



Conversations w/Tino

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Airdate	Monday, November 26, 2018

Tino Magnatta: Hello and welcome. And I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving week. And boy, was there enough food or what? That's always the case in Thanksgiving. But anyways, today I have a great friend and amazing CEO. Please welcome Sam Askew. Sam, how are you, buddy?

Samuel Askew: Doing well. How are you this evening?

Tino Magnatta: Good, good, good. So you grew up all over. Your dad was an Army officer, right?

Samuel Askew: Yes I did. Born in Germany, moved from Germany to Georgia, from Georgia to Arizona, from Arizona to Hawaii, and from Hawaii to Europe and all over. So I consider myself an Army brat in the oldest sense of the word. And I really enjoyed ... At first I didn't, when I was younger I didn't know about it. But, you know, now looking back on it, those were great times for me. Formidable years.

Tino Magnatta: What ... You know, those years that you spend doing all that, what do you think developed in your character? What do you think you got from all that traveling and all those experiences?

Samuel Askew: The cultures. Being able to understand varied cultures and meeting new people and making new friends and the value of letter writing. Back in the day when long distance calls cost \$5 a minute, you had to learn how to write a letter and communicate to people. And all those relationships that you build, those cultures that you get to visit, those are things that a lot of people don't get to experience. And I love that. And I think it's helpful for me now because I'm able to understand different viewpoints and perspectives that some people might not normally be able to if they didn't get that exposure.

Tino Magnatta: You also said to me once that you learned how to make friends really quickly. And that's something that's instrumental in the work that you do, right?

Samuel Askew: Absolutely. And you gotta be able to talk to people at their level, no matter how they are and what positions that they're in. You know, you treat people as people. So I did learn to make friends pretty quickly. You know, You and I hit it off immediately. And I'm typically the guy at the party who walks right up and just introduces himself.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, it is the hospitality business, right? So-

Samuel Askew: Exactly, yeah.

Tino Magnatta: I did a lot of that traveling ... Yeah, it's hard to do that. Now, you also had a certain standard that you had to meet because in effect your entire family was representing your country, right? I mean, talk a little bit about that.

Samuel Askew: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, so my father was an officer. He spent 24 years in the service and I was taught at a very young age that you had to be better and do

better because you're a representation of your father. So I remember getting up at 4, 4:30 in the morning, five o'clock. Making my bed, listening to the PT drill across the base. And basically having my homework inspected and stuff at the end of the day. Then when we moved overseas, that expectation grew because there were very few Americans in the area that we lived in in England and it was always this, "You're an American. You're a representation of your country." And so there was always something to be better.

Now, at the time, I hated it. Now when I look back on it, I learned a lot from it because it's one of those things in my position now, or even my previous positions, I understand that I'm a representation of the company and the tribe and the culture and the people that I work with and for, and who work with me at the ambassador level. So it's that kind of ... You know, you represent who ... It's kind of the walking the walk and talking the talk. But you're the face and figure of a lot of things.

Tino Magnatta: You had to also walk through different strata of society. So you would be dealing with the Army and then you would be dealing with the kids at school. But then you would be dealing with ... There's a lot of different cultures. So you were getting used to dealing with all sorts of different people. Probably more than most kids, right?

Samuel Askew: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, when I was younger and living in England, we'd get on the train and go down to London by ourselves at the age 13. But ... And that was certainly a cultural melting pot of diversity and there regardless of who you were, it was just a cultural mix. I will tell you that probably the biggest shift for me was moving from Hawaii, which is really kind of a Pacific Asian culture to the middle of what is traditionally European-style system. It was great culture shock. You know, they talked differently and their figures of speech were different.

And I remember when I lived there before my parents' divorce talking to my grandparents on the phone. And my grandfather was always keen to find out what I had learned today or who I had talked to. And even in the years subsequent, he was always anxious to find out about what I was learning and from who.

Tino Magnatta: Now, talk a little bit ... You mentioned your grandfather briefly, but let's talk a little bit about him because I know that he had a lot of influence in your life. Tell us a little bit what kind of influence he had on you, and also kind of perseverance.

Samuel Askew: He was ... I'm gonna tear up a little bit ... He was a really strong man. He had spent a long time in the Air Force in the service and then after that he was a civil servant for many years. When my parents divorced and we moved back from England, we moved into their home in Tucson. And my grandfather became the one person that I could look to in terms of a male figure, male guidance. And

not just from the perspective of being a male in society, but the perspective of how to treat others. And then also how to be successful yourself.

You know, I had gone through that period of transition of divorced family the same way most kids do, right? And one of the things that my grandfather instilled in me was a sense of pride in who you are regardless of the circumstance that you come from or what life's handed you. And he always told me walk into the room like you own the place. And at the same time, he also taught me that while you may own the place, you need to be respectful of the people who run the place and who make that success that you have possible. So it's always this balance and this give and take. And we spent Sunday afternoons at my grandparents' house and he would take me up to the nearby high school and we'd shoot games of horse at the basketball court.

And I loved the man dearly. It just ... I can't speak highly enough of him. He taught me all kinds of great things in terms of life and relationships and work ethic and value. And he had two rules in his house in Tucson and one of which was no MTV on his television. He didn't like rock and roll music. And then the other one was keep the water in the pool, because water was expensive. So those were just two of the little things that I remember to this day. And I found myself saying the same things to my kids, too. It's like, "Keep the water in that pool."

Tino Magnatta: Of course. Great expressions. Great stuff, great stories. Hey, what was your first gig in the gaming business? I know you always worked hotels and restaurants, right? And you did that. But what was the first kind of gaming thing that you did?

