Todd Gailor: 0:04

The kids and the parents are playing miniature golf, so there's this incredible family dynamic of unplugged. I think that's a beautiful thing, that the ability to turn your phone off, get away from something and go have some family time is what this place, I guess, is about. It's, I think, for me and my kids, whether we do something outside of here. We're here a lot, but the ability to put our phones down and go do something fun is, I think, a big part of our success.

Brian Sheehan: 0:34

Welcome to Retail Intel, the podcast dedicated to shining a spotlight on the most innovative and rapidly growing brands in the retail sector. I'm your host, brian Sheehan, and I'm thrilled to guide you through the dynamic world of commercial real estate, where we explore the latest trends, groundbreaking concepts and the stories behind today's most successful retail businesses. Today, I'm excited to welcome , co-founder of the Acres, a golf-focused entertainment concept based in Cincinnati, ohio. The Acres is redefining how people experience golf, not just through play but through a full-service food and beverage program, and it makes it a destination for both golfers and non-golfers alike. Todd's vision blends sport, hospitality and community in a way that's innovative and inviting. I'm looking forward to learning more about his journey and the story behind the Acres. Todd, thanks for joining us on the podcast. I'd love to start with your background. What led you to launch the Acres? What was your professional background kind of prior to founding this really interesting business?

Todd Gailor: 1:49

Sure, my background you know. I grew up here in Cincinnati, finished high school, really, here in Cincinnati, but I'm a Midwesterner at heart Went away to college, moved back here after college and sort of teetered around in the corporate world, both for profit and not for profit. I kind of took teetered around in the corporate world, both for-profit and not-for-profit. I kind of took a cup of coffee in the not-for-profit world Cincinnati Nature Center and the Cincinnati Art Museum and somehow, lo and behold, ended up in the equipment financing industry for commercial banks and worked for a number of local commercial banks, kind of in that commercial banking industry. So I was Provident Bank, natcity, pnc, which was really all kind of the same job, ended up at a Missouri-based bank that had a loan production office here in Cincinnati called Commerce Bank, which is kind of an old old world, family run but publicly traded bank, did that for nine or 10 years.

Todd Gailor: 2:48

Come 2017, I joined the truck and trailer financing business at Wells Fargo, which ultimately led us into COVID and I think, as with maybe a lot of people, covid certainly had people reflecting on life, jobs, family, all sorts of things, because you had more time to think and I think at that point you know I was 15, 20 years into a commercial banking career, didn't love. It Felt like here I am, I'm 47 years old. Is this really what I'm going to do for the next 15 or 20 years until I retire? And it just kind of woke me up to what else can I do with my life? I think I'm a well-rounded individual. I like sales, I like people, I like golf. How do I marry those things into a career?

Todd Gailor: 3:47

I took a lunch break while working for Wells Fargo. I was working from home. So it was just this. You know, we weren't really traveling to go see clients, we were. I mean, I was going from my bedroom to my office in my house and sort of just had all these ideas what else can I do? And I was like I'm going to go, hit a bucket of balls and drove down to the old Edders Custom Golf Center on Redding Road in the village of Evendale, which is really an iconic place in and of itself. It's been around since 1951.

Todd Gailor: 4:22

But on that drive was sort of this epiphany moment of maybe I should see if he's willing to sell this old driving range. And I went down here and sort of I don't know why I was nervous, but I had this like nervousness of walking into the pro shop here at Edders and to ask him. Him like hey, would you, are you willing to sell this place or are you, are you willing to talk about? And it was like just the right time, right place, right time for him. He didn't really want to talk about it at the moment, and so he he said let's go get breakfast next week. And so we went to get breakfast and that sort of started the ball rolling to an acquisition. And it was, he said at that time when we went out to breakfast, he's like, here's the deal. I'm under contract with a development company in Cincinnati to sell it.

Todd Gailor: 5:13

And that meant selling it, tearing the place down, and one of the local developers who I don't know exactly who it was, but build the suit development, they were doing all sorts of things, but he said it. It was like it was falling through. It was during COVID. He was on some sort of an evergreen every 90 days. It's like, hey, if we don't close, we're going to give you a little bit of money. So that was September of 2020.

