

EPISODE 497

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:00] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to The Real Estate Syndication Show. Whether you are a seasoned investor or building a new real estate business, this is the show for you. Whitney Sewell talks to top experts in the business. Our goal is to help you master real estate syndication.

And now your host, Whitney Sewell.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:24.1] WS: This is your daily Real Estate Syndication show. I'm your host Whitney Sewell. Today, our guest is Kevin Bull. Thanks for being on the show Kevin.

[0:00:32.7] KB: Hey, thank you Whitney, appreciate it.

[0:00:35.0] WS: Yeah, I'm looking forward to this.

And Kevin is the cofounder off of InvesTechs. A digital marketing agency that specializes in raising investment capital for established real estate developers, game changers, changing startups and alternative energy companies. He's cofounder of Atlantis Downtown, a co-working space in Eugene, Oregon that has a diverse and passionate community of freelancers, startups and small businesses. Atlantis Downtown was recently ranked fourth best co-working space in Oregon.

Kevin, thank you again for your time. Looking forward to just really diving in to InvesTechs and what that is and really what that does for our operators that are in the commercial real estate business?

[0:01:15.9] KB: Yeah, quick note. Atlantis, we've moved on from that but that was a great experience and you know, one of my same cofounders, is my cofounder in InvesTechs as well.

That was fun as it was. Kind of WeWorking type co-working space that led to a lot of opportunities.

[0:01:31.2] WS: Nice, tell me about InvesTechs and what that does for operators in our space?

[0:01:37.0] KB: InvesTechs is a modern investor relations firm. We work with real estate developers, syndicators and fund managers to help them build their network of investors. So, we work on behalf of our clients and help them build out their own investment platforms for them to gain new relationships with investors and build their own network.

Different than how like other platforms work where you submit a project and that project might get listed up on that platform and then you get the investors. You know, we're building a platform on your behalf for you to build your own network, grow your business and continue to have more and more investors for the next project too.

[0:02:15.6] WS: Okay. Tell me what that looks like? You know, say I'm getting started and I don't have much network yet. Maybe I've done a deal or two or maybe I haven't, you know. What does that look like to help me, do I get my network started?

[0:02:25.0] KB: Yeah, we work closely with you on figuring out you know, what are your values? What are your strategies? You know, what makes you different? Really getting down to the core of your strategy. And then from there, we build out an investment website for you, one page is specific for each investment opportunity which we call our project pages.

You know, [inaudible 0:02:43] five or six C, public solicitation.

Then we go out and we build the content for you. You know, that could be videos, presentations, podcast, webinars. We put together what we think is the best fit for you. You know how you like to communicate? Are you people person? Are you good on video?

From there, we put together the most likely investors to invest in your project and that can take different forms as well depending on what type of project you're working on. We have what we call our local based strategy and so local based is we'll draw a radius around your project and

we can get the 5,000, 10,000 closest high net worth individuals that have invested into real estate before and we bring them to a monthly educational event that you put on. Kind of the old school traditional approach there.

Then also, we'll do webinars with our listening key words. And so, if you have a specific niche like opportunities zones or 1031 exchange or you know, let's say you do ground up development in Portland, Oregon, those kinds of things. Then we can use those listening key words to bring people in when they search or use those terms online. Bring them to your webinars and help you grow your webinar base as well.

From there, we also have kind of a more of an institutional approach. So, if you're doing larger deals, we have some databases of funds and family offices that we can help you reach out to. Still on your behalf but we'll help you put together in messaging and help you approach them in a way to build relationships with them.

That's kind of our step by step process, how we'd piece it all together. We also build that at CRM and email newsletter to stay top of mind. Also couple in some ads most of the time to be able to stay in front of those investors and you know, keep them engaged.

[0:04:24.0] WS: Okay, there's a lot happening right there. You know, I've gone through that process. So many working pieces in the background especially podcast, especially doing it daily. But you know, if you're doing webinars or whatever kind of content you're creating, there's a lot of pieces to that that most people don't ever realize.