Samuel Askew: So the first true gaming thing that I was involved with was Willow Creek here in Washington almost 16 years ago now. Little Creek was going to be expanding and adding the first phase of a hotel. It was gonna be the third property in the State of Washington, gaming property that was adding rooms. Previous to that, you know, you'd have Skagit and you had Quinault. And so Little Creek's team, they didn't have a hospitality person. And they took a lot of risks in trust of me to come up and to help them learn the ways of quote unquote "hotels and hospitality". And I learned a lot about gaming through that operation.

Mike Peters, that was the Assistant GM at that time at Little Creek ... And when we go to meetings where we both are at and he's hosting or speaking, he'll stand up and take credit for bringing me to Washington. And I take great pride in the fact that he and our friends at Squaxin Island took a chance on bringing a guy from essentially a Marriott and IHG background to gaming in Washington State.

Tino Magnatta: Talk a little bit about that, because you had some pretty extensive background in hotel, right?

Samuel Askew: Yeah, real extensive background. Everything from select-service properties to luxury properties. Everything from branded to non-branded. I worked for Arete for a while, one company I worked for. I was in three countries and eight states over three years. Same company. They had multiple properties and we moved around. Little Creek was my eighth new opening. So I had a lot of background in opening new hotels. But also a lot of background in renovating hotels. My first-ever renovation was for a property that was in receivership in St. Augustine, Florida. And we bought used furniture. And I remember vividly the furniture coming off the back of a U-Haul and we were pressure washing it and drying it with discard towels before we took it up and hung them in the rooms.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, I can imagine.

Samuel Askew: So some of those experiences actually have been-

Tino Magnatta: You've had a lot of experience. Yep.

Samuel Askew: Yeah. And, you know, the thing is because it's so diverse, when I'm working in a luxury property and someone tells me it costs X number of dollars to do something, I know for a fact that we can do that same type of thing for less money or for a better quality based on those experiences from select-service. So when you look at someone individually and you say, "Hey, they've only got this select-service background, they don't have luxury", you know, that's a value to a luxury brand or vice versa.

Tino Magnatta: Exactly, yeah. And you'd have to have experienced it to understand that. So let's talk a little bit about ... You had all this background in hotels. Now, what did you learn about how a hotel relates to gambling? How did that formulate?

Samuel Askew: So-

Tino Magnatta: What was the journey about that?

Samuel Askew: Well, so at the time, Little Creek was working with Raving, with Dennis and Steve and Toby, that core group back in the day. And I remember vividly. They called me into the GM's office and they were gonna kind of teach me casino 101. I think they were really nervous about the concept of a hotel guy not understanding casino or the number piece, right? So they had this wiper board in here and they asked me how much money we could make if it was a standalone hotel. And I did the math for 'em. I said, "Hey, optimally we're gonna be able to make this, X dollars." And they said, "Okay, what if I told you we want to give away every room for free, but the people who are gonna stay in those rooms were worth Y dollars on the casino floor?" And, you know, mathematically it was a no-brainer.

So for me, that transition of going from the hotel standalone thinking or mentality of it's ADR and occupancy to ... You know, the casino model of it's ...

It's occupancy by the right guest for the right value ... Was a pretty easy transition. I was also exposed to Jim Snead for the first time while working with Raving. So once I understood what they wanted was basically ... They want the hotel to support the gaming activity of the enterprise, that was easy to do. You know, margins on the gaming floor obviously are a lot better than they are in terms of a hotel, and as long as you know the purpose in life for that particular property, you're good to go.

Tino Magnatta: We're having a little bit of static on the phone. Let's see if it gets a little better. Hang on one sec.

Samuel Askew: Sure.

Tino Magnatta: Okay. So you understood that concept and you just ran with it and embraced it. Did you learn something after about how to actually accomplish that? What was it that you learned?

Samuel Askew: So in terms of accomplishing that, I started to learn the concepts of like ADT and gaming value. And today, sharing the knowledge of non-gaming spend value for guests as well so that you can incorporate the whole spend, right? But Jim Snead was pretty instrumental in sitting down with me, like I said, along with our friends from Raving to get me to understand what ADT was and those concepts behind it. So while I was building the hotel and operating the facility, I came to understand that I wasn't in the hotel business, I was in the entertainment business. And that gaming was a component of that entertainment.

Tino Magnatta: Exactly, yeah. That's a completely different spin on the hospitality business that you were doing at your hotel.

Samuel Askew: Exactly.

Tino Magnatta: What did you learn from Jim? What were some of the key things that you learned from Jim?

Samuel Askew: I really honed my P&L skills. Started to understand when you work in specifically the hotel business, in a lot of instances the only time you care about percentages is when it relates to occupancy percentages. When you start looking at P&L statements, again, you're either up or you're down. The things I learned from Jim was to operate a little bit within those gray areas and to understand that, yeah, you can be over budget in marketing, however, that overage equated to a much larger revenue for the gaming departments or for other locations.

And if you were down in revenues or occupancies you start looking at the expenses. And if those expense differentials start to correlate, then ... You've got ... It's one of those things ... Jim used to say, "We've got miles to go before

we sleep." And I've never seen Jim get anxious about anything in my entire life. So that was another he taught me was the sense of calm that I might not normally have had in the past.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah. Jim is like that. I know him, he's a great guy. And you always see him like even keel. And that's a really good quality to have in our business, isn't it?

Samuel Askew: It is, absolutely. And again, I think that's one of the things that helped me years ago was to start getting that even keel. Because the hotel business in general, you know, you react. And the gaming business, you predict and plan.

Tino Magnatta: Right. It's a little different.

Samuel Askew: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: What was the ... Where did you end up after that [crosstalk 00:16:20]-

Samuel Askew: So after Little Creek [crosstalk 00:16:20] I was at Alderbrook for a while. I was repositioning of a property. Believe it or not, you know, as well-known as Alderbrook is now for being a luxury property here in the Pacific Northwest, at one point it was a Crista Ministries hotel. And the property was sold to some very wealthy and famous owners. And I helped to reposition that property. After a change that took place at Little Creek, I ended up at Alderbrook. And Jim Snead hadn't been working specifically for Raving. He was consulting for both them and for Little Creek. And Jim ended up here at Clearwater as the CFO.