Todd Gailor: 5:41

And in December of 2020, he called me. We had had all these ongoing conversations because I was kind of hot to trot to get a deal. And he, in December 2020, he said hey, listen, I'm pulling the plug on this development deal because it just is taking too long and he's 68 years old, he wants a check and he wants to retire. He didn't want to have to wait, keep waiting and waiting. And so he said I'm willing to sell it to you. Here's my price. And so at that moment, december of 2020, it just sort of like exploded my brain of like, oh my gosh, this is a potential real deal and like a life changing moment for me. How can I get this deal done?

Todd Gailor: 6:23

And so I called as many people as I could who either knew about this place, knew about small business, knew about starting a business I mean, I have a note, still have the notes app on my phone, just my old iPhone notes app and I wrote down every person that I called, what they talked about the advice yes, this is a great idea. No, I think you're crazy. And I took all of that in. But I really believed in the concept and I started writing a business plan about what this place could be. And I knew kind of marrying golf and this place had a mini golf course course, so it had too many golf courses that were largely in disrepair, largely unutilized, but it had a loyal client base of golfers who would just come down here to hit golf balls. And I just fully believed in kind of marrying the old school driving range concept, the mini golf, and then really borrowing, I think, from ideas that are successful. Right, a lot of ideas, a lot of music is really just borrowed rhythms and melodies of other places that are successful.

Todd Gailor: 7:38

And so I say the success of Topgolf, the success of kind of these open brewery concepts, which I admire. I admire 50 West and I referenced 50 West in my business plan. I admire the Slatterys and Bob Slatterys. He's an entrepreneur, he's a hardcore entrepreneur, he works very hard and they've created a concept that people subscribe to Madtree Brewing, certainly similar. I'm not a Topgolf guy, I don't think golf purists are top golf people, but top golf, you can't argue with the success that they had.

Todd Gailor: 8:11

And so I think what people found was that you know, hitting a golf ball is fun and top golf kind of brought that to a much wider audience. Obviously, the topolf concept is kind of built around this reward system Every time you hit a ball, you get points or you get something. And so I sort of took all of those ideas and said, okay, I think we can do something like this at this golf driving range, mini golf facility, obviously with adding the restaurant and bar. So that's really how I kind of built the business plan. I took

ideas, I referenced those ideas of the 50 West and the mad trees and the top golfs and sort of amalgamated them into my own little concept and tried to pitch it to people and said hey, this is the idea that I want to build. What do you think of it?

Todd Gailor: 9:05

And I got a lot of feedback and a lot of people said no. But I'm a sales guy at heart. So my goal was to find people that would say yes, because I really believed in it. And I think the best advice that I got from someone along the way who's a local entrepreneur here in Cincinnati, he owns restaurants and bars, he's a development guy he said whatever you do, just love it. If you love the thing that you're doing, it will show and it will be successful. And I think that's like super simple advice and it could go with any career, right, I think, if you really love what you do and you love the place, people will see it, people will feel it, and so, yeah, that's kind of the long short story of how I ultimately got this property.

Brian Sheehan: 9:56

That's incredible. What a journey that you've been on to build this or renovate, remodel, bring to new life, you know, this cultural kind of an institution. I mean, I can remember going there as a kid, so I love what you've done with it. I guess I'm curious a couple of things how many people said no to the idea and what was sort of the consensus you know, maybe behind the nose of people who didn't think maybe this was, you know, a concept with legs and I'm really kind of leading towards Eatertainment, such a big trend right now. And you, you know, talked about Topgolf and some of the other places in Cincinnati, Ohio, where you can go have that experience. But I'm curious, kind of like, why Eatertainment is doing so well. But it's sort of a two part question there, I guess.

