a go-to. So now that you're again not running around on site, being pulled and being that firefighter, how many hours are you saving on a daily basis, you think now? So how many hours are you investing in the business on a daily basis now as opposed to before?

**Jason** [00:21:42] I only really do my max nine-hour-a-days now. I get to work around 7:00 and later around 4:00.

**Matthew** [00:21:49] And before?

**Jason** [00:21:50] I was doing probably seven to five on the tools and then three hours, three or four nights a week.

**Matthew** [00:21:56] So you effectively doing thirteen-hour-a-days before, now you're doing nine. So essentially, you've chopped off about three to four hours a day.

**Jason** [00:22:03] Yes, but I don't even take my diary or laptop home now. So I've got the emails turned off on my phone from 6pm that I come through between six and six, just so you're not sitting on the couch that eight o'clock at night trying to chill out and then you get an email and you start thinking about it. But it can wait.

**Matthew** [00:22:19] I just want to hold that, I just want to reframe that for everyone. So listen to this. This is about that we spoke about before, about when you leave the office or leave work change hats. A key way to change hats so you don't get pulled back when you got the home hat on you that you have to interchange back into the work hat is, you know, leave the phone or have the phone, but like you've done, make sure that emails are stop so don't ping through, turn off notifications, leave the computer in the office, whatever that may be, so that you are fully detached, right? Because we are talking about now, like, how are you? And we talk a lot about sharpening the saw and you've got to be great as a business owner. If you want your business great, you've got to operate at a high level. And now that you, and we talk about why that less is more. It's not about the quantity of hours, right? It's about the quality we put into each hour. It's about the intent per hour. Your quality now per hour is going up obviously, 10 folds, agree?

**Jason** [00:23:12] Yes, 100%. I think it's just because I got my little spreadsheet with all my rocks in there, if you start to get distracted, which is pretty easy, you can look at it like, oh shit, that's what I'm meant to be doing and push back to it. Whereas if you're not really aware of or have a process of what you want to be doing, it's pretty easy just go off on a tangent and someone calls and it's urgent. Well, I think it's urgent. So that's just what you go and do you really stick to the process. You end up driving around half a day and getting four hours worked on. You get to listen to the podcast, but you don't get anything done.

**Matthew** [00:23:53] Listen to Power Up Your Business podcast, that's a positive. But coming back to it and that's that thing about it's amazing, and most people really underestimate how much time they waste on a regular basis. What are some of the outcomes? I want to talk about some of the outcomes now that through going through this process and really implementing it. So taking it back. Number one, the quoting, and the scoping and then getting the bill of quantities, right, and then obviously communicating to the guys on site. How's that quality of delivery in that? And we talk a lot about just as one percent is improving, always the little one percent areas. How are those improvements now rolling out in terms of outcomes from quotes and the deliverables, especially from a profitability point of view?

**Jason** [00:24:38] Oh, it's gone up. Heaps, it's probably gone up around 15% net just by like even just simple things like with the supplier price rises at the moment, like if you're not on top of it and you know, everything's probably gone up. Average is 20 to 30%. And if you're busy on the tools and you're not reading your emails and updating your pricing in your writing programme, then there goes 15% on the job.

**Matthew** [00:25:06] There goes your profit, right?

**Jason** [00:25:07] Gone, like just like that. Just because you're too busy to sit down and actually work it out. Where now, like, I'm updating the supplier, pricing every month and making sure I've got the right amount of materials on the job, the right amount of labour on the job.

**Matthew** [00:25:23] So your bill of quantities now is far superior than what it was before.

**Jason** [00:25:27] Yes, I reckon most jobs would be within, like from the quote to winning it and executing it would be within two or three percent, I reckon.

**Matthew** [00:25:37] Yes, massive.

**Jason** [00:25:40] Like on average. So, which is good, where before I might have a couple of good wins and you think you're going well and then you wouldn't even realise because you're rushing your invoicing, you might not even have all the materials on the job. You just kind of like, oh shit, I got to get the invoices done. So you whack your purchase order number on there and the amount and just invoice it without knowing the actual outcome on the job.