And I received a phone call out of the blue one day and Jim said, "Hey, I'm over here now as the CFO. We're getting ready to build a hotel. Is that something you'd be interested in helping us with?" And I said, "Well, I gotta call you right back. I've got some fairly famous people sitting in front of me and I can't talk right now, but I'll give you a call back."

Tino Magnatta: That's hilarious. I love it.

Samuel Askew: Well, and I remember that day [crosstalk 00:17:35] specifically because the-

Tino Magnatta: You do? Right.

Samuel Askew: Board of Directors for ... Yeah, oh, I do. The Board of Directors for Microsoft were standing in the lobby of the hotel at that time. And I was assisting them when he called. So I was like "Okay, well, how do I say [crosstalk 00:17:51]-

Tino Magnatta: Oh shit.

Samuel Askew: You know, yes to him, I want to talk to you about this, but I gotta go because certain people are standing here in front of me that really wouldn't appreciate this conversation?"

Tino Magnatta: No, of course not. Not at all. That's funny. And Jim's great. He's great that way. He runs with it.

Samuel Askew: Yeah, he-

Tino Magnatta: So-

Samuel Askew: He absolutely does.

Tino Magnatta: So you did that. And how did ... What did you learn on that project? 'Cause I know you took the gig and ... What did you learn on that project?

Samuel Askew: For Alderbrook? Look, the thing there is about hospitality. It's always about delivering the experience and the next level of service. And I had the great pleasure and honor, like I said, working for some very important people who had I not had that job, I don't know that I would know luxury resort properties as well as I do now. And those were great experiences. And again, it was one of those things of taking the experiences of being even-keeled to that job because you have to in some instances make miracles happen.

Now, the other thing, too, I've seen some really amazing stuff in my ... In that position. I mean, how many people can say they've seen Bill and Melinda Gates dancing at a concert, you know? That was great stuff. And I'm really proud of those experiences. So ...

Tino Magnatta: That's amazing. Yeah, that's amazing stuff. Okay, so then you ... After that you ended up at Tulalip, right?

Samuel Askew: So I ended up here at Clearwater right after Alderbrook as the Hotel Director, originally opening up the resort property here. And I was here [crosstalk 00:19:38]-

Tino Magnatta: Oh yeah, you did Clearwater-

Samuel Askew: For about six years as the Hotel Director. Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: How ... What did you learn during that stint?

Samuel Askew: So this was my ninth new opening. I got a much better understanding of the Tribal enterprises and Tribal politics. Again, I was very fortunate that coming here I had received a welcome that I wouldn't have received in the corporate world, you know? The hands were raised and hugs abounded. And even when you made mistakes, they kind of rolled with it. I remember the day we cut the ribbon here for the resort originally. I stood out front and I thanked everyone for coming and I thank Squaxin Island Tribe for building the resort. And Leonard Forsman, the Chairman of the Tribe steps up, puts his hand on my shoulder and

he goes, "He means the Suquamish Tribe." And so even a faux pas out of nerves saying the wrong tribe-

Tino Magnatta: That's [crosstalk 00:20:43]-

Samuel Askew: Worked out. And so-

Tino Magnatta: Oh, that's great.

Samuel Askew: The greatest thing that I learned here honestly is that I love working for Tribal entities and I love working for tribes in Indian countries. It's really like just a big family. But you see a much more immediate impact on the lives of the people that you support in the position that you're at. When I worked for Marriott or IHG, I knew I was doing well because I got a year-end bonus or because the stock prices went up a few cents, right? When you are doing well and performing at an optimal level and doing what you're supposed to be doing in jobs when you work for Tribal entities, you know, there's a new police car or they're able to add a policeman to the police force. There's a new playground. There's a new Boys & Girls Club. There's a new museum and cultural center. There's a new youth center. There's a new youth program. All those things ... You just ... There's no supplementing that whatsoever. Unless you've worked in the environment, it's hard to describe the sense of pride and accomplishment that you get from seeing those things ... The people who get to benefit from it. And team members, too, right? Being able-

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, of course.

Samuel Askew: To develop ... I'm extremely proud to say that one of the Board of Directors ... A member of the Board of Directors here for Port Madison Enterprises was formerly a PME team member. And I in my time here previously-

Tino Magnatta: Wow.

Samuel Askew: Got to coach her as a ... Through her IDP. And I remember the day that she told me she wanted to get her degree and I said, "Okay. So how do we go about doing that?" And even when I was gone at another property with another organization, I follow along and had a sense of pride the day that she graduated. And to know now that she's leading me because of the efforts that I made so many years ago, it's astounding. It's great stuff. It humbles you.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, it's social change.

Samuel Askew: Yeah, absolutely.

Tino Magnatta: You're enacting ... You're stimulating and enacting social change. So that's a big deal. And a lot of people that work in the industry, they say that on our show and it gives them a lot of pride to give back and be able to see that the money

that they're making is transforming communities from living with dirt floors, no running water, you know, poverty, to infrastructure and medical services and peace forces. It's an amazing thing to see that evolution, isn't it?

Samuel Askew: Oh, it's tremendous. I mean, even with Tulalip, when I went to work for them ... You know, anybody who goes to work for them understands you're working for generations to come, right? You're providing for generations to come. And when you think that back in the 1980's, the unemployment rate for the Tulalip Reservation was near 75%. And today it's less than 5%. You know, that's come about because of that social change because of that work that we do every day to provide jobs for Tribal members, to provide money for systems for assistance and everything else. Yeah, I don't know that I could go back to work in the corporate world. I really don't because this just means too much for me.

Tino Magnatta: It's a big deal, it's a big deal. Talk a little bit about Tulalip.

Samuel Askew: Sure. So-

Tino Magnatta: You did a lot there.

