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Executive Spotlight: Adam Chase

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EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT:

ADAM CHASE, CEO CHASE MARKETING

BY KYLAN RUTHERFORD

Adam Chase has been CEO of Chase Marketing, a Utah-based marketing firm, for ten years. Chase Marketing was started by his father, Mike Chase, in 1992. "It's a family business, but it works because we all have such different strengths." Adam has worked with his father, brother, and now his sister to build Chase Marketing from the ground up. A career's worth of ups and downs, roadblocks, and brilliant moments of success has shaped Adam into a grounded and people-centered CEO.

MARKETING AND BRANDING

At Chase Marketing, Adam and his employees work with companies to develop a strategy to reach more people. And they do this well; their website catalogues a rich history of gorgeous designs and campaigns for various well-known clients.

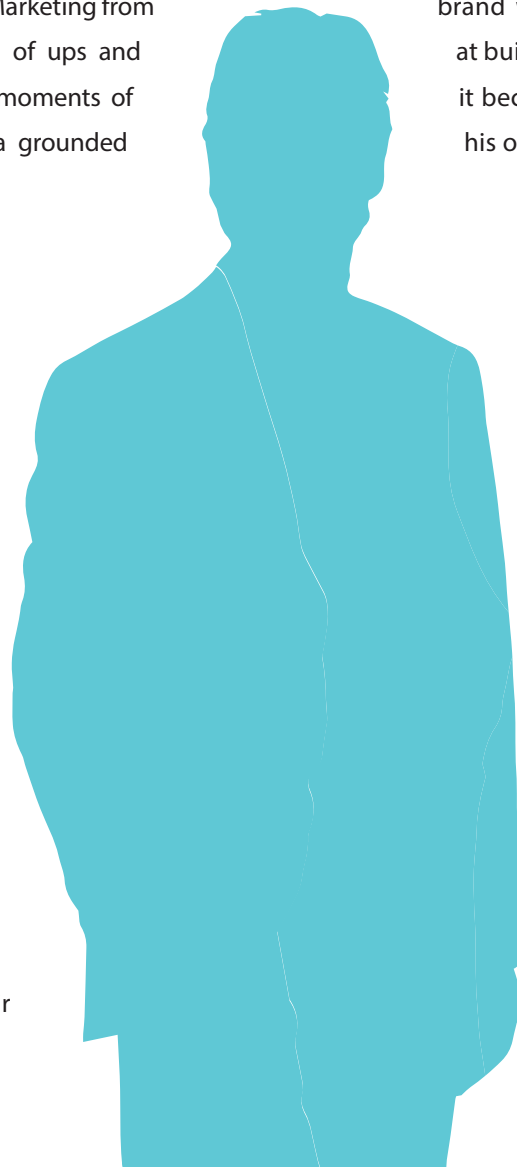
But the company doesn't just *market*. Chase Marketing *creates brands*. For Adam, their

connection with a client is so much more than just an ad campaign. "Your brand is the emotional connection that you have with everybody you touch." For each company with which he works, Adam strives not only to increase exposure for a company, but also to establish a brand worth exposing. Chase Marketing excels at building brands, and Adam knows how to do it because there was a time he had to do it for his own company.

BRANDING ACCOUNTABILITY

Several years ago when Chase Marketing had just a handful of employees, Adam Chase had a defining moment while meeting with a client that would define his future career in leadership, his personal life, and the eventual branding of his family's company.

The client was a big company and Chase Marketing had already established a great relationship with the client's rep. In the meeting, Adam and his father, Mike, had just finished presenting the rates that they could secure for a large-scale



media campaign the company wanted to pursue. Adam's rate was lower than the competition in all but one of the areas of interest, a group of radio stations. The rep turned to Adam and Mike and pointed out that if he didn't partner with Chase Marketing, he could get a cheaper deal somewhere else. Then, he asked, "if it's not about you getting lower rates for me, why should I use you guys?" In essence, the rep wanted to know why Chase Marketing was different.

"We didn't have an answer, which was just a symptom of the bigger problem. We hadn't established a 'why' for our company." That shook Adam. He was so rattled that when he stopped for gas after the meeting, he forgot to take the nozzle out of his car. "I drove away with the nozzle still in my car, and the thing popped off." However, he arrived the next day at the office composed and resolved to establish that "why."

Over the next few days, Adam reached out to all of the company's clients, and even some potential new ones, asking questions about what they were looking for in an ad agency. They responded with a variety of things, like naturally fitting within the existing team and putting in the time to understand their industry. But the one common denominator was that "I want my advertising agency to have a sense of accountability."