**Matthew** [00:26:02] Well, that's the next six years habit, right? That's what you do the next day, right? I just want to talk about that, the importance of timesheeting and looking at purchase orders, getting that right. But the key thing that you're doing there on this Tuesday, and let's talk about it from getting a quote right, getting the bill of quantities right, getting the specs right. And then making sure that the team are totally across so they can put in the applicable detail in there. And you can educate the team exactly what's happening. So even that transparency, right, in terms of hours and what needs to be done on the job, what's been the feedback from the team? And again, you've done a really good job with the way we do it here. So Jason, just for everyone who's listening, it is just like, he's got a really good job building that culture, the values. And he's done a great job over a long period of time of building a really energetic and a team that just get on with it. But how are the team now? What was their response when you're doing a job handover and getting them started? Did they appreciate going to another level? And obviously you're not getting as many calls, right?

**Jason** [00:26:58] Yes, I'm not getting as many calls, which is good for me and for them, and they line up because we do a lot of schoolwork and types and be at commercial sites. Just little things like having a room number like cost site contact, like you can rock up to a TAFE and if it says split system installation like in B Block, it doesn't mean anything because a B block could have a hundred rooms in it. So just having like a proper site contact, proper room number, couple of photos of what's going on, because as a tech, it's frustrating because you feel really awkward, like you're rock up to a job and you don't even know what you're doing kind of thing like you feel a bit stupid from the start.

**Matthew** [00:27:41] You know, they get out there, they run around, they're frustrated, they can't find it. Then they call you and they ask you, where is it? And you're going, what do you mean you haven't found it yet? So you're getting frustrated. And it's just that whole but again, that's where back in that we would talk about the tradie mindset where you're working long hours, you haven't got time to do this little one percent details that have a big impact, right? So cool. So in terms of the success habits, this is what I want everyone to think about, start from the start. We're getting to start right, the quote right, the specs right, the handover right. And then on the next day, it's allowing you too from the success habits, they're making sure timesheets are right or the purchases are right and all lines up to obviously the quote, you can then send the invoice off at the applicable stage so you know that the invoice is correct. So you're not missing any materials or any variations. Anything like that is locked away solid, agree?

**Jason** [00:28:32] Hundred percent. I did do a bit of delegating there. By the bookkeepers, they do all the supplier invoice uploads if they don't automatically get uploaded and reconcile every invoice to each supplier statement. But they're doing that for me every Wednesday, so sometimes the suppliers are a bit slow. But most of the time the invoice is sent as you walk out the door, so just makes it 10 times easier and more streamlined. And to be honest, doing the invoice is easier because I'm doing the quote correctly. You just literally click a button to upload all the materials and labour on the job, change the description a little bit and send it. Takes a couple of minutes compared to where you type it every single time.

**Matthew** [00:29:17] Yes. How long was it taking before, right? And then you're still having mistakes, and this is what you're trying to do at 10 o'clock at night.

**Jason** [00:29:23] That's 10 times better. Even the clients are happier because they're all commercial clients. They can't send their invoice to us and my invoice, like my invoice, has to be in the system before I can close the job off. So it's just a snowball effect. Like they're not getting frustrated at me for sending only invoices in on the 30th of the month, and they're trying to then get all theirs done in the same day, so it makes it pretty hard.

**Matthew** [00:29:48] It's a knock-on effect where they're appreciating what you're doing makes it easy for their admin. And then rolling into that next phase, which is really about the team training and looking at processes and what we talk about, you know, just how can you improve by one percent, how can a team improve by one percent? Now for listeners out there, especially those that don't really know your numbers, it is hard to really appreciate the impact of little improvements on a number of different processes, the impact it delivers on the bottom line. But it is massive. And obviously you've done a really good job of adopting that, Jason, mate. And really understanding, wow, you know, if I just one percent here, one percent here and we're talking on the bottom line everyone. We're talking tens of thousands of dollars. A couple of percent here can be tens of thousand dollars on the bottom line, which essentially for you as a business owner, that's your reward, right? That's your family holiday; pay off the mortgage quicker, whatever that may be. But going through this, how tight now are your processes? Again, because you're working on it, you've got it locked in, just tightening everything. How's that been? What are some of the highlights that you've really been able to implement as far as processes and fine-tuning?

