

GMSB004

[00:00:00] **Antony Whitaker:** Welcome to the Grow My Salon Business podcast, where we focus on the business side of hairdressing. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker, and I'll be talking to thought leaders in the hairdressing industry, discussing insightful, provocative, and inspiring ideas that matter. So get ready to learn, get ready to be challenged, get ready to be inspired, and most importantly, get ready to grow your salon business.

[00:00:31] **Antony Whitaker:** Today's episode, I'll be talking with Clive Allwright, an Australian salon owner who is also frontman and founder of a startup website that addresses two challenges the industry has everywhere. The first being affordable and customized salon education, and the second being finding staff, specifically assistants.

[00:00:51] **Antony Whitaker:** Clive and his team have come up with a technology-based solution that embraces the gig economy. It's a great example of an expression I once heard. You won't solve today's challenges with yesterday's thinking. We need new thinking for new age challenges and new solutions. And that's what Clive Allwright and his team have done.

[00:01:10] **Antony Whitaker:** So welcome to the show, Clive.

[00:01:13] **Clive Allwright:** Thank you very much, Antony. It's a pleasure to be here.

[00:01:15] **Antony Whitaker:** Now, Clive, as I said in the intro, you've got this fantastic website called Pilloroo.com. If you met me in the elevator and I said to you, So Clive, what is this Pilloroo.com and you had 30 seconds to pitch it. What would you say?

[00:01:31] **Clive Allwright:** That is a great question. I have built or we have built this digital online platform, i. e. a website, um, which is based around, I'm sure you've heard of sites like Expedia and Airbnb and the travel sites. that you can, that you can use and book hotels and that kind of thing. What we've done is we've built a bespoke platform that's just purely for hairdressing.

[00:01:53] **Clive Allwright:** It's it centers around education, which is one side and the other side is assistance. And, and it basically is, it works in the same way as Booking, uh, booking a hotel or, or a place on Airbnb. You can scroll

through different people's skills and instead of looking at hotels, you're looking at hairdressers, educators primarily and their skill sets.

[00:02:13] **Clive Allwright:** And you may be looking for a barber or you may be looking for someone that does hair hunting or precision cutting. And you can, that has filters just like the, the travel sites. And you can look for educators to fill your needs that you need within your business. And it's developed. It's come along a bit further than that.

[00:02:29] **Clive Allwright:** Now we can also do the same thing for assistance. You can search for assistance on demand. They're not apprentices. They're assistants that come in to your business in times of need. Um, just like when you need an Uber to get, to get home, you can jump online and, uh, you can find someone that's going to come into your salon tomorrow and sweep the floor, wash the color bowls and serve the coffee and wash the hair.

[00:02:52] **Clive Allwright:** And that's what the site is all about. You know, we, we really felt that, you know, as educate as an educator and as a salon owner, you know, when we travel, we book our flights online, we land at the airport, we, we use an Uber and then at the places that we stay are booked in Airbnb and we even deliver our food, uh, to our

[00:03:13] **Clive Allwright:** to, uh, wherever we're staying and so we thought, why can't we build something like that to make it easier for education to be accessible and to help businesses run more profitable, uh, within which we spoke for the hairdressing industry. And that's basically it. Okay, that's it in a nutshell.

[00:03:29] **Antony Whitaker:** I'm familiar with, uh, with, with Pillaroo, but I just want to, you know, uh, make sure that I capture the

[00:03:35] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, you know, the, the relevant distinctions there for our audience who haven't heard of it before. Um, so it's essentially a booking platform and it is. It serves a two, a twofold purpose. First of all, it's for booking educators. And, um, I'm not sure if you just said this in your intro, but I know that eventually it then morphed into, uh, booking assistance as well.

[00:04:03] **Antony Whitaker:** So, so that's what it is. It's a booking platform where you can book. Educators or you can book assistance for the salon. So,

it's sort of it started off as one thing, but it's now morphed very clearly into 2 different functions. Is that about the size of it?

[00:04:19] **Clive Allwright:** That's exactly right. So basically, it started off.

[00:04:23] **Clive Allwright:** From my own experience as being an educator, uh, how do I get to a wider audience and how do I make myself more accessible? A lot of people would contact me privately and ask me the same questions, whether they were a big salon or a small salon, what could I do? What was my skillset? How could I. What could I bring to, to the, to the table when it comes to education?