"All too often," Adam explains, "it feels like agencies are transactional—like I'm putting together a package of design for you, or I'm putting together a package of media strategy, and you're purchasing that from me. Agencies will sell something and then they'll wash their hands and say, 'It's up to you to raise the bar.' So we decided then and there that we're going to be the accountability agency. And we're going to build a business on a mutual investment in our clients. And I feel like to this day that's what helps us stand out from our competitors."

FINDING NORTH

For Chase Marketing, establishing accountability comes up front. In their first interactions with a client, they establish what Adam refers to as a "north star principle." They establish expectations and define what the most important goals the company wants to achieve. Then, they filter everything they do with that company through the lens of achieving that objective. "If we don't establish expectations with a client upfront, you never can have a cadence of accountability."

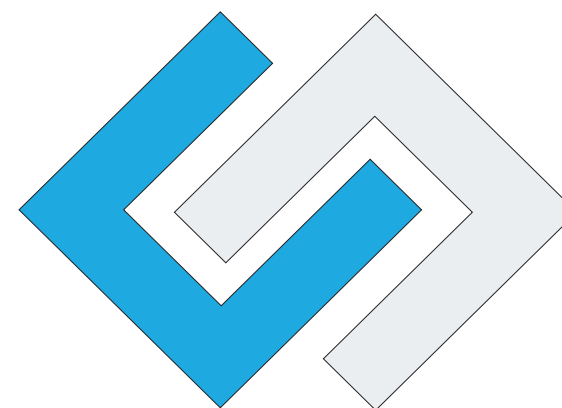
Adam practices that principle internally as well. For clients and employees alike, it's never just about business. "We're really building people at the end of the day. If I put all the power I have into making you successful as an employee, then you're going to have a sense of accountability too."

BRANDING IN ACTION

The principles Adam espouses shine through in the campaigns his company undertakes. A recent example is their creative and personal efforts on the 20th anniversary of one of their clients, Café Rio. "We called it their 20th birthday." That sparked a fun idea in their office. Who would want to help wish Café Rio a happy birthday? So, they started floating the idea around, reaching out to their contacts.

They ended up with a list of people who wanted to help, including Alex Boyé, Thurl Bailey, the Murdock Brothers (Murdock Auto Group), and Jimmer Fredette. Chase Marketing sent a camera crew out, filmed several people at locations up and down the Wasatch Front, and produced a video for Café Rio that ended up going viral. That video led to a noticeable spike in sales, and an outpouring of "happy birthday" wishes from customers.

That personal yet simple touch with Café Rio speaks to the genuine care and love that Adam and his team give to



every one of their clients. Their marketing strategies are never just sold and left; instead, the marketing relationship continues as long as it takes to help a company reach its goals. The results speak for themselves—through their long-term commitment to companies and their brands, Chase Marketing has established lasting relationships with clients, expanded their company, and become a thriving marketing agency at the base of Silicon Slopes.

BECOMING A PROBLEM SOLVER

For individuals looking to enter the marketing industry, Adam Chase's advice is to become a problem solver. In hiring employees, "I want people who are willing to work hard and who are willing to dig to find solutions. [...] People who come into my office and notice that there is a problem are far less valuable to me than people who come and show me that there's a problem and then say, 'Here are two different solutions and here are the repercussions of either.'"

In a job interview or in a career, how does one show they are a problem solver? "It's really a show, don't tell mentality," Adam believes. He suggests that individuals

interviewing should first know about the company and the issues the company is facing or the problems the company needs to overcome. Then, go in armed with examples that show how you would overcome those problems and "that you're a person who can, on the fly, be faced with a curveball and be able to hit that pitch anyway."

In the marketing industry, there will always be curveballs, and that's one thing that makes Adam's career rewarding. He loves the opportunity to dive into diverse industries, understand what they face, and work with them to think outside the box. The challenges that Café Rio faces are completely different from the problems a car dealership has to overcome. Individuals like Adam who thrive when faced with ever-changing objectives and obstacles have a career for them in marketing.

ADAM CHASE

"My north star is my relationship with God and family. It puts everything else into perspective." Despite his busy and variable career, Adam keeps to his north star by making time for his priorities. He says his calendar is his favorite app on his phone because it helps him protect time for family and faith. "As soon as I start making verbal commitments or as soon as I don't record what needs to be done, I get lost in the moment of whatever I'm doing." Adam devotes all the time he can to his "north star" relationships, just one example being his decision to coach his son's soccer team.

Adam's personal and professional commitments and relationships underpin everything he does as a CEO. "I've learned from really great leaders around me that leadership is about investing in people. I feel like that's one thing that matters to me—investing in relationships and helping people to become better, and then somehow I always end up better for it."