**Jason** [00:30:55] That was a hot main highlights, bottom line.

**Matthew** [00:30:56] Yes, of course.

**Jason** [00:31:01] So I always look there first and scroll back up.

**Matthew** [00:31:05] And again for everyone like Jason, doing a great job from an operating profit, again, after taking away, you know, ran at 15%, 20% consistently every month, month on month, agree? And you're tuning into that.

**Jason** [00:31:17] Yes, no, it's good. And if you do have a month, it's not as great, you know, where your money's gone or why it is like that. Like, it's an example if you're spending 15 grand on materials that's put on one month, but it's not getting invoice to the next, you actually know that that's why the month wasn't that great or if an invoice was sent early before you have been invoice for your materials, you know why it's the other way. You don't just think that you've had this killer month because the hit is going to be coming the month after. So you're just aware of that.

**Matthew** [00:31:50] Or if there's those price rises.

**Jason** [00:31:53] That and wage costs are probably the two biggest things, really. But again, all the other little ones add up where I used to just have my bookkeeping, subscriptions, advertising, and like, SEO unless you spent hours going through it, you didn't know what was what. But now we have everything is its own detail line item, so you just feel like Xero cost me that, AroFlo cost me that, you don't have to actually click into things to find, find out why.

**Matthew** [00:32:23] And just on that, just to explain for people, rather than which most people's chart of accounts, if you have a look at your Profit and Loss, you got one line item for subscriptions and in there, in that one little item, yes, you've got our AroFlo, you've got Xero, you've got other memberships, multiple, 365, Google, whereas what we did, as a business owner, you need to break that down into separate line item account. So you we're in control of it. We understand what we're investing. And we also understand, are we in the questions, which is part of the success habits, is questioning am I getting a return on this investment? Do I need this? Is it adding value to the business going forward? And we do that for all the buckets of our categories in our accounts. And that's one thing that you've done really well, too. And this is again, it's about you are now making educated decisions, right? Like, you don't panic if it's a bad month and you don't get over excited if it's a really good month because we always try to understand why is this been delivered, because we're knowing the numbers and more importantly, our percentages. On the back of that too like, I think and one thing and just everyone, too, is that productivity has gone this route, referring back to our wage cost percentage, Jason, how important now is because it's so tight now that with your team again, this is the wage cost now, where Jason's wage costs as a percentage of his turnover is lower than it's ever been. And that's with Jason off the tools. This is what I want everyone to understand. Jason's taking a wage, paying yourself superannuation just like every other team member, but your wage cost percent, your productivity has gone up, you know, essentially with you off the tools. Now a lot of business owners out there think that, I've got to be on the tools, I've got to keep on the tools to keep things ticking over. But it's actually the reverse, right?

**Jason** [00:34:03] Yes, hundred percent. I'm lucky that I do have a good team and I can trust on.

**Matthew** [00:34:06] There's no luck.

**Jason** [00:34:08] And you know, they all do have pride in their work, and I know that they'll do things to a higher standard. I guess even if you didn't really trust them, you can train them. And with all your running programmes now where you go to, you can upload a photo, 10 photos of every job, like you can't really hide, they can't do something dodgy and get away with it, because if you have the photos on the job, you can check it on every job, I don't have to but that is there. Having a good team obviously, I can trust is number one. And number two, I think the wage cost has gone down just because I'm more organised. Really, I've got just having simple things, more detail on the job, materials ordered, and yes, they don't have to fluff around and call me and they get to site that can just get into it, really?

**Matthew** [00:34:59] Yes, definitely. And just to clarify, because you are investing the time for the planning, investing and time with team meetings investing the time making sure that the job handover is really clear and transparent what needs to happen. Pretty simple. We've got a lot less wasted time. There are no mistakes. There's less wastage. There's no over ordering, agree? Or, if we do over order, you can be straight on it, put a credit back to the supplier. And also, one of the big things, too which we often talk about is that you don't have to do overtime or allocate overtime where that can't be charged out at overtime rate. For everyone too if you want to really improve your wage costs, just do not do overtime and pay overtime rates, if you cannot on-charge overtime to the client, agree? Like, it's just a no-no. And then most people are rolling in and they fall into, oh, I've got to throw it. We've got to work this Saturday and pay him double time or I got to work time and a half, or they got to work overtime just to get the job done. That just shows me straight away that there are no success habits locked in. There's no planning, agree? That's some of the traps that you fell into previously.