[00:04:44] **Clive Allwright:** And I thought there must be a way to simplify this is where if you're looking for someone that's just say specifically, you're looking for someone to teach barbering, shouldn't you go onto a site or wouldn't it be great to go onto a site where you could filter these, the barbers, these live in my area, these are what you can do, and we can book them to come in on demand

[00:05:01] **Clive Allwright:** into the salon. Once we built that and that was going really, really well, that's been really successful. What we realized was we built a platform where we deliver people to salons. Um, and we were delivering educators, uh, all around Australia and salons then came to us and was like, okay, your education's great, but what I really need is I had someone to come and help me out on a Saturday.

[00:05:23] **Clive Allwright:** Is there someone that you can send to us? And we developed an assistant training program and typed into a very niche. Market we've sent in some excellent skilled people, just like Uber that you just book them on demand into the salon and, uh, they come and help you out when you, when you really need them.

[00:05:40] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. So, let's, let's not talk about the assistant thing. First of all, let's explore a little bit, the, the educator side of things, and then we'll go back to booking an assistant. Is it an app or is it a website?

[00:05:53] **Clive Allwright:** It's just a website at this stage, right? It will eventually become an app as well. We're actually developing the app along with the website, but right now it's just the website.

[00:06:02] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. So, um, the, the website from an education point of view, if I'm an educator, how do I use the website? And if I'm a salon owner, how do I use the website?

[00:06:17] **Clive Allwright:** Great. So, if you're an educator, what you can do, you basically jump on the site and you register and make a profile and, in your profile, you'll explain, uh, exactly what your skillset is.

[00:06:28] **Clive Allwright:** Um, you'll also have an opportunity to show your portfolio of your work and most importantly, your rates. So. And we have a half day, right? We have a full day, right? And we have an evening, right? Um, and so someone's can browse. I can go on to the site. And what we do in our salon is is when we do a training night once a month, I'll say to my staff, I'll say, right, what do you want to focus on this month?

[00:06:54] **Clive Allwright:** And they'll say, we want someone to come in and do hair painting. And I go, right, jump on the side. Find someone that you really like that specializes in hair painting and let's book them for either a day or an evening or both if we need to. And most salons or salon owners wouldn't even know how to get hold of an educator.

[00:07:13] **Clive Allwright:** It's usually done through their product company. And you can only get access to the educator that your product company supplies. And so, if you're not with that product, then it kind of hinders you in who you can actually get to come in. And as well, what we've done is done exactly the same as what you would get on Expedia or Airbnb, but instead of houses, it's people.

[00:07:33] **Clive Allwright:** And, um, and you just book them as and when you need them. And so many people would contact me and we'd talk about what I can do. I'd talk about how the day would go. I'd talk about what they would need in regards to mannequins or models. And then most of all, when we tend to have that conversation about price and how much I charge, and then what happened is I would do the job, I would then have to invoice.

[00:07:57] **Clive Allwright:** And then I'd have to wait for the money to come through. And the whole process took forever. And I thought, surely, we can do this exactly like they do with other businesses, as I've already previously mentioned. And so, what happens is the salon will find the educator that they like, or that they're looking for.

[00:08:13] **Clive Allwright:** They will click and book and they will pay up front, which goes through PayPal. Once you've made the booking, you can then freely communicate with the, with the educator and you have an open line of dialogue. Um, then the educator turns up, does the job and you rate and review each other. The educator will review the, the salon and the salon will, will review and rate and review the educator, just like you get on Uber.

[00:08:38] **Clive Allwright:** The minute that that's done and the following day, the money leaves our PayPal account and it goes straight to the educator. So, there's no invoicing that's needed to be done. The salon that the educator doesn't have to chase up money or sit there for a day invoicing for the jobs that they've done. It's all automated and it's really seamless.

[00:08:57] **Clive Allwright:** It's it just makes our life so much easier. That's fantastic.

[00:09:00] **Antony Whitaker:** So, so, anyone as an educator can put their profile on

[00:09:06] **Clive Allwright:** there. Correct. Right.

[00:09:08] **Antony Whitaker:** So there's, so there's no one who vets the educators and there's no affiliation with the educators. It's not, it's not ran through any particular manufacturer or anything.

[00:09:18] **Antony Whitaker:** It's just any hairdresser who thinks they've got a skill to offer can upload their own profile, say what their, what their skills are. And am I right in saying that they set their own fees?

[00:09:30] **Clive Allwright:** Correct. They set their own fees. And so it is a sort of two pronged approach to this as well. So most of our educators that use the site, when someone contacts them privately, whether it be through their Instagram profile or whatever, most of our educators tell us, they say someone contacted me on Instagram and asked me if I can come and do a session.