Todd Gailor: 10:54

Yeah, I think it's a great question and I think the no's were really based, I think, on people that had been coming here, based, I think, on people that had been coming here. Golfer friends of mine will use those examples of, like man, that place is so rundown that it's going to cost a lot of money to renovate it. And I said, yeah, you're probably right, it's a pretty rundown property. But I guess real estate people know location is super important. So I always thought, okay the nose, I'm balancing out these nose with the like to me again spinning it into okay the nose, they're saying it's really run down. My yes to that is great location, great community. That is great location, great community. The village of Evendale is, you know, a wildly successful, tiny little place because they have GE Aerospace as corporate headquarters, formica

as corporate headquarters, growing biotech companies as corporate headquarters, and so I think, you know, close to Kenwood, close to Montgomery, close to Blue Ash, close enough to Indian Hill, close enough to Madeira, so you've got all these communities. So location's important. It's on a main road. So I sort of balanced out okay, the no's are like, yeah, it's run down, but I believe that if I put the money in I'd bring people here. The other really is that there was infrastructure here that existed, that was convertible, and so there were buildings on the property. There were two miniature golf courses here that didn't need a ton of work to get them up and running, to provide entertainment space, and I love. It's in a little valley. The Mill Creek runs through here, so you have incredible nature. I'm a bird nerd at heart so I love the outdoors, I love birds and it's got this like there's nature here, so it's like man. How do you take all of these things? It's a beautiful piece of property. Largely. It wasn't beautiful when we took over, but it had all the guts for it to be beautiful. And so you know the no's. The other no's were restaurant people, and this is during COVID, so we really hadn't felt.

Todd Gailor: 13:17

The restaurant industry certainly has changed, probably for the worse, over the last four or five years. It's a very difficult industry and so those are kind of the other no's like ah, the restaurant business is so hard, true, but this is not a freestanding restaurant. My belief was that the community of this place could be built around the restaurant. I'm not a freestanding restaurant so I'm not fully reliant on restaurant and bar I'm reliant on, and this is a big part of the business plan building a community around a restaurant and bar, or entertainment as you would call it, which I think are. You know, these are businesses that I don't have to compete with Amazon I'm really competing with. You know, amazon has changed the whole landscape of many, many things. So what are industries that? You know? There certainly is competition for entertainment, but I'm marrying something that I believe in.

Todd Gailor: 14:29

Golf is growing in popularity, and so I think I thought the concept was there, and I think one of the things that I'm most proud of, and people that come here also notice, is that when families come here, kids largely are not on their phones, so people are playing games.

Todd Gailor: 14:53

You can't duplicate that anywhere and so you know they come down here, they have a family. Dad or mom might have a beer or a seltzer or a cocktail. The kids and the

parents are playing miniature golf. So there's this incredible family dynamic of unplugged, and so I think that's a beautiful thing that is super important in society today that you are unplugging from your phones. I mean, here we are on technology, here we're connecting in this incredible space, but the ability to turn your phone off, get away from something and go have some family time is what this place, I guess, is about. It's, I think, for me and my kids, whether we do something outside of here. We're here a lot, but the ability to put our phones down and go do something fun is, uh, I think, a big part of our success.

Brian Sheehan: 15:46

Absolutely, and I think it answers, you know, part of that question, which is why is an entertainment concept successful? In part, it's due to the fact that this is a place you can go and you don't have to be plugged in to a device. You can disconnect Totally. And, yeah, one thing I probably took for granted was the, I guess, the natural beauty and splendor of the location that you're at, something I never fully appreciated until you, you know, made a point to kind of open up and direct people to the Mill Creek, which is, you know, a really amazing asset to have.

Todd Gailor: 16:25

Absolutely is, and it's like that kind of leads into one of the discussion points that I had. So here I talked to Steve in December of 2020, and he's agreed to sell the property to me. Really, the environmental steward of the Mill Creek and they were a handful of people over the last 25 or 30 years have been instrumental in cleaning up the Mill Creek. So they alarm businesses hey, you're dumping toxic chemicals into the creek and they would alert the EPA. And so I think a lot of the success or the transformation of the Mill Creek was handled by a number of people who believed that the Mill Creek should be cleaned up. And so I called them, had many conversations, asked them. I mean because if you grew up in Cincinnati, the Mill Creek was this toxic cesspool you don't get near it, you don't put businesses on it Certainly a family entertainment business because it's dirty and it's gross. And so I did the research. I called the Mill Creek Alliance. They said, hey, listen, the Mill Creek in certain sections is cleaner than the little Miami River, which is a national historic river. And I believed in kind of what they were doing with the cleanup of the creek, this property which you know, when I was starting to talk to Steve in December of 2020 and on into 2021, you couldn't even see the Mill Creek because there was a 30 foot section of honeysuckle so you couldn't even access it. So I came down here one day and sort of dug my way through the honeysuckle and looked at the creek. I was like, oh my gosh, this is like it's beautiful, it's a beautiful section of creek, and I just believed, man, okay, so they're cleaning it

up. There's like people that care about it, they're taking people on kayak trips on the Mill Creek, and so it's not the Little Miami River. It's not as big, so it's a little bit harder to kayak or canoe it. But I just viewed it as this incredible natural resource that could be part of the property instead of hidden from the property. And so we cleaned out a lot of the honeysuckle after we took over and have created.