**Jason** [00:36:02] Yes, 100%. I wasn't planning anything. It was all planned in my head. So hence, I don't know, probably 50 phone calls a day, I reckon, I would have got, probably four calls, five calls per tech plus clients.

**Matthew** [00:36:18] How many calls are you're getting now?

**Jason** [00:36:18] I'm not sure. Roughly, maybe one an hour. When you think about it, so maybe eight, maybe 10 calls a day.

**Matthew** [00:36:28] So you sliced off about forty calls?

**Jason** [00:36:30] Yes. Chris might be getting them, but at least not coming to me.

**Matthew** [00:36:34] That's cool, that's part of delegation, right? Like you're doing a good job there, of handing over the ownership there. Again, in essence, here this is the takeaway everyone, so wrapping it up, mate and just for everyone like we talk about, you've got to invest, you know, to get the benefits. And it's all about too getting uncomfortable, like you said with tradies; we're in that tradie mindset, it was all about a job. And I think we're just hardwired to get things done and say yes. And the busier we are, of course we going to get ahead, which just doesn't happen. How hard was it to really make that change and get out of your comfort zone and get uncomfortable? Doing this stuff was uncomfortable, right? It's uncomfortable for everyone.

**Jason** [00:37:15] Yes, it is. It's 100%. Doing a podcast for me is uncomfortable.

**Matthew** [00:37:19] And you're nailing it, right? Look at how good are you, right?

**Jason** [00:37:22] Yes, you sound like my accountant.

**Matthew** [00:37:25] You're doing really well. Looks good. Just keep on doing it.

**Jason** [00:37:30] It is pretty daunting, to be honest, like even just opening your books up to someone that you're basically paying to critique everything and can pick your business apart so everything you feel like you've been doing right could be wrong. So you do feel pretty vulnerable at the start, but obviously it's not like that at all. You're all here to help.

**Matthew** [00:37:52] You're going to be able to do the process.

**Jason** [00:37:55] Yes, 100%, you got to be well in the league. If you're told that something's not right, you have to be willing to change it, otherwise there's no point doing it. But that's the whole thing. I could have kept doing what I was doing and probably survive until I was 60, but I wouldve been doing exact same thing when I was 60. And I've had massive changes in six months.

**Matthew** [00:38:14] It's huge.

**Jason** [00:38:15] Yes, it's been really good.

**Matthew** [00:38:17] And the pleasing thing from our point of view and invaluable member our community, our client community with Cube Performance and going through the Power Up coaching programme is that you've really sort of roll the sleeves up and implemented it 100% and what you've done, which is what we want everyone to do and everyone who runs a business, this is what we should be aiming for, is you're really getting the business to work for you. You're really getting the business to serve you as opposed to what was happening before, where very clearly, you're enslaved to the business, right? And that's essentially where most Australia business owners are, they're enslaved to the job, they're enslaved to their business, they're at the beck and call of the business, and they've got no control and hence where you were high stress, financials up and down, and a general lack of control. Whereas now coming back to as mentioned, you know, you're really getting in control; you're building that business that serves you. It's scalable and ultimately going down and getting some value in where whatever part of that, the long-term plan, whether we sell it to someone, whether you get in full time manager in, where ideally now we get someone that is in your chair right now to do your job, that's obviously the next transition in the organisation. But you're building it based on strong foundations and strong processes where you're enabling other people to come and sit in your chair and take it and run with it, and you've given them support to drive it. And that's what you're doing really well because you're testing and measuring these habits, that is replicable. So what you're doing now, you're creating that regular rhythm in the organisation that every business needs regular rhythm. Your team needs to know what the regular rhythm is so they're confident and comfortable that they turn up. And I know exactly what to expect that day in, day out. And you're doing that really well. And like you said, what's the measure? It's the bottom line. It's the cash in the bank. We can quantify that, but the qualitative things that are really important, too, is obviously you quality of life, up, stress levels, down, and that confidence in the future is up, right? So it's getting that balance, because one of the key things we talk about too within the community as part of our success habits is about your training, your life, getting out there with the family, whatever it is. It's about that balanced approach. So how has that been to just to being able to know that it's not all about work that you're able to then because remember we don't live to work, really, you know, we really work to live. And how has that been to like transitioning that into an overall holistic view?