[00:09:51] **Clive Allwright:** The first thing I told them to do was check out my Pilloroo profile and book me through Pilloroo. That way I know my money's safe. And I know that I'm going to get paid as soon as the job's done, it's clear and precise on what is actually required on the day, tells you what kind of equipment you need to bring, um, shows a portfolio of my work, and, and they

usually, they use it as a tool as a regular booking platform, so yeah, it's, it's really seamless.

[00:10:18] **Clive Allwright:** In the answer to your question, no one vets the educators, but the educators get rated and reviewed by the, by the, People that are doing the job for the salons and then the educators rate the salon, uh, as in, I'd say when I got there, everything was set up well, they treated me well, the models were good, all that kind of stuff.

[00:10:35] **Clive Allwright:** And when we do this writing and review on both sides to, and as a salon owner, you can search through all the different profiles and you can see all the writing and reviews and we do a five-star rating as well. So, okay, obviously, if we have an issue where someone gets booked for a job and the review is good, then we need to.

[00:10:53] **Clive Allwright:** Pull the educator aside and say, maybe it's, this is when we maybe need to do a little bit more work, or this may not be for you. Yeah. That hasn't happened.

[00:11:01] **Antony Whitaker:** Right. Okay. What about all the, you know, the boring stuff, um, insurance, uh, who pays tax, things like that? How do you cover

[00:11:09] **Clive Allwright:** off on all that? That's great.

[00:11:11] **Clive Allwright:** So everyone that's on our site, I mean, I'm like, we're based here in Australia and I'm sure, you know, your listeners around, we, we have a thing called an ABN, which is an Australian business number to be. Uh, as a contractor, you must have that number. I think it's called a tax file number in the UK, et cetera.

[00:11:27] **Clive Allwright:** So they're basically like their own business and they set their own rates. Um, one of the things that's included in our fee is that we ensure the educator when they go into the salon in case if anything happens, then if a personal injury or if they cut someone's ear or whatever it may be, they're covered under our insurance.

[00:11:47] **Clive Allwright:** Um, as an educator in Australia, they must take out their own public, um, indemnity as well, their own private insurance, but all the tax obligations are down to the educator. Just the same as it would be as if

you were doing a private gig for a salon anyway. If you charge the salon, um, you would have to, you know, declare the money and pay the tax.

[00:12:07] **Clive Allwright:** So what we do is we just offer a platform where we connect almost a business with the business is a B2B platform. That's basically what it is. Yeah.

[00:12:17] **Antony Whitaker:** And you make your money by taking a piece out of the middle,

[00:12:21] **Clive Allwright:** basically. That's right. We take a 15 percent uh, booking fee and in that 15 percent, we cover your insurance while you're in there, right?

[00:12:31] **Clive Allwright:** Okay. That is,

[00:12:31] **Antony Whitaker:** that is fantastic. So, so that is the, the education, uh, side of what pillar is, um, just so we can clarify this because the name sounds very Australian, uh, with the word with the word roux on the end of it, which Australians have got a habit of doing, but I know that it's not. Okay. It's not really affiliated with that at all.

[00:12:52] **Antony Whitaker:** Uh, do you just want to just give me a little bit of background? First of all, tell us how you spell the word Pilloroo and, uh, and explain where it did come from, because I think that's a very interesting story as well.

[00:13:03] **Clive Allwright:** So Pilloroo is spelled P I L L O R O O. Um, and we, we tried, we, we tried different names and, you know, we had very many different working names when we were going through this process and the working name that we had at the beginning was Hair B& B, uh, Hair Tasker.

[00:13:21] **Clive Allwright:** We came up with all different stuff and, uh. They were all very expensive names to buy and being a startup, you know, cash flow is not in abundance. And so funny enough, our chairman and one of the instrumental people behind Pilloroo is actually French. And we started searching for a name and he discovered that plurum is, is actually the Latin word for the erectile pili muscle, which is actually the muscle that makes your hair stand up.

[00:13:48] **Clive Allwright:** Right. And so. And then with all startups, I'm sure it makes your hair stand up. And ironically at that time was when I'm, I'm thinking England, you have delivery. Do you have delivery? Yes, we do deliver the food. Um, so it's the same as like Uber eats. Yeah. Uber eats. That's right. And we looked out the window and there was all these guys waiting on their bikes out, out on Elizabeth street and with the delivery coats and the things.

[00:14:12] **Clive Allwright:** And I was like, we just deliver people to salons. So it was like pillo the plural. Pillo And then we just put the rOO on the end. So it basically, it refers to the erect type pillo muscle, which makes your hair stand up. But we're delivering it to your salon in a convoluted way, but that's where the name.