Samuel Askew: I spent ... I did. I spent about six years here as the Hotel Director and then I was fortunate enough to be hired on as the General Manager at Tulalip originally overseeing specifically hotel operations. And when I got there you could see that there was a shift in thinking in terms of how they wanted to operate the hotel. They wanted to go from what would typically be quote unquote a "standalone model", where the hotels gauge the success based on its own occupancy and whether or not it brings in meetings and conventions specifically for the hotel, et cetera, to one being more of a true casino resort experience. Where resort was an adjective to the word casino.

And so we kind of started some fundamental shifts and changes in the minds of the team members and the understanding that we're here to support the gaming operation, which is here to support the Tribes themselves. And I think we were pretty successful at it. And so my role grew beyond just the hotel piece to assisting with food and beverage and marketing and ultimately internal projects. So I oversaw the conversion of several F&B venues, the creation of a couple of new F&B venues. And just kind of the all-around go-to ... And I loved it.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, it's a really great place. And you did a really great job. And it's such a great Tribe. And we worked with them for years, too. What kind of skills does it take to do what you do? And, you know, a lot of people who are listening are gonna know ... And what does it take to develop those skills? How do you go from doing something that's a small thing to running a whole enterprise the way that you have?

Samuel Askew: So I've ... Again, I've been very fortunate that in terms of my progression of my career, there really truly hasn't been a job in hospitality that I haven't done. I started off as a ... My first real job was as a dishwasher at a retirement home. And the job before that was a paperboy who delivered papers to that retirement home. So, you know, I've literally had the opportunity to do it all. And then in the process to take on expanded roles by learning new skills. So some of those ... I mean, really the most basic skill set that you need in order to achieve some of the success or to get those directions that you go to is kind of a drive to want to do your best today and be better tomorrow. And that includes everything from not just like literally doing the job, but learning about new things and new skills. I mean, you kind of have to be a sponge to a degree, right? So that's like at it's most base level.

When you've got team members who are interested in learning new skills, more often than not managers will say, "Well, that skill doesn't apply to the position that you're in." And you as a leader need to be able to look past that thing, because I will tell you that I got my skill sets because there were leaders that supported me and said, "You're right, Sam. That job doesn't apply to you right now, but I know that it's something that you want to do in the future or to learn about." And so I got supported.

The other piece, too, unfortunately I think a lot of people of our ilk and this particular generation right now, we learned to be good leaders because we saw leaders before us who weren't very good. And rather than learning a skill set, we learned what not to do, right? So ... And I know that we've all worked for good bosses and bad bosses, right? And I think that in some instances I've looked at people and said, "Okay, I don't want to be that type of person." Or, "I don't want to be that type of leader." Or, "I'm not gonna do that type of thing when I get the opportunity." Right?

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, good point.

Samuel Askew: Sometimes you do. You don't understand it until you get into that position. You say, "Oh, that's why they did this." Right? But those are things that ... That striving for knowledge, I mean, it never ends. I got six books that I'm reading right on my nightstand right now. I've got two here in the office. And so I'm just a sponge when it comes to that stuff. And then the other thing, too, is keep abreast of industry stuff, you know? Even if it's just a cool thing. You know, like, "Wow, that's cool." Guess what? 20 years later, it's the standard now. I mean, like RFID locks on doors, you know? Back in the day we had hard keys, right? Or even plastic keys. I remember when the first plastic keys came out from Ving.

Tino Magnatta: Ving is great. Let's take some calls. We've got a lot of people here that want to ask you questions. Hang on a second.

Samuel Askew: Sure.

Tino Magnatta: Hello, this is Tino of GT Radio. Do you have a question for Sam?

Luigi: Hi Tino, this is Luigi. How are you?

Tino Magnatta: Luigi, how are you?

Luigi: Very good, thank you. Happy Thanksgiving, everybody/

Tino Magnatta: Good. Thank you.

Samuel Askew: You as well.

Luigi: And thank you. Hello, Sam. Your very interesting, diverse career background, and I'm finding it very interesting. And your positive attitude I really appreciate as well. Your leadership style, leading by example I think is like the best way to think and manage people. And you've got ... It seems like you've got that down, so that's really great for your team. And speaking of your team, I work with Kristin Roy and Barry Sharpe. Both of them, they're both a pleasure to work with, by the way. I love them.

Samuel Askew: Thank you so much. I appreciate that. I'll pass the comments along. That's great.

Luigi: Okay, you're welcome. Yeah, keep them happy. Keep them there.

Samuel Askew: Well, I intend to.

Luigi: Okay. And my question is, you know, I read a quote that you said there's about 37% of gaming revenue today in your property. And first of all, is that accurate?

Samuel Askew: Well, and so specifically at our property, it's probably a little bit larger. I mean, we're looking to always diversify. And I think that's the thing that most companies are ... Need to be aware of is the diversification of revenue streams, right?

Luigi: True.

Samuel Askew: Don't put all of your eggs in one basket.

Luigi: Okay. And let's say it's 37 to 40. It's under 50, is the point I think we're making. And in Las Vegas, we have the same situation, and that's typical of like a huge destination area where we are. So my question is, how do you ... Do you think that the numbers of gaming revenue will eventually shift back to like a majority of the percentage eventually? Or do you think it's going to stay at like in the 30's or 40's? Or go down to the 20's? And then we have to remember the Millennials, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z are not very interested in going to brick and mortar gaming facilities today. So where do you see ... You have a diverse background and a diverse experience with many different types of people and

different businesses. I was wondering what you and the Tribe think about the future of gaming and average daily profit instead of maybe ADT coming at ... Coming forward in the future.