Todd Gailor: 18:39

You know, we and I invite people to come down to see it. I mean, if you're, if you're at the restaurant and bar or the patio or you're playing golf, you don't, you don't you may not even walk down there to see it, and so I try to get as many people down there. I'm like, look at this. This is like little waterfall. Here there's we've seen bald eagles, there's turtles, there's smallmouth bass, large mouth bass, incredible wildlife and that didn't exist 25 years ago.

Todd Gailor: 19:08

I mean, the Mill Creek was the most endangered urban stream in North America. It was very dirty, it did not have a lot of life and I say life, beavers and muskrats and bald eagles and herons and all these things, and that has all started to come back. And we're highlighting that and I think it's just such an important piece to our development and growth over the next five years is getting people connected back to the Mill Creek, whether it's a 60 minute canoe trip, I'm not saying a big long, all day giant multinational companies that do business right here in Evendale, but you're, you're surrounded, kind of, in this little miniature oasis, and so certainly a big part of what I believed in and I don't even think we've touched, scratched the surface of what we can make of the Mill Creek.

Brian Sheehan: 20:08

So I don't know if I answered that question right, but you did now and I mean I think you're absolutely right, there's so much there that's untapped potential. And I think it speaks a little bit to kind of the next question, which is, you know, if you could talk about some of the challenges of operating a hybrid, some of the challenges of operating a hybrid, you know, retail restaurant entertainment concept like this. I think one of the takeaways for me would be you know, really understand and take a look at kind of what you have on site or within the bounds of your business to make sure you're maximizing the full potential of kind of everything you can do, like you've done with the Mill Creek. There you're starting to do with the Mill Creek, but if you could talk about what some of the other challenges are kind of operating a hybrid business concept like this and how you overcame them.

Todd Gailor: 21:04

Yeah, I think, as a, I mean I'm a, I was a business guy, I was a sales guy, but I certainly wasn't a an operations guy and and so I think this is to me a hybrid is this is a sales business to a degree or it's a customer relations business, and I'm good at the customer relations side, and so it's welcoming people to the property, thanking them for coming, making sure that I'm visible as a face to the whole thing. I mean I don't I'm the acres is certainly much bigger than me, but I think any small business that I go to, that you go to, you know, when you see the owner or an owner there in the weeds doing the things, I think it just like gives you an appreciation for that business. And I think I'm good at the relation side and good at being here and being present, and I've committed a to a. I mean this is a seven day a week job from April until really the end of December. A. I mean this is a seven day a week job from April until really the end of December.

Todd Gailor: 22:16

And I think the things that are the most challenging for me are the restaurant and bar, and restaurant and bar business is is very hands-on. It's low margin business? Um, it is. It is a. It's a very tough business to run and I would say a lot of my time is spent helping the restaurant and bar, staffing the restaurant and bar, even though it's probably on the smaller side of the profitability of the business, but it's such a key component to the overall community we're building. So I think a business like this just is hands-on. I mean, there really isn't a way to avoid the restaurant and bar business, the miniature golf business. This is a customer business and so you just have to be here and you have to feel it and you have to see it and you have to adapt. I would love for it to be a proactive business and I'm trying to get there.

Todd Gailor: 23:12

I've had all of these reflections over the past number of months of how do we get more proactive towards program development, towards creating a calendar of events, towards me being less involved in fixing things and me being more involved in planning and vision and strategy, and that's what I want to do. But I also know that I have to really kind of be in the weeds still until we're you know this is we're still only three years from the time that we opened the restaurant, which was August of 22. And so we're getting there and I think that's my goal is. The challenge is the restaurant and bar. It requires a lot of people, it requires a lot of labor. You know, restaurant bar business is very tough. The margins aren't very good, but how do we create programs and program development that really feed and help grow this property?