[00:14:29] **Antony Whitaker:** No, it's great. It's a, it's a great name. Very catchy name. Okay. So, um, from the salon owners' point of view. Um, just talk about Pilloroo as an education website. Just talk about all the advantages for the salon owner. You have sort of, you know, weave that in and out as we were talking about it from an educator's point of view.

[00:14:50] **Antony Whitaker:** But just to sort of a bit of a recap as to how it works from a salon owner's point

[00:14:55] **Clive Allwright:** of view. Great. So. I'm going to reflect back on something that happened to us, uh, about a year ago, when we first started building the site, uh, we interviewed a new staff member who, like a lot of hairdressers had not had any experience with really cutting men's hair.

[00:15:12] **Clive Allwright:** And she sat in the interview and she said, look, there's this global trend of men getting fades. And she said, I've, I've only learned scissor over time. And she was actually from the UK. And she said It scares the life out of me. I have no idea how to use a pair of clippers and, um, you know, I'm just going to be upfront that if anyone comes in with a fade, I can't do it.

[00:15:33] **Clive Allwright:** And in the interview, we passed over a phone and we pulled up Pilloroo and we said, right, scroll through the barbers that are in Sydney and find someone that you think you would like to learn from. And she looked through and ironically, she picked a young guy who's on our site called Jake Patan. I said, just to check out his profile, it's awesome.

[00:15:52] **Clive Allwright:** And we just booked him there and then in the interview, we said, right, next Monday we are going to do a half day. Uh, look and learn and then a half day workshop with him and he's going to come in and show you and not only does he teach you how to fade, he shows all the clippers and all the different tools that he uses.

[00:16:10] **Clive Allwright:** And it was amazing. We didn't even have to pick up the phone. We, we literally booked him online. He got, he received the booking, he accepted, and we solved the problem straight away. And it was, I think it was around about October time. And we actually got Jake back in to do a session for the rest of the staff the following week.

[00:16:28] **Clive Allwright:** And, and as, as the approach to Christmas, uh, everyone was so competent in doing something new and there was a new level of excitement and that can be on anything that we just barbering is the example that I've used, but that could be in hair painting or whatever, but that's how easy it is to use. I didn't have to pull out an education brochure or, or literally go and look around for, you know, search Instagram.

[00:16:50] **Clive Allwright:** It was literally, I used the filters and I said, I need a barber on this day. At this location, who's available and then there was a list of others that came up and so yeah, it was awesome. Fantastic.

[00:17:01] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. All right. Now, um, as is so often the case with good ideas is you start off. With one thing in mind and, uh, you know, market forces, whatever you want to call it, uh, present other opportunities.

[00:17:14] **Antony Whitaker:** And I, I know that that is where Pilloroo started in this education area, but I know that it's now morphed into this other area, which you touched on in your intro about finding assistance. So, tell us all about that. How does, how does that work? How did that come about? And what does

[00:17:32] **Clive Allwright:** that look like? It's so funny.

[00:17:34] **Clive Allwright:** Actually, when we started this process, obviously, we had the team that helped us put this together, which ironically, they all come from the travel world from Expedia and those places. They're smart people. They actually told, they explained to Kelly and I, when you start do a startup, quite often it ends up.

[00:17:50] **Clive Allwright:** Starting as something that goes somewhere else. And we were like, no, no, this is exactly what it's going to be. And ironically, as I talked to you today, it has become something else. And I think I touched on it earlier on. And that is that once people got used to dealing with it in a hairdressing digital platform, they would then contact us and say, is there any, is there anyone that you can help?

[00:18:11] **Clive Allwright:** Or do you have anyone that would come be interested in coming and helping out as an assistant and we started to delve into a little bit and we thought, well, what's the difference between changing a profile from an educator to an assistant? So, we have a drop-down box on our platform, so you can either search for an educator, or if you click it underneath, you can search for an assistant and we started looking for.

[00:18:35] **Clive Allwright:** It's ideal candidates that would look at doing hairdressing, um, on like the Uber model. So many people want to, want to work, but they don't want to necessarily work full time. And I think we can all be honest here that we've, we're facing a global challenge in our industry, not just in Australia, but I know in the UK and in the US, we're really struggling to find young people to take hairdressing as a career seriously.