Samuel Askew: So we haven't got to that point yet with looking at average daily profit. I would ... My personal belief is that we're gonna remain what I would consider balanced. I think that, yeah, I would anticipate almost a 50-50 mix. And while Millennials ... And I'm a parent of a few Millennials ... Right now are less inclined to go to bricks and mortar stores, I think that when you look back at let's say our current demographic of that 55 to 65 male and/or female. What were they doing when they were the Millennial age? Right? I think that Millennials at some really Again, they're gonna kind of mature and there's gonna be this sense of, "Yeah, I do want to go to a place."

And it may not be specifically for gaming, but we see Millennials ... They're very much group-oriented. They want to have their friends with them. They go out and do things together, whether it's gonna be going to a concert, going to dinner, having just a cocktail, or going to gaming. I still think there's going to be a need. So what I see, again, is kind of like that balance of diversification. I think what properties of our size need to think about is, what can be gleaned from what we would call the mega resorts? Right? In Vegas.

I travel to Vegas on a somewhat regular basis. And we look at things and I may not be able to bring back ... I'll use The Still as an example, a new venue or newer venue at Mirage, right? I may not have the space or the floor capacity to come back and build a venue around a bar with an Airstream trailer for a kitchen, but there are certain aspects of that venue that we could bring back, you know? That might be casual seating that's both functional as a lounge but also functional in terms of seating for a dinner, right? Those cluster of group seating versus individual two's or four tops. You are starting to see more communal tables and so forth.

So those are the things that I think are gonna continue to drive our industry are those communal activities or that communal entertainment. Everybody wants experiential experiences these days. It's all about experiential travel. And I think the same thing is gonna be scaled to casinos.

Luigi: Okay. Well, so as a followup question, do you think that the Gen X and Gen Y and Gen Z eventually will just morph into like the typical 45, 55, or 60-year-olds eventually? And that's ... It'll just keep rolling that way is basically what you're ... 'Cause of those companies like Interblock and Gamblit that have designed games that are completely unique and different from anything that we typically see in the casino floor, and they're not terribly successful, but yet those are the kind of games that Millennials want to play.

Samuel Askew: Exactly. And so I think what we're gonna see is this shift to a new norm. I don't think it's gonna take place over 10 years. I think it'll be a 10 to ... You know, 15 to 25, yeah, type of experience. I think you're gonna ... Interblock is a perfect

example, right? So with their electronic table games and this kind of more stadium-style communal piece, I think you're gonna start seeing more open spaces and more community-type gaming than you do just like rows of slot machines, right? So I think that that will be the shift. But I still think that people will be coming to the casino to have that escape, right? I mean, right now the typical gaming guest is using a visit for entertainment or escapism.

And, you know, the most successful properties of any scale are those places where the team members are friendly and they know your name and so forth, right? That's not gonna change in the future. It's just that you're gonna be there with four or five people who are your friends who already know your name versus going to the casino individually yourself and relying upon team members to be quote unquote "your friends". Now, you're going with your friends and you're just expanding your circle.

Luigi: That makes sense, instead of going into the casino with a group of friends and everybody disperses, now they can play something together.

Samuel Askew: Correct, yeah. And we're already starting to see that. When we have entertainment that skews more toward a Millennial demographic or a Gen X demographic, we're seeing more groups of people who will pick banks together or they'll pick a table together. So, you know, you see that kind of ... I can't say it's ... Herd mentality is probably a really base version of it, but you already see that kind of ... That experiential thing where it's like, "Hey, we're gonna all experience this together." And it's not just in gaming that you see that. If you look outside the gaming industry to the travel world, you're starting to see more couples and/or families traveling together than you might have had in the past.

Luigi: Yeah. Okay, that makes sense. It makes sense. Very good. Well, thank you very much [crosstalk 00:38:20]-

Samuel Askew: Thank you. I appreciate the [crosstalk 00:38:21] call. Yeah. Thank you.

Luigi: You're welcome.

Tino Magnatta: Thank you, Luigi. We appreciate it. Good lessons. Have a great night.

Luigi: Thanks. You too. Goodnight.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, good questions. Great answers, too, there, Sam.

Samuel Askew: Thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Let's see. Hello, this is Tino Magnatta, GT Radio. Do you have a question for Sam?

Vince: Hi, can you hear me okay?

Samuel Askew: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, we can hear you perfectly.

Vince: I've really enjoyed listening to this conversation from the Robert Frost quotes to the early days as a dishwasher. A lot of it is very familiar, I have to tell you. And I like the way that you approach ... You know, the way that you mention the guest service as a critical component. I've been around both commercial and Native American casinos. And obviously, there's similarities and differences.

Regarding the younger generation, you know, I had an eye-opening experience just about a couple of weeks ago. I'm working on a job in Las Vegas right now and I haven't been to the Cosmo in a long time. And actually, almost a decade. And I was very pleasantly surprised to see a significant younger demographic that was playing there, that was eating there, that was enjoying themselves there.

Tino Magnatta: Absolutely.

Vince: I know it's the opposite of your situation, you know, because I think what Vegas is doing is adjusting because the gaming experiences available around the ... In their backyard. But it's the extraordinary sorts of service, dining, and entertainment experiences I think that are in the case of Cosmo I think that's what's attracting that younger guest. In terms of having ... I don't know how to frame up a question here, but you know, I've done a lot of thinking about more interactive and more communal gaming. And I know that's a component. But it seems to me is that the opportunity to get a greater share of that market is not necessarily through traditional slot machines, but through a blended experience that incorporates entertainment and gaming. And I'm just wondering how you feel about that sort of circumstance.

Samuel Askew: No, I think it's absolutely true. And I'm glad you use Cosmo as an example, because I will tell you, you know, I'm in Vegas probably three or four times a year, both for work and personal. And the Cosmo at one point was probably my least favorite property in Vegas. And now, truthfully, it's one of my most favorite properties. I think that the new leadership team there over the past few years has done a tremendous job of really taking the turn and moving things forward. And I believe it is because of that blended experience. When you look at the changes that have taken place there ... First of all, the place is much cleaner than it ever was in the past. I mean, it's immaculately clean. The other thing, too, is that there ... They've kind of stepped outside of the box of what was ... What you consider traditional thinking in terms of entertainment.