But you talked about you all are going to help with the website, is that right?

[0:04:42.4] KB: Yeah.

[0:04:42.9] WS: You're going to help with the website to the content, to the CRM, so important. Tell me some things about is there a specific CRM that you help setup or that you recommend?

[0:04:52.5] KB: Yeah, we actually work off of Zoho and we use – it's a very simple base platform that allows for a lot of customization. And so, you know, people can get off running with

it within a couple of days and you know, we can help them with that process. And then as we go and want to integrate different features into the website and integrate different data flows and customer life cycle journeys.

You know, we can do that within the flexibility of the platform. It gives us both the simple interface and then ability to make it more complex and effective as we build it out.

[0:05:25.0] WS: Okay, you talked about the – like helping us with that relationship building process. It's so important. Investor relations and help walk us through that little bit or maybe some things that you all help people do to really help build that relationship?

[0:05:38.7] KB: Yeah. A lot of people see 506(c) and they think crowdfunding. You know, we realize that people don't click an ad and invest \$50,000 or your minimum amount is. So, it's much more about getting in front of those right investors and bringing them to meet with you face to face or to have you know, hour long phone calls where you can make that connection and you can build that relationship. You know, really, we're about opening the door and our clients needs to walk through it.

You know, we can't make the sale for them. We're the investor relations, marketing, lead generation, relationship building. And you know, really, we're looking to find, who is that right investor, that would be interested in their type of projects? Who would relate to them personally? And then getting them in front of them and helping them with that process.

[0:06:24.2] WS: Okay. Give me a couple of tips on getting in front of the right investor like you're talking about?

[0:06:30.5] KB: Yeah, that's through conversation with the client from the beginning. You know, figuring out what their strategy is. If they're locally based in an area, a lot of investors like to invest in local projects, you know, they know their own town, they know where the hot spots are, they understand it.

Another good thing about real estate too is it's a physical asset. People want to drive up to it, they want to touch it, they want to feel it, they want to see it. A lot of times, the local approach

makes sense if it's a local developer. And then also, with the national approach, it's more that they have a certain niche and they're developing outside of that one area. Then they can make sense to maybe they might have investors from New York even if they're developing in Kansas City. You still get that flexibility because there's something attractive about this strategy itself, not necessarily the local area that they're using.

We take different approaches depending on who the client is and who we think would be the best fit.

[0:07:22.2] WS: What are some of the bigger difficulties that you see operators have that you're working with? You know, in making this happen? Increasing their network?

[0:07:29.4] KB: Yeah, a lot of syndicators, fund managers and stuff, they have their friends and family and then they have maybe people that they met at the country club and a few people they met at conferences and stuff. They have a hard time getting outside that original bubble of four or five investors. And so, we're really here to help them build above that and to continue to grow their network.

You know, we put in the system and the strategies and really, the engine and the gasoline to keep that going forward. When they've already figured you know, thought they reached their threshold and don't know where to go from there, you know, we help add in some fire power and help them build the network.

[0:08:05.6] WS: Nice. It's so important. When you're getting started and then getting outside the network or getting people, or just getting in front of people initially is difficult.

[0:08:13.2] KB: Right. You're just looking around town and you're like, "Where do I find people that might want to invest?" There's not always a certain club that you can join, depending on where you're at. And sometimes those clubs, you know, they're not always the people that are actually the investors. When you're looking at passive investors locally, they're usually high net worth individuals that want to be limited partners and they're not really involved in real estate themselves. That's why they want to invest with the syndicator. Because they want to invest with somebody that knows the business better than they do.

They might be doctors, lawyers, business owners, you know, people that are high net worth, not necessarily going to these real estate events. But they do want to be active in real estate because they understand the benefits and all that.

[0:08:52.6] WS: Yeah, they're not always where you think they are and then it takes so much relationship building time before people are usually going to invest with you a lot of times, it's not normally right away for everybody.