[00:18:59] **Clive Allwright:** And, um, they see it as being long hours and unfortunately not a lot of money. And what we've done is we've created by using Pilloroo is we've now got this army of assistants, which started off wanting to just put food on the table. Um, they, we trained them to become an extra pair of hands in the salon

[00:19:18] **Clive Allwright:** so, we teach them to shampoo, take off a color, sweep, um, you know, wash up the color bowls and salons, just book them on demand just like you would book an educator. So most of our salons book the assistants on the busy days, like Thursday, Friday and Saturday or in the late nights and, and it's all done online. So you don't hire these people as, um, you know, they're not on your payroll.

[00:19:42] **Clive Allwright:** They're that's part of the gig economy, just like our, um, uh. Educators are all the assistants have their own ABN and, um, and they will literally connect a business with the business and, um, it's become so successful. That's what we're really focusing now on in Australia, because we really are making a difference.

[00:20:01] **Clive Allwright:** And when we set out on this project, what, you know, we had a little motto saying we really wanted to raise the bar. We wanted to raise the bar of education. We wanted to raise the bar of. Of what we do every day and salons like mine, and they don't run profitably and productively if I've got to do all the things that an assistant does.

[00:20:20] **Clive Allwright:** If I've got to shampoo my client, but I've got to wash the color balls, serve the coffee, then I'm not doing what I'm paid to do. And so by supplying this army of people that go into salons and booked on demand as and when you need them with we get in such a success right now with and salons now in Sydney now they've got the head around it.

[00:20:38] **Clive Allwright:** They're like, this is such a genius idea it is and so yeah,

[00:20:43] **Antony Whitaker:** you were telling me a story before we got on air about, um, a young Brazilian boy who came to work for you. Tell us that story because I thought it was it's it's

[00:20:54] **Clive Allwright:** So what, how this all started, once the education platform was up and running, we, I mean we, my business partner Kelly and I, we run a small business, a small salon as well, and we faced the challenges just like everyone else, and we stuck a sign in the window, and it just said we need an extra pair of hands in times when we're busy.

[00:21:12] **Clive Allwright:** Please inquire within and one day I'm cutting hair in the salon and this little young lad, which we call Alfie Um, he knocked on the front door and I said come on in and then he knocked again and I was like and I waved him to come on into the salon and he knocked again and So I opened the front door and he said excuse me, sir I saw your sign in the window and I've just arrived this morning from Mexico.

[00:21:35] **Clive Allwright:** I'm here for three months Do my PhD in English and I need to get a job. I need to do, and I would do anything, teach me and I'll do whatever you need to do. And ironically, I found out weeks later that the reason why he didn't walk through the front door was because in Mexico, all the doors are locked and you just don't walk into a, to a shop.

[00:21:54] **Clive Allwright:** And he'd never been out of Mexico until that morning when he arrived in Sydney. And, um, but basically what happened

[00:22:00] is we taught little Alfie to shampoo and become. Uh, part of the salon and all the clients loved him and he worked for us for the three months and it was a sad day when unfortunately, he had to go back.

[00:22:12] **Clive Allwright:** But Kelly and I were like, there must be thousands of these people that are here as students across Sydney. Because Sydney, as you know, it's a big international city and where our salon is located. There's lots of backpackers and lots of students and lots of universities. And these people are either working in hospitality or they're cleaning offices at nighttime or doing all these other different jobs.

[00:22:31] **Clive Allwright:** And most of the time we offer an amazing place to work. You know, we call people with great music and, and they're fun places to be salons. And, you know, it's not for everyone. But it certainly was for Alfie and Alfie ended up going back to Mexico and he, um, got a job in a salon. He's still studying and he's now become a little bit of a superstar.

[00:22:51] **Clive Allwright:** And so we just tapped into that market of, of students that are in Australia, that if you've got a visa, if you've got a passport and you've come here to study English and most of our workforce on Pillar are Brazilian and Nepalese and Indian. Um, you, you, you get stuff done, you know, you, you, you've got some now, so what we call now about you and, um, these guys are just amazing because they're here, they're here to study English legally, they can work 20 hours a week.

[00:23:21] **Clive Allwright:** They've all got their own ABN because most of them were doing cleaning jobs or hospitality before, and they just want to work in salons.

[00:23:28] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, let me just jump in there just to clarify that again with the ABN thing. I'm sorry. No, you did. You did say it earlier on what an ABN was, but I'm just going to repeat it for our UK and American audience.