And, you know, they start bringing in people like Bruno Mars, right? And so clearly they're sending a signal, "Hey, you're our kind of guests." But it is about that blended experience, because when you look at the food and beverage venues that they've brought in, they've brought in really unique kind of cool

ideas, like Momofuku and Milk Bar. Even Holstein's at that time was pretty new and edgy. And if you haven't been to it in the past few months, they've recently opened a food hall that, again, is tremendous. And it's got Puck Puck Chicken and these things that would normally be kind of a food truck concept. And they brought it all together in one really unique venue.

So when you say this blended experience, it really is. And that's why I believe that revenue mixes going into the future really are gonna be about a 50-50, because those experiences that you offer in terms of food and beverage or entertainment or even hotel stays, those experiences people might be looking for very specifically because of who they are. And again, that's why you see the trend of specialized hotels within a hotel, right? I mean, think NoMad at Park MGM. It would be [crosstalk 00:43:11]-

Vince: Delano and-

Samuel Askew: Yeah, exactly. Those would be perfect examples. Delano had its name from Ian Schrager and the original property in Miami, which was a great, phenomenal hotel and one of my favorite properties in all the world when it first opened.

Vince: I agree.

Samuel Askew: So those ... Yeah, right? It is ... So those-

Tino Magnatta: I've heard that, that's for sure.

Samuel Askew: Right. Those experiences bring new people to your property. And while they're there, they may or may not gamble. But the propensity to game is gonna be greater 'cause they're there than not, right? And the same thing-

Vince: Sure.

Samuel Askew: People who are coming there because it does have a machine that they want to play are ... Or has a sports book that they want to bet at. They start to see these other things and go, "Oh, I'm here, I'm gonna have lunch." So ... And again, it's about taking those ideas and the scalability. They're successful in Vegas, and not because it's just Vegas. I mean, you think about who goes to Vegas. They have millions of visitors a year, and the vast majority of the people who are going to these venues ... Whether they're again, hotel, food and beverage or entertainment ... Are from out of town. And they're going there because they can't get that experience at home.

Now, for us, my goal is to take a little piece of Vegas and bring it back here and say, "Okay, if I can get you to go to Vegas one less day or one less time a year because you can get that same experience here, then you're being successful." But it is going to be about blended experiences because generationally, all you

have to do is look at your workforce, right? We've got four to six generations of team members. That's a representation of society as we move forward.

Vince:

Yeah. They're all on the floor at the same time. That's fascinating. I think ... The specific thing that bugs me, I look in the mirror and I realize I'm an old-timer now. And I moved to Las Vegas in 1980. And back in those days, one of the things that you couldn't help but notice when you would walk into any of the major properties was that there was live entertainment. That there was a lounge. That there was activity. And we don't see that anymore.

And I know that from a financial perspective if you pencil it, it's difficult to show profit in any specific component, especially something like lounge entertainment. But I find that where I still see it, and those examples are far and few between, I see a livelier energy on the floor. I think there's an intrinsic value. And I'm just wondering if you have any thoughts on that, or what you guys do at your property relative to live entertainment on the floor?

Samuel Askew:

So we don't do live entertainment on the floor, except for maybe special occasions. Say like, New Year's and so forth. I think that you're right to a degree, but when you also look at venues like Cosmopolitan and you realize they don't have live entertainment on the floor, they have what I consider a programmatic experience, right? You ... The places that have vibe, that feel, that excitement either have, again, the live entertainment on the floor ... And I will tell you that Paula I think is one of the properties that does it really well because of their center bar. They've got a band and it's seen from just about every place and every angle. But if you're able to have what I would consider basically piped in music and you schedule it to the tone and tenor of what your experience, then you're there.

And the Delano that we talked about earlier is a perfect example. If you went to the Delano in Miami, South Beach in the afternoon say at three o'clock, it was very chic and open and airy and it had that just kind of cool jazz feel to it. And what ... They didn't have a band, but it was based on the music programming they were doing at that time. It was based on the lights and, you know, what they were set to, how bright or how light. When you go in the evening, if you got there around ten o'clock at night, it was like walking into a modern version of Studio 54. It was the music, it was ever so much louder. It was a different type of music, right? They had some of the-

Vince:

For the pool.

Samuel Askew:

Some of the sheers pulled back for those things, right? All those types of those things, I think you can layer in at a much better, more affordable cost. But it's just about consistency, too. Because some places, you go to the property and you pull up and you go, "Oh, it's nice. They've got music out here in the porte-cochere, they're setting the tone before you enter the property." Right? Well, you go back a second time, maybe it's a week later or two months later, and this time you don't notice the music in the porte-cochere. Or when you walk into the

lobby, it's not ... There's no music or it wasn't the same as it was before. I think that you ... You know, we have entertainment managers and most of have entertainment managers. Those are the types of things when they're not worried about booking a live show or taking care of a live show need to be thinking about.

Because the entertainment experience coming into the property is just as important through a digital music source as it is anywhere else. Same thing when you walk into a hotel room, you know, do you walk into a room that's got The Weather Channel on it? Or do you walk into a room that's got digital music playing smooth jazz? Or do you walk into a room that's got piped in music that's more uptempo and contemporary?

Vince: Right, right. You know, Wynn does a real good job. When you enter the room you get sort of a Rat Pack sort of musical experience from Sinatra and some of the more jazzy-

Samuel Askew: Exactly.

Vince: Artists from that era. And it really does ... It sort of sets the mood. And I think that kind of detail, whether it's live or whether it's using digital programming, I think is a huge component. But anyway, I really enjoyed listening to you and I wish you continued success, sir.

Samuel Askew: Thank you. I appreciate the call. Thank you so much.