But what about any other ways that you all are helping people get outside their network that we haven't discussed? As far as you know, the local community or like maybe the obvious thing or local meetup or something like that. Any other ways that you're helping people to get outside of that?

[0:09:15.0] KB: So, really, it's about having our client host their own local meetups. And so, having them be that figure that's you know, the term is thrown around a lot but the thought leader within their local community, within their individual strategy and bringing investors to them, you know, I once a week.

We call them investor round table events, usually 10 to 12 people, maybe wine and cheese, maybe they're meeting at local bar for happy hour or the office, wherever you want the setting to be. But it's a relaxed group conversation that syndicator or fund manager can have engaging relationship building and they can help educate people and that education leads to more questions and more trust and you know.

Usually after that, they meet up with two or three or four the next week for coffee or a drink and they continue that conversation. And continue down the road to feel more and more comfortable with each other and being able to partner up on some deals.

[0:10:09.9] WS: Do you all push running ads very often? You briefly mentioned it earlier but online ads?

[0:10:15.5] KB: We do use ads as part of our strategy. It is not core to it. It really allows you to stay in front of those people and to we reach them in multiple ways. And so, the ads it allows your company and you to stay on top of the mind with those investors. We also do things like retargeting ads where, when somebody visits your websites you are now following them around with a series of ads to kind of bring them back to your website and through the funnel.

There is some things like look alike audiences where say you have 10 investors already. We can look at those 10 investors and upload their information online and then it creates a look alike. So, it expands that to thousands of investors that match on certain data points and are similar to your existing audience. And so, there is ways that we use ads to stay in front of people that are already interested and then also reach new people that may be interested.

But we know people don't just click an ad and then invest the next day. It is more about getting them engaged. We touch on that a little bit more too. You know once you bring them back to the website it is all about creating lead magnets and having downloadable content on the website or having been through webinars that they can register too. You have to give somebody something of value for them to be able to give you their contact information which is value as well.

So, you have to give them something that they can digest and they can understand and that helps them in multiple ways. So that then educates them, it makes them feel more comfortable. It shows you as that thought leader and vice-versa.

[0:11:37.1] WS: So many great tips already right there alone. It was really good but tell me about this lead magnet. Help us to create that lead magnet that somebody's going to want so they do submit their information?

[0:11:48.4] KB: So, a lead magnet is usually a pretty large piece of content like an eBook that has a wider range of information. It is like a library of a lot of the content that we create all in one piece. And then we take pieces of that and kind of use that in our ads and in our educational events.

And so, people get pieces of information and they create us to learn more and then you have this full on eBook that they can sit down and look through for 15 to 20 minutes and then really digest it in their own time.

[0:12:20.2] WS: Okay, so if somebody sees our lead magnet, they want it, maybe you could walk us through the nurturing process after they have signed up on the website a little bit more in detail?

[0:12:29.1] KB: Right. So, once they sign up usually have AN to auto-reply, where it says, "Thanks. Thanks for downloading. If you want more information, here is a link to our educational resources on our website." Give them more stuff to be able to chew on.

And then once you get back to your desk, you know they are in your CRM and you can follow up with them personally. You know the quicker you can get to them personally, the better results you're going to have.

You know people know what a template, the email response is. And most people don't reply to them.

But we also will have them in a drip campaign, where we are sending them more and more newsletters and contents and articles. Third party articles work well too. You know I am just utter proof that show that your strategy is the right thing to do and that there are ways to stay in front of people.

But it really comes down to that personal conversation. You want to get on that phone with them. You want to meet with them in person. You want to walk through the properties together. You want to take that relationship to the next level. The marketing is all about continuing to build that relationship and assists our clients in that.

[0:13:26.1] WS: Yeah. All right Kevin, well a few last things before we run out of time. A few more questions, tell me a way that you have recently improved your business that we could apply to ours?