[00:23:40] **Antony Whitaker:** An ABN is an Australian thing, stands for Australian business number? Right. So, in the UK, that would be something they call a tax file number. And in the U S I'm imagining that would be their social security number. So in other words, it's just to make sure that, you know, you, you are a business unit of one and, um, that this is legal and you know, that, that you're a,

[00:24:02] **Antony Whitaker:** you're a legal entity and you're going to pay your own tax, et cetera, et cetera. So that's all the ABN thing is. Um, I think I, I said he was Brazilian, so he's actually Mexican uh, but yeah, good, good story. Um, so just so I can be clear on that, they're not hairdressers. They're people that are looking for part time work.

[00:24:22] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, and you train them in the, you train them am I correct in saying that in the fundamental skills that are needed before you send them out there as bona fide assistance?

[00:24:34] **Clive Allwright:** Correct. Yeah, we've actually developed our own training program and it's the alternative to in, in this country. We in, you know, if you want to work in hospitality, you must have a license to be able to work in an, a premises that serves alcohol.

[00:24:48] **Clive Allwright:** And that that's a two-day course to do. Um, and so the alternative to doing that is that you can come and do our course for the same price and we teach you how to shampoo, how to take off a color. How to greet people, um, how to wash a color bowl and a brush, how to sweep a station. And we, and these kids are fast learners.

[00:25:08] **Clive Allwright:** As I mentioned before, they, these people that used to getting stuff done, most of them have come to this country and they've got a degree in something. They're the physiotherapists or whatever. And they just are literally looking to, to survive while they're here, while they're studying and they're legally allowed to work 20 hours a week, but they must do our course first, which is what we've called it the ATP, which is the assistant training program.

[00:25:30] **Clive Allwright:** We've linked up with some, with some great people like Tony and Guy in Australia. We use their academy to do the training. So it's a an exciting place to be. Um, we've recently now formed an alliance with L'Oreal. So we're going to hopefully scale this throughout the country around Australia and use their training centers, um, with, with L'Oreal, um, to train these kids in, and we've had a, a training program written collectively with, with bunch of us and we put everything together.

[00:26:01] **Clive Allwright:** It's a PowerPoint. It's a teacher's guide and they do the two days with us and we give them their basic baptism of what it's like to do to be an assistant. And then the third part of their training is they get to go

to a real-life salon, what we call like an on-the-job training day, which we call a mentoring day.

[00:26:17] **Clive Allwright:** Yeah, and that's part of their training. So, in, they don't actually get paid for that third day, but on the, the, on the job training, we cover them on insurance. So the salon only pays a minimal fee of like \$2 or something for the insurance for the day. And in that day, what they happen, they have to demonstrate that they are competent in shampooing.

[00:26:35] **Clive Allwright:** They, they show initiative, they sweep the floor and, and what happens is the salon then rates and reviews just like the educator, that assistant and they give them their first writing in review and that's how then salon owners find and locate the assistance that are located close to them that they can book as and when they need them.

[00:26:54] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Okay. Um, so, uh, you've a couple of times you sort of said that these kids and I know they're not all kids, meaning, you know, that they're not, you know, I know, I don't know. I know you don't mean that negatively, but, um, what sort of age range. You know, do these, uh, assistance, you know, cover, um, because I can see there could be, you know, opportunities for a diverse, you know, age range of people to take advantage of this program.

[00:27:23] **Clive Allwright:** Absolutely. So most of the, I should refer to them as kids. You're right, but they, they, we feel like they're our family. So, um, yeah. They're, they're in their early twenties. Um, most of us, as I mentioned before, they've, they've been educated in their home country. Most of 'em, as I say, have come here with a degree.

[00:27:42] **Clive Allwright:** Yeah. Or they're working one, so they're in their, their sort of early twenties, 22 to 24. But we've also opened this up to working moms as well. And, you know, single moms or whatever it is that they've gotta have, they've had kids and, you know, they're free a couple of days a week and they want, uh, a little bit of.

[00:28:00] **Clive Allwright:** And, uh, we, they go through the training program and they say, well, my husband can take the kids on Saturday that's me back in the workforce for the day. I go and work in the cell and they love it. And it's, um, and ironically, we have, I've just come out of meeting today and we're now going to take this program into the schools, um, and we're going to start

presenting this to the high school students, um, and just show them how amazing hairdressing can be, uh, and to talk about some of the benefits of.

[00:28:30] **Clive Allwright:** Of being involved in headrest. And then, as I mentioned before, this is like a bridging gap. It's like a toe in the water. Yeah. So, you know, you're not committing to an apprenticeship. You're just going to go and try before you buy, you know?