Todd Gailor: 24:12

I think I'm learning and I'm not really an operations guy, I'm a bigger picture guy and I'm really not a detailed guy. So I think anyone here, both my business partners, investors and the people that work here would probably say the same thing. I mean, I'm pretty spacey, I'm pretty ATD and I try my best to listen, and I'm frequently on my phone and responding to someone and someone's talking in my ear. I'm like I'm listening, like I told you that five minutes ago. I'm like, ok, I heard it, can you tell me again? So I'm getting better? I promise, tell me again, so I'm getting better, I promise.

Brian Sheehan: 24:50

Todd, what advice would you give to yourself if you could go back three years or five years? You know when you were first starting to put this together. What lessons do you feel like you've learned? That you know would translate to somebody that's interested in opening their own entertainment concept.

Todd Gailor: 25:09

I don't believe. I mean, I think it's like you go through this iteration. I met a couple here six months ago who were going to try to start some sort of almost like not youth hostel, but like some sort of a community space around hotel, like a mini hotel in northern Kentucky, and they were asking me, and I think I said pick good business partners, have a good operating agreement. From a legal standpoint, that was advice that one of my business partners, who's no longer here, gave me. It was just like, hey, you have an operating agreement not to protect yourself from failure, you have an operating agreement to operate for success. And so you know it's like you think of it as like a defense mechanism, but really you should think of it as, hey, this is going to be successful, we should have an operating agreement that is pointing our way towards success, which is like a positive spin on. That is pointing our way towards success, which is like a positive spin on, I guess, the legal world. I have great business partners, all with different skill sets, and I think having the ability to pick business partners that you like, that hopefully leave you alone. You know I'm here 80 to 100 hours a week, or at least plugged into the business at that much, and so I think largely investors and people have left me to. They trust me to do the work that I'm supposed to be doing.

Todd Gailor: 26:40

I think the hardest part, for me, the most difficult thing, is delegating, and I think I'm learning how to delegate, but it's not my strong suit. I feel like I'm better doing it than I am trying to train someone, because it takes longer for me to train someone to do it than for me to just do it myself. And I've heard that from many, many business owners.

There are plenty of business owners here who live in the village of Evendale who have been loose guides for me. They're not formal, formal advisors, but they'll come down and have a beer and ask me how things are going hey, how can I help you? And I've largely told them like I think the hardest part for me is to delegate. And they all said the same thing. In the first three or four or five years of starting a business or owning a business, they said the same thing. They said you'll learn how to delegate, but they understand the need to want to do it yourself, and so I think that's the hardest part is just learning how to find the right people who you can delegate to and trusting them to do the work and staying out of their way.

Todd Gailor: 27:46

I don't want to manage people. I listened to one of your other podcasts and I don't remember who it was. I listened to one of your other podcasts and I don't remember who it was. I think it might've been Josh from Mizunte, but he said the same thing. He's like I want something related to leading and not managing, and I think I guess I lead by example. I clean bathrooms, I pick up trash. I'm constantly around the property doing things that I believe I should be doing, but I certainly don't want to manage people. I want to find people who see I can probably tell and help, but my goal is to find people who can lead themselves. I'll knock down walls to help you do the job that you need to do, but I don't want to come in and have the 30 minute management.

Todd Gailor: 28:33

Hey, what did you do this week? And you know the micromanaging stuff, because I believe you know I've got an amazing chef right now and I'd be remiss if I didn't mention him. He's done amazing work in the past year and he manages himself. He's done this for 20 years. I don't need to get in his way. I can help him knock things down, try to prevent things that are muddling up his world, which I try to do. I'm sure I've stumbled along the way, but he's a great chef, has made great food and I stay out of his way. I don't need to manage him. He knows what he's doing. He's been in the restaurant business for 20 years. So back to the question is, I think, how do you lead and how do you delegate?

Brian Sheehan: 29:20

The hardest certainly the hardest part for me, and I'm learning- it sounds like we could do kind of an entire episode on that just aspect alone of owning and operating a business. There's a few other things I'm hoping we can get through. One talk about kind of the design of the entire experience. So it sounds like from the outset you knew

you wanted to have a bar and a restaurant on site, but I guess talk about how the different elements kind of came together there at the Acres.