Tino Magnatta: Thank you so much. Have a great night, Vince.

Samuel Askew: Alright, take care. Bye-bye.

Vince: Thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Excellent. Great questions. Hello, this is Tino Magnatta. We have Sam. Do you have a question for him?

Heather Lee: Hi Tino, hi Sam. This is Heather Lee with Atrient. How are you?

Samuel Askew: Good. How are you?

Tino Magnatta: Hey, Heather. How are you?

Heather Lee: Good, good. Thank you. So my question was, all of your contributions you talk about to the travel community that you're proud of to watching Bill and Melinda Gates dance ... Of all these moments that you've experienced, is there one that you're particularly proud of that you'd like to share?

Samuel Askew: Yeah. Truthfully, it's the work that I did with the Boys & Girls Club at Tulalip. I wouldn't say one very specific moment, but the culmination of those. You know, this year when I left Tulalip ... I left in early March and started my new position here as the CEO and I was ... Still Chaired the Boys & Girls Club Auction Group. And we were still able to make almost \$500,000 at that auction this year. And so that was really ... You know, I'm quite proud of that. When it comes to moments of pride, they're more ... They're smaller in a scale than you would think. A perfect example is Canoe Journey. Being able to ... When Canoe Journey takes place and letting certain Suquamish to go down and to help carry the canoes from the beach up to the House of Awakened Culture. It's [crosstalk 00:50:42] those little things-

Tino Magnatta: Well, Sam, you gotta describe also, you know, when all the Tribes get together they do the canoes and then they get together-

Samuel Askew: Oh, yeah.

Tino Magnatta: And then they do the journey, right? Describe a little bit about that 'cause that's amazing.

Samuel Askew: Yeah. So Canoe Journey takes place throughout ... You know, you've got 29 Tribes within Washington, but they have participation from Canadians, First Nations Tribes all the way to the Maori from New Zealand. And annually they get together and they do what would be considered Canoe Journey. And they start off at their respective Tribal locations and they paddle via canoe to one specific coast location and stopping along the way at different locations. And so when you look out across the water and you see 30 to 40 canoes ... Because in some instances Tribal communities will have a canoe for youth as well as traditional pullers ... It's just a beautiful thing to see the culture revived.

And so for me, those special moments, those great moments, the moments that I look back upon are those moments where I was able to actually live in the moment and not think back to, "Oh, this is a big deal." Whether it's restoring a totem pole that was given to the Tribe and having it inaugurated to the ribbon cutting, even to opening properties, it's not the day of opening stuff that's exciting for me. You know, my son, he's 15 now. He asked me this year if we were gonna come back and if I was barbecuing for the team again on Christmas. 'Cause he wants to come for that.

And so when I was first here originally at Clearwater as the Hotel Director on Christmas Day, I spent Christmas morning opening presents with my family. But I brought my wife and kids with me and we celebrated lunch together with the team here, because they're my second family. And I would barbecue lobster tail and steaks for Christmas lunch. At the time I was blessed because I had a smaller staff that I could do it for. It's hard to do for 900 people at one shot now. But those are the moments that I relish, is to be able to sit down and celebrate the holiday with them.

Even the other day, Thanksgiving-

Heather Lee: Wow.

Samuel Askew: Lunch in the EDR, you know? Crazy moments? Yeah, there have been quite a few. But those ... For me, those are the ones that stand out. Now, I will tell you watching Bill and Melinda Gates dance at the Christopher Cross concert was pretty cool. I thought to myself, "Yeah, I did it." We ... And that was, you know-

Tino Magnatta: That's great.

Samuel Askew: Quick story. It was at Alderbrook we had ... I had booked what was gonna be the Christopher Cross weekend over Labor Day. And everybody who came to the event got to go to an exclusive Christopher Cross concert. And, you know, Bill and Melinda and their family came over from their vacation home and celebrated the concert with everybody. And I ... It was just like any other person would. And when you see someone having as much fun and excitement and is able to just kind of cut loose, then yeah. That's kind of a cool experience.

I ... The best part about that whole weekend ... And I'm not above what I consider guerilla marketing. Before the show, there was a young man who was learning to sail a boat out in front of the concert area. And I went out there and I gave him \$10 and I said, "I'd like you to come back this afternoon at five o'clock and this song that's called Sailing. And when you hear it, I want you to throw open the sail and just sail around behind the stage."

And sure enough, five o'clock, he's out there just hanging around. And Christopher Cross comes on with Sailing, the first few notes, you see the sail go up on this boat. And 300 people all at the same time all just went, "Oh!" And, you know, Christopher Cross looked over his shoulder to see what everybody was like ... And it was just like the perfect moment. So when you can create some of those things, it's pretty awesome.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah. That's cool.

Heather Lee: That is really [crosstalk 00:54:51] cool [crosstalk 00:54:51]-

Samuel Askew: Experiences, right?

Heather Lee: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah.

Heather Lee: Thank you so much for sharing.

Tino Magnatta: Priceless.

Samuel Askew: Thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Thanks, Heather. Appreciate the call.

Heather Lee: Thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Have a great night. That's a great story. You never told me that one.

Samuel Askew: I ... It was [crosstalk 00:55:06]-

Tino Magnatta: I love that.

Samuel Askew: This is those ones that you keep in your head, you know?

Tino Magnatta: There's so many of them.

Samuel Askew: You just look back [crosstalk 00:55:10]-

Tino Magnatta: There's so many of them.

Samuel Askew: Yeah, I ... Someday I'd love to write a book. But, you know, it's one of those ... And get the time. And sometimes I wonder, "Do people really care about what I have to say about something that took place eight years ago on a Tuesday?"

Tino Magnatta: Well, yeah. And it's also you gotta do it in your spare time. And what spare time is it? Let's try that number again and see if they can hear us now. Hang on.