**Jason** [00:40:50] Yes, it's been good. And it was really perfect timing coming aboard because we just had our second child then. So now we all know what they're like. They want all of your attention, but you can actually be there, present and actually engage with them rather than be there, playing with them, thinking about, oh, shoot I got to write back to that email when they go to bed or didn't do that for whatever it is, I just go home. At the end of the day, I know I've done everything I need to do for the day and anything else can just wait till tomorrow. So yes, it's just a really good feeling.

**Matthew** [00:41:26] I love it. And that's the ultimate aim, it is when you're at home, you're at home, you're there. You're not going to miss a moment; you don't miss any moment. And just to finish, what sort of advice would you give? Like as a tradie coming through, about making this transition into better time management, what do you think of your learning? What's the number one thing they should start doing as a takeaway for them?

**Jason** [00:41:48] Not a hundred percent sure, I'm qualified to give advice.

**Matthew** [00:41:52] On this podcast, you are.

**Jason** [00:41:54] My advice would be, even if it's a one man band or 20 people, is to get like what we call our rough spot Just then things that have to happen, like dedicated quality time, you dedicated invoicing time, you dedicated time to make the business better just every week and just stick to it, whether it's, you know, six hours a week or three days a week, just sort of stick at it, just keep working on it because it's really daunting at the start, to be honest, like, I didn't even have employment contracts like, as you know, like so you can like, God, the list is just so long, but once you've been stick at it for six months, it starts to get a lot easier and you actually start working on some pretty fun stuff and some cool stuff.

**Matthew** [00:42:41] Yes, that's right. It's just about, have that consistency. And I think one of that you were talking about, too, is coming back to say that one-man band even as a one-man band, you should be setting aside at least maybe four to six hours a week or half-a-day a week working on the rocks, working on the business. So essentially everyone we're talking about four hours during the week. So walk, work four and a half days, okay. Don't work five days, and then again, try and fill this stuff in on the weekend. A lot of people try and do on the weekend or at night. Be really diligent about less is more. Just work Monday to Friday, seven to 3:30. And what we always talk about, put a bit of urgency in there, or scarcity in there where if you've got to stop at 3:30, then it's going to focus your attention. And make sure your quality per hour is going to be up rather than go, oh, I'll do that later, I'll do that on the weekend. So I think good advice here, mate, again to start as a one-man band.

**Jason** [00:43:31] And looking back, it would have been really simple. I could have been every Friday morning from seven to 12, I'm invoicing and quoting, like that's what I'm doing but I just ended up filling up one of the weeks and weeks in advance to just keep working and working and working and not actually doing it.

**Matthew** [00:43:50] For everyone now, I thing that we do with say, especially the smaller guys like one-man band, two-man band, Friday morning, your Friday should be office days. So if you do eight hours, great. If you do six hours, great, four hours, great, but just start. Lock in that time where that's the time you're going to make sure that you're making the right decisions rather than being busy. So it's back into the comfort zone. But Jason, good stuff, mate. Really appreciate jumping on board. And again, you know this podcast, like you are now out of the comfort zone and you're in the podcast fraternity, right?

**Jason** [00:44:24] Yes.

**Matthew** [00:44:24] And looking forward, mate, to the new year, mate, what brings, obviously, we're coming into 2022, the new year and looking forward to as you keep progressing as a business owner on your journey, mate. Well done.

**Jason** [00:44:37] No dramas. Thank you. Thanks for having me.

**Matthew** [00:44:39] Cheers, mate.

**Jason** [00:44:39] See you.

**Matthew** [00:45:03]