[00:28:42] **Antony Whitaker:** So, this could be, you know, a 16, 17-year-old still at secondary school who is going to work in a salon on a, on a Saturday or during the school holidays or whatever, during which coincide with busy periods in salons.

[00:28:54] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay that's fantastic. Um, what about yeah uh, yeah, late nights. What about the receptionist angle? Has that sort of read its head? I mean, do you, you know, if I've got a salon and my receptionist calls up today and she says, I've got food poisoning, I can't come in, I wish they'd come up with something more original than food poisoning all the time.

[00:29:16] **Antony Whitaker:** But anyway, um, is there, is there a way that you fill that gap? I mean, can you jump on Pillaroo and see, is there someone who's, you know, a receptionist who's got these skills that, you know, trained in this point-of-sale system, you know, that can be, can be there within an hour or so, or, or am I stretching it too far here?

[00:29:35] **Clive Allwright:** The receptionist thing is not that popular, um, purely because I mean, in Australia, unfortunately, there isn't an abundance of salons that still use receptionists, you know, salons have got smaller. Um, however, saying that we do have an amount of, of our assistance, which actually are qualified head research, which are on our site.

[00:29:57] **Clive Allwright:** And for various different reasons, as I mentioned before, they might've had a baby or we've got, we've caught a couple of superstars, which have actually unfortunately decided to leave hairdressing and go to uni. Yeah. And while they're funding their way through, they're like, you know, I can take off a color. I can do a toner and I can answer the phone and I can use your booking system and we can, we know who they are on the site.

[00:30:18] **Clive Allwright:** And if someone does need someone that can do all those things, we, we can let the salon know to book that particular person because they have all the skill set. Now, the other thing that with that, the better the skill set, the higher the rate. So. Um, you pay a little bit more for someone that can do all those things or do a blow dry

[00:30:35] **Clive Allwright:** if it walks in, um, as I've mentioned, do it, do a toner at the base and or follow instructions to mix a color.

[00:30:42] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. So again, those assistants, when they upload their own profile, saying what their skills are. So if they were skilled in operating, you know, certain point of sale systems or whatever, they can list that on their profile.

[00:30:55] **Antony Whitaker:** And if they've got experience, let's imagine that it was someone who, you know, was a hairdresser, but they've been out of the industry for 10 years. Uh, they, they don't particularly want to do clients, but yes, I can put a toner on. Yes. I can take a tint off or whatever. Uh, they can list all that sort of stuff on their profile.

[00:31:14] **Antony Whitaker:** And then they also can set their own alley is an hourly rate or a day a day rate?

[00:31:20] **Clive Allwright:** It's a, it's a, it's broken up into a day rate, or a half day or a 3 hour evening.

[00:31:25] **Antony Whitaker:** Right? So they set that based on what they feel is, um, you know, what they want to get relative to their skill level. Wow. Absolutely. Okay.

[00:31:34] **Clive Allwright:** Yeah. And so, I mean, we've got some of the, that they put on there that, you know, the, you know, the different booking systems that they're familiar with, the different product companies that they've worked with, you know, their level of competency and what they can do or what they're prepared to do, you know, most of them say most of these guys that are actually qualified hairdressers are like, look, I have no desire to go and color or cut hair in someone else's salon, but I'm a damn good assistant.

[00:31:57] **Clive Allwright:** And I can shampoo and I can, you know, and
[00:32:00] I'm, I'm, I can watch the clock and know when things are happening
and then they're worth their weight in gold.

[00:32:05] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, I know someone who we both know who
is, or I don't know if he still is, but he was working through pillar who has an
assistant and, and this guy, you know, he's been in the industry

[00:32:17] **Antony Whitaker:** 45, 50 odd years. And, uh, I think you know who
I'm talking about and, uh, he's a, he's a legendary assistant, what he doesn't
know about being an assistant isn't worth knowing. Okay, well, listen, we need
to wrap up life, but just, just a couple of points to wrap up on what are the
plans to expand this internationally?

[00:32:37] **Antony Whitaker:** I mean, I know you're, um, you live in Australia,
your salon's in Australia, your family's in Australia, but I know you're from the
UK. I know you spend a fair bit of time over here every year. I also know that
you've worked extensively in the US, um, in a, in a former life, so to speak. Um,
are there any plans to expand this internationally?

[00:32:55] **Antony Whitaker:** Is it a, is it a franchisable business model?

[00:32:58] **Clive Allwright:** Absolutely. And as I mentioned, we are a startup.
Um, baptism into the startup world has definitely been one that's been a
journey and, you know, like all startups, it costs money to grow these
platforms, but we're growing this organically in Australia. First, we really want
to get this model right here.