Jessica: Hello, can-

Tino Magnatta: How was it-

Jessica: Hello, can-

Tino Magnatta: Hello.

Jessica: Can you hear me?

Tino Magnatta: How are you?

Jessica: Can you hear me? Hi.

Tino Magnatta: Yes, we can.

Jessica: I'm great [crosstalk 00:55:34]. Hi, this is Jessica.

Tino Magnatta: Who is this?

Jessica: This is Jessica.

Tino Magnatta: Oh, Jessica. How are ya?

Jessica: Good. How are you? I've been enjoying your show [crosstalk 00:55:42], and ... Hi.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, perfect.

Jessica: So what an awesome experience to share with the gaming industry. I definitely thought it was interesting to hear about, you know, your past with grandfather and you being able to bring the family atmosphere to all the venues that you've been able to have the pleasure of working with. One of the things I wondered for all the people listening was, what you could share that was a common denominator that people can do on their properties to help with the experience? Whether it's a certain service or a certain mindset, what do think could be shared with the audience that ... From your experience?

Samuel Askew: So a good question. Look, I can give you any number of things. And many people have heard me say this before. You know, working in the select-service hotel, there is no reason why a Red Roof Inn can't be just as clean and give just as great a service as a Four Season. There's no reason whatsoever. It's just about the difference in amenities that you provide, right? And so when you think about these things, the piece of advice I would give to everyone is it really is about service, right? I mean, we've all heard Kemmons Wilson saying, "Location, location, location."

And people, you know, they choose casino or gaming destinations based on proximity and how easy it is to get to them. And that, you know, there is a certain degree of truth in that. But when you start providing excellent service, when you start providing friendly atmosphere and people remembering your name and the entertainment that you want to hear and not because the GM wants that band, those are the things that people start to remember, you know? The ... The [crosstalk 00:57:37]-

Jessica: And if that doesn't [crosstalk 00:57:37] ... And then that kind of goes ... Does that go across the board with everybody? Including the Gen X, Y, and Z?

Samuel Askew: Oh, absolutely. I mean, even more so for Gen X, Y, and Z. Because what happens now with the Millennial generation is, you know, if they don't like something, they're on social media instantly. Back in the day-

Jessica: Absolutely.

Samuel Askew: You know, you had the opportunity to tell 10 people about a bad experience. Today, if you're an influencer, you have the ability to tell 10,000 people about it, right? And so that's why it's even more important to provide that outstanding

service, you know? When ... Look, we're all human, right? None of us can achieve perfection. But you can and you should achieve excellence. And so those are the things that I instill in my team members and at all levels across the board. You know, my wife Sally, she has had either the pleasure or displeasure of working for me at a couple of my locations. And there've been a couple of times where I've coached her like live on the floor. I walked up to her and said, "Okay, Mrs. Askew, I'm saying this in my role as the General Manager, not in my role as a husband. Do you understand?" And she'll be like, "Yes." And I said, "Well, when we're giving directions to a guest, we don't point. We use an open hand if we're unable to take them-

Jessica: Exactly.

Samuel Askew: "To the location. Open hand high for far distance and open hand low for a near distance." And I actually heard my wife tell that to my son a couple of weeks ago when he wanted ... He was pointing something out for somebody at the mall and she was like, "No, no no. We don't use our fingers. We use an open hand." So it's about culture.

Jessica: Well, I think ... And I agree with you about the culture. I think there are a lot of people who study the psychology of it and they study the TNLs and they study all these different things. But at the end of the day, it's the attention that you're getting from your guests and the experience you're giving them within that eight seconds or eight to 10 seconds that you have and their first impressions. So bravo to you. And, you know, thank you for having this program.

Samuel Askew: Well, I appreciate the call. Thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Great. Thank you for calling in. Appreciate it. Thank you. Have a great evening.

Jessica: Alright. Goodnight. You too. Goodnight.

Samuel Askew: Thank you. Goodnight.

Tino Magnatta: Sam, that was fantastic. Really enjoyed it. Great questions. Great insight. You're definitely an amazing person. I'm proud to have you as a friend. You and I have worked together for quite a few years. You know, we're gonna have you back on the show next year. And I'm just really excited about having done this with you tonight.

Samuel Askew: I appreciate that. Thank you. If I may, can I end with a quote?

Tino Magnatta: Sure. Absolutely.

Samuel Askew: So this one I keep above my desk. Actually I have several above my desk. But one of the things that, you know, I gravitate to on a regular basis is one by John Wesley. And that quote is, "Do all the good you can by all means you can in all

ways you can and in all the places you can at all the times you can to all the people you can as long as you ever can." And-

Tino Magnatta: I love that one.

Samuel Askew: So for me, that's a good one.

Tino Magnatta: That's great. Well, you're definitely [crosstalk 01:00:52]-

Samuel Askew: I appreciate that.

Tino Magnatta: Like that. There's no question about it.

Samuel Askew: Thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Great. You have a great evening. And we'll talk soon.

Samuel Askew: I appreciate that. I look forward to being back on the show. And thank you for having me.

Tino Magnatta: You got it, buddy. Talk to you soon.

Samuel Askew: Yep. Goodnight.

Tino Magnatta: Bye-bye. Bye-bye.

Alright, that was fantastic. And Sam's got a lot of experiences in many different aspects of life and in the hospitality business. And it's a pleasure having him on the show. December 5th I got a special show for everybody. I got Conrad Granito, who's been on the show. He was the first guest on the show, and he's been on the show three times. Well, twice, this will be his third. But I have him teamed up with Kara Fox-LaRose, who's the GM at Ilani and President and Mohegan Tribe. She's an amazing woman. Really looking forward to having both on the show 'cause they're good friends. And, you know, it's gonna be fantastic. So don't forget to tune in.

And remember, everybody's got a story to tell. You just have to have time to listen to it. You guys, God bless and have a good night. Bye-bye.

END