[0:13:34.7] KB: Yeah, so a recent improvement is really streamlining things on our end. You know making it a much more of a fine-tuned system and so almost with everybody who we worked with just continuing to narrow in on what is working and what's not.

Marketing is kind of the scientific method. You know you test your hypothesis. You have different variables out there and you start to narrow in on what's working and continuing to narrow in on it.

So, you know it is an ongoing game of improving it and making it more effective. Everything from the ad strategy to the messaging to the content that you are using and continuing to improve on that with each client.

[0:14:09.0] WS: So, doing this for numerous people, you know working with numerous operators, helping them grow their network and understanding marketing and different aspects of marketing. What have you seen is the top way to connect with the most investors?

[0:14:21.7] KB: So, you know most investors is not always the best thing, right? So, there's also limited, high quality, high net-worth investors and so sometimes it's about building a relationship with a few that have a lot of trust in you and want to put forward a lot of money.

So, how we quantify isn't necessarily always by dollar amount or people you meet. It is more just kind of feedback from our client on how they feel about their business is growing. And that they want to ramp up the pace of how fast it is growing or they want to dial them back down.

You know just making sure that you're happy with the conversations they're having and the people they are meeting and the way their business is growing. There is several different strategies and different clients and so it just depends on who we're working with and what makes sense.

[0:15:02.5] WS: If you had to pick one what would it be like ads or a meet up or a podcast or a webinar or is there one thing that you guys say, "Okay if I can only do one, this is it."

[0:15:12.3] KB: I think the local based strategy is really the tried and true kind of traditional approach that people have been giving this presentations of high net worth individuals about investments for a long time and people are either comfortable with it and they understand, “Okay, you know I am going to go there. I am going to learn something. I am going to meet this guy that knows what he is talking about in his specific field.”

It is a pretty sure-fire way of meeting ten people a month and getting in front of them and I have seen more of those conversations [inaudible 0:15:37].

[0:15:37.7] WS: So, what is the number one thing that’s contributed to your success, Kevin?

[0:15:41.0] KB: Just continuing to move forward and continuing to learn as going. I think life is all about continuing to improve your craft and learn about the different areas of it that you can bring in different influences and just having that mentality of being a lifelong learner.

[0:15:56.3] WS: And how do you like to give back?

[0:15:57.4] KB: So, I like to give back through friends and family, you know always taking care of the people closest next to me. I am looking to get involved with more organizations and such but I think taking care of the close circle is always first. Making sure everyone’s happy and living good.

[0:16:11.5] WS: Kevin, thank you again so much for your time today. I appreciate you walking through just some of the marketing techniques that you all are using and now you are helping lots of people in our industry to grow their brand and their network and that is such a big part of the business and nurturing those relationships with investors.

So, I appreciate your time. Tell the listeners though how can they get in touch with you and learn more about you?

[0:16:30.8] KB: Right, thank you. Yeah so InvesTechs.com. Also, my email is kevin@InvesTechs.com or you can reach out to me on LinkedIn, anything works.

[0:16:39.3] WS: Awesome Kevin that's a wrap. Thank you so much.

[0:16:41.9] KB: I appreciate it.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:16:42.8] WS: Don't go yet, thank you for listening to today's episode. I would love it if you would go to iTunes right now and leave a rating and written review. I want to hear your feedback. It makes a big difference in getting the podcast out there. You can also go to the Real Estate Syndication Show on Facebook so you can connect with me and we can also receive feedback and your questions there that you want me to answer on the show.

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[OUTRO]

[0:17:23.3] ANNOUNCER: Thank you for listening to The Real Estate Syndication Show, brought to you by Life Bridge Capital. Life Bridge Capital works with investors nationwide to invest in real estate while also donating 50% of its profits to assist parents who are committing to adoption. Life Bridge Capital, making a difference one investor and one child at a time. Connect online at www.LifeBridgeCapital.com for free material and videos to further your success.

[END]