[00:33:16] **Clive Allwright:** And then obviously we would love to expand this
into different international markets, but where we also see pillar route going
as that, which is a very, I'm jumping ahead of the game here, and my business
partners will shoot me for this, but we really see, um, Piru developing into an
event booking site as well.

[00:33:34] **Clive Allwright:** So what you could do as an educator, you can host
your event on to Pillaro platform. And you are, I'm Do you have Eventbrite in
England for ticket tax? Yes. Yes, we do. We do. Yeah. Both of those things and
yeah, we are looking at expanding Pillaroo into like an Eventbrite or Ticketek
where an educator can host their, their event, you could be down in
Melbourne next weekend and say, look, I'm doing a show on the Monday.

[00:34:01] **Clive Allwright:** I'd like to do a, an event on the Tuesday morning and I'll sell the tickets to it. So. That's one thing that we're looking at doing in the next, you know, 12 months or so, which is very premature right now, but that's kind of what we're super excited about. But as we get this model, right, and we're learning so much along the way, we're learning a lot about the people that are best suited to work in as assistants.

[00:34:22] **Clive Allwright:** We're learning about the educators and how they get the most work out of utilizing our site. Um, and it's, we've really got to get that message out across to, it's been a year and we, like all businesses, we came up with this, nothing like this in the world. And it's his first to market. And a lot of hairdressers were like, well, what about this?

[00:34:41] **Clive Allwright:** And what about that? And how does that work now? They're all saying, okay, we get it. And it's so clever. And as a result of which we're now finding people that want to come and work in our business. So. To wrap it up. Yes, we do want to expand. We do want to go into international mode. I see this as being a global issue for our industry, not just something that's isolated to Australia.

[00:35:02] **Clive Allwright:** And we're super excited about the potential of doing that. And, uh, obviously that's going to take money. And so, if anyone, if any of your listeners that are interested in what they've had to listen to someday, I'd certainly like to hear from them.

[00:35:14] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, definitely. And, and so, um, I think this is just such a great example of, of solving

[00:35:22] **Antony Whitaker:** you know, what has been a problem? What is a big problem all over the world in the industry? Um, you know, the hairdressing industry doesn't attract the volume of people that it used to. And for a whole number of reasons, um, you know, cost of employing people, etcetera, you know, in different countries again, it's gone through the roof.

[00:35:39] **Antony Whitaker:** So I think this is a fantastic example of solving, you know, existing problems with with current technology. You know, you can't solve. You know, our problems with old ways of thinking, you've got to, you've got to solve them. You've got to address them with new ways of thinking. And I think that Pillaroo and what you and your team have put together is a brilliant example of that.

[00:35:58] **Antony Whitaker:** So, uh, all the best with it. Thank you very much. Where can people get in touch with you? What are your social media, um, email website, what, what, what details do people need if they want to reach out to you or even just have a good old knows about and have a look at pillar and how it works? How do they do that?

[00:36:14] **Clive Allwright:** First thing I'd suggest you do is jump onto our website, which is Pilloroo.com, and I'll spell that out again, it's P I L L O R O O dot com, and just have a search, look for the educators, look, look at the assistants, look at the, the, the superstars that we have. Um, it's an exciting site to be on, and you know, it's, I was with someone yesterday and they said you've built something that's really quite beautiful, so, which was, which was nice to hear.

[00:36:39] **Clive Allwright:** Um, you can check us out on Instagram, our, our Instagram name is Pillorocom. Someone already took pillory, which upsets a little bit, but it's Pillorrocom and not .com just com, or you can email me at Clive, C L I V E at pilloroo.com.

[00:36:57] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. Well, Clive, it's been fantastic talking to you.

[00:37:01] **Antony Whitaker:** And, um, I'm sure that this is going to be a huge success, um, with you, with you behind it, your team behind it. It's, it's a success. It's well deserved too. So, Clive Allwright, Pilloroo, thank you very much for joining us today on the Grow My Salon Business podcast.

[00:37:15] **Clive Allwright:** It's an absolute pleasure. Thank you so much for having me on Antony.

[00:37:20] **Antony Whitaker:** Thank you for listening to today's podcast. If you'd like to connect with us, you'll find us at growmysalonbusiness.com or on Facebook and Instagram at grow my salon business. And if you enjoyed tuning into our podcast, make sure that you subscribe, like, and share it with your friends until next time.

[00:37:38] **Antony Whitaker:** This is Antony Whitaker wishing you continued success.