Todd Gailor: 29:52

Yeah, I think it was always designed. I mean, I, I here. I bought an old driving range, been here since 1951. It had a miniature golf course. That was an iconic place. It was a putt putt at one point. It was always built around restaurant, bar, driving range, miniature golf.

Todd Gailor: 30:13

We've since added this lighted forest concept, which is certainly not new. The Cincinnati Zoo does their Festival of Lights and other companies around town or nonprofits are creating lighted forest walks to bring people to their facility during the tougher months and for us I think adding the lighted forest was an important piece to November and December we die. Once the time changes, the business sort of falls off the cliff and so I think that's like the fifth piece of the business for us. It's restaurant, bar, driving range, miniature golf. Lighted forest is like the fifth revenue piece and last year was the first year. It was a wild success and our goal is to create it into really an art and light festival. So we commission local artists to come down here trying to take our spin, to do it a little bit differently than maybe some other companies and or nonprofits in town. So I think it was always built around the concept of those four things. We added a fifth. Can we add a sixth or a seventh? Those are all sort of in the works that may get released next year.

Todd Gailor: 31:24

There are big surprises to the world. One of those surprises is a pop-up drive-in movie theater on the driving range, which is something new and something that we're going to try, and it's using the space. I mean, it's like, okay, you have this big, giant driving range out there, how do you use it? It's like, okay, it's just a driving range, it's supposed to receive golf balls, but are there other things that we can do on that space? And so that's kind of where the drive-in or music festival or things like that came about.

Todd Gailor: 31:54

So we're still a four-piece business, really, four revenue centers, the fifth kind of the lighted forest. But how do you continue to add to this entertainment concept while still being core to this is a golf place and and I don't want to alienate the driving range base, because that is a big part of who we are but how can we expand? That, I think is, are the questions that us myself and I'm not the only owner, I am the majority owner,

but I have investors and so making sure that we are have a keen eye towards profitability. This is a for-profit business and shareholder return largely increasing the value of this asset that we have. But mindful to my belief, if you build a community around this place that everything else kind of falls into place.

Brian Sheehan: 32:49

One that's really fascinating about the I'm going to call it in the sense of a golf driving range or drive-in movie theater, and how do you maximize the revenue that you can generate from that? I'm curious the different metrics that you might use for a business like this, because you have the four different revenue centers and obviously you need to be focused on profitability. But I'm curious, are there certain metrics that you're looking at, like how many you know buckets of balls did we sell? Are you offering you know golf lessons, swing analysis, technology, integration at the driving range, many golf rounds played? And then also to talk about how important is the retail side of the business, because you guys have a cool and I would say, what growing merchandising program there.

Todd Gailor: 33:38

Yeah, so I'm actually wearing the. So our branding company is Tommy Sheehan, who runs a company called Tommy Inc. He's been a kind of longtime branding guy in town. We really believe in the Acres brand and building a brand around it. Currently we are demoing out the old pro shop, which used to be a club repair facility, and that becomes kind of our hybrid retail shop.

Todd Gailor: 34:04

We've almost not abandoned the retail piece, but we've been careful about making sure that when we do retail we are aware of creating a retail concept that is unique merchandise. And so the golf club business, the golf retail business, is hyper competitive. The margins are pretty bad, and so I believe in the concept more of like how do you create unique retail merchandise that you can't buy on Amazon, that someone isn't going to say, oh yeah, well, I found that at golf galaxy, for you know $15 and you're selling it for $25. And so the ability? Not, you know, I don't want to compete in that business. I want to find, um, our own little niche, and so I think we can create a merchandising line around the acres that is super unique, that is small. I don't want to be a big retailer. I think retail is tough. It's got to be staffed. But I think we can create something that's unique.

Todd Gailor: 35:04

And I look at the golf industry as a whole. There are all of these craft micro brands. It's sort of like the brewery industry craft beer. It's like I know the guy that brews that and they named it after his cousin who's you know. It's like all that stuff is all the rage and I think the golf industry head covers and clothing lines have exploded and there's a ton of opportunity in that space. It was written in the business plan that we could create a merchandising line around that space. It was written in the business plan that we could create a merchandising line around the acres and we've got the acres and the A flag and a handful of other things. I don't know that business well enough, but I really believe that that can be a really successful retail side of our business. And so the pro shop is now gutted.

Todd Gailor: 35:52

We are starting to work with an architect to develop something that's a usable space, not fully retail, but enough retail that's convertible. So it's like a hangout space, slash retail, slash. You know, it's like you got to like adapt to all of these things instead of it just being a retail shop because a retail shop. You got to staff, and I don't necessarily want to staff it 12 hours a day, absolutely. That's a big cost, right. So but I do think I believe in the retail side, and retail could be grips, golf grips. It could be merchandise, but it has to be merchandise. That's ours, as opposed to Strixon or Titleist or something else. Not that I would abandon those, but I just think it's too hyper-competitive. You can buy it if you can buy it on Amazon cheaper and easier. That's where you're going to buy it.

Brian Sheehan: 36:48

And it's probably not a fit for you, right.

Todd Gailor: 36:50

Not a fit.

Brian Sheehan: 36:51

Part of the reason you go there. And let me ask you one more question. This will be the last question. I get the sense that you've been very intentional about designing and building a community here. If you could talk about how you think about that, why it's important and how and why you've been so intentional about trying to create a community around the acres.

Todd Gailor: 37:16

Yeah, I think one of my business partners who was really the first business partner and I both see eye to eye Corey Myers. He and I both went to Wittenberg together. We were coaching soccer. That's how I met him, but he and I are both big believers in this like form of community as organically as you can make it. And so there's two components to community that I see. One is the consumer side of the community that you're building. It's getting to know the people that are coming here, getting to know their families, you know, appreciating them. I mean, they're coming here to spend thousands of dollars in golf balls a year or buying food at the restaurant or drinking beer here or playing mini golf, and so it's like you have to appreciate each of those people who are supporting you. And then there's really the business side of the community, which are the partners that we have the architect, the builder, the branding company, the plumber, the guy that you can call on a whim, who's going to come down here and help you fix things, and then the employees really and I say the employees, we're trying to create a community of both high schoolers and full-time people here the bartenders, and then one of my business partners. Bill Roberts, who's been kind of here as sort of a jack of all trades from the very beginning, has done just incredible work of just being here and doing things and fixing things. So the community is really all about people, the consumer side, but you can't forget about the business side. The architect did a great job, the branding company did a great job, we have a great builder, and appreciating and trying to maintain those relationships I mean, I don't I guess I don't shop around a lot.

Todd Gailor: 39:04

I try to find people I trust, as opposed to hey, can you give me a proposal for running a plumbing line? It's like you find the people that trust you or that I guess that trust me to a degree that I'm going to pay them. But on the flip side it's like just do the work, don't gouge me, and then there's like repeated work behind that. I guess those are the best. Business relationships are the ones where they're going to come do the work for you. They're not gouging you, they're going to make. You know, everyone has to make money. So I want people to make money. I don't want anything for free. I don't like doing I'm not a big trade guy Like, oh, I'll do this for you, and then it's just like tell me what you need. I would rather pay you than it doesn't leave some like open-ended like. Like open-ended like. Do I have to buy him another beer because he did all this work for me? It just gets weird.

Brian Sheehan: 39:55

I think it's a great note to end on and good advice for anybody that wants to own and operate their own business Find people you trust. Trust them to do good work.

Todd Gailor: 40:06

Huge, hugely important, and I don't think we've been burned. I mean, I think maybe one or two contractors along the way that just you know weren't the right fit. But you hear stories, right, I've heard plenty of stories of just relationships that go sour and, knock on wood, we've had a really good success and we've built a community. We're continuing to build a community and I think that's really a big, big part of who we are and what we're about.

Brian Sheehan: 40:36

Oh, that's awesome. Well, Todd, it's really been a pleasure having you on Retail Intel. Thank you for sharing the story behind Acres and your insights into the entertainment space. Be sure to check out the Acres in Cincinnati and follow them on Instagram at Acres Cincy.

Todd Gailor: 40:52

Thanks so much. I really appreciate you having me on. It was a real pleasure to talk about.

Brian Sheehan: 41:00

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