

GMSB 183

[00:00:00] **Antony W:** 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 on business.

[00:00:27] **Antony W.:** Hey, it's Antony Whitaker here and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. I really want to start off by saying thank you for all the feedback on the podcast, the reviews that you've posted. Rarely do mean a lot to me, I read every one of them and I wish it was like social media where I could reply to you, but you know who you are. So a very heartfelt thank you. And if you haven't yet written us a review, just visit the Apple Podcast app and search Grow My Salon Business. And there will be a link in the show notes section. So, with that said on with today's show, so today is the first in a series of perhaps three episodes where I want to talk to hairstylists, who most of the audience may not have heard of before. But amongst other things, what makes these people so special is that they produce very high revenue figures behind the chair, and I want to find out what it is that it takes to do that. Now, my guest on today's podcast is Denise Deering from the Juut salons in Palo Alto, and Denise is one of those hairstylists who produce ballpark half a million dollars a year behind the chair. Now for context, half a million US dollars is 417,000 pounds, or 470,000 Euro or Australian dollars. That's 752,000 New Zealand dollars, 808,000 or Canadian dollars, 683,000. So, these are big figures. Now, I'm gonna take a guess here. I'm gonna say that the average American hair stylist, and this is just a guess, probably generates between 80 and a hundred thousand a year behind the chair in total sales. So, when you meet someone who's doing five times that, they're obviously doing something very special. So, in today's podcast, we're gonna discuss what the key is to doing extraordinary numbers behind the chair. How long does it take to build up a column, how to avoid burnout, finding balance, and lots more. So, without further ado, Welcome to the show, Denise Deering.

[00:02:45] **Denise D.:** Hi, Antony. Thank you so much for having me.

[00:02:48] **Antony W.:** I wanted to start off doing, Denise, was just to ask you what I pretty much asked everyone to do, and that is to give us their sort of 60

second backstory. So, who is Denise Deering? And then, once you've answered that, then we can dig into the good stuff.

[00:03:03] **Denise D.:** All right. I am, I grew up in Wisconsin, small farm town, and my mom was also a hairdresser and I wanted to go to cosmetology schools. So, I went to the Aveda Institute in Minneapolis. At that time, it was the Horst education center. And after I went to cosmetology school, I went through the Aveda, massage school. And then I applied for, a job at the time it was Horst salons. David Wagner had acquired them. So, I started in Minneapolis. I was, I first started as a stylist. And when I went through the whole styling program, after a year, I realized that I wanted to be a colorist. So, then I assisted for another year to be a colorist. So, I was in Minneapolis for six years, and then when David acquired the Juut in Palo Alto, I transferred out there. So, I've been in Palo Alto for 23 years. And with Juut 28 years.

[00:04:07] **Antony W.:** Okay. Fantastic. All right, so you've done all your career with the one company. So that in itself is an amazing testimony. and like as we go through this conversation, it's digging into what does it take to be successful, to be that successful. And you meet a lot of young stylists who really want to be successful. And they've been in the industry two or three years or something, and they've already worked in two or three different salons. And so, I think, that there's an expression, I think it, I don't know who said it first, but Tony Robbins uses it a lot. And it is, success leads clues. And I think that's gonna be a sort of a theme that I want people to take from this podcast is that what is it that someone does who is able to produce the sort of figures that you are producing? Because I believe that success leads clues. So, 28 years in the industry, all that time in one salon started in Minneapolis, but then you moved to Palo Alto, which for anyone who doesn't know is, is it part of San Francisco?

[00:05:06] **Denise D.:** So, it's 30 miles apart, so technically no.

[00:05:10] **Antony W.:** Okay.

[00:05:11] **Denise D.:** They're separate.

[00:05:11] **Antony W.:** So, I knew it was, it's the sort of the home of tech, isn't it? It's the home of, all the big tech brands I know are based, I weren't sure how close it was to, San Francisco. So, let's get in and start talking about these numbers here. just for context, I introduced you as doing ballpark about half a

million dollars a year in sales as your best year. Are we, am I on the money with that? I'm not exaggerating at all. That is about what you are able.

[00:05:34] **Denise D.:** Yes, that is correct.

[00:05:38] **Antony W.:** Okay, that, that is extraordinary. there are a lot of people that, will be rocked back on their heels for that. and I'll be wanting to know the answers, to the questions I'm gonna ask you. So, first thing I wanted to ask you about is, that's in total sales. Do you know ballpark? What would be the services retail split on that?

[00:05:58] **Denise D.:** So, what we're commission based, so I get, 50% of my service. And then retail. We have, it depends on how much you make. So, the more you bring in, the more, the percent you get. So, it could be anywhere between four to 6%. And then every quarter we have, we have a high performer bonus, and if you get over a certain amount, it's either four or 6% of your service sales. And so that's like an extra, I get that every quarter typically.

[00:06:34] **Antony W.:** Right? okay, so that's how you get, how you get paid. thank you for sharing that. but out of the, say half a million dollars that you generate in a year in sales, how many dollars of that would be retail?

[00:06:46] **Denise D.:** That'd be around, like 80,000 for retail.

[00:06:50] **Antony W.:** About 80,000 of that. Okay. so big retail numbers, a company, big, service, numbers as well. Okay. how many hours, like if you meet someone who's generating that sort of money, the first thing you think of is, oh my God, they must work all the hours that God sends. how many days a week would you typically find yourself in the salon? Behind the chair?

[00:07:08] **Denise D.:** So, I'm typically in the salon five days a week. I'm there Tuesday through Saturday. I'm there right when we open, and I'm pretty much there closing as well. give or take an hour at the end. But I'm there every day though. and then,

[00:07:25] **Antony W.:** So, 40 hours a week you'd be in there 35 to 40 hours a week? Okay. Do have you got management responsibility in the salon or are you a, hardcore dedicated behind the chair stylist?

[00:07:36] **Denise D.:** I'm typically, full-time behind the chair. I will partake in with education and then because I'm just a colorist, I help to direct a lot of the color department. But we have, in every salon we have a salon manager and then we have a front desk manager. So if I need anything else, I go to them. I will help them with the inventory though. For the color department?

[00:07:59] **Antony W.:** Have you always specialized in colour?

[00:08:00] **Denise D.:** I have, so I typically do color, I do extensions, and then I'll do keratin treatments. And the only thing I don't do is cutting. I don't, so I'm not as, cutter at all.

[00:08:15] **Antony W.:** Right now, I know that in Juut there are, a lot of stylists that are very productive. people when they listen to this, they go, oh, Palo Alto. No wonder she's producing half a million a year. And Oh, she's a colorist. No wonder she's producing half a million a year. People always like to validate why that's happening and that couldn't possibly happen to them because they're in some small town, city, country, whatever. So, what I wanted to ask you about was, do you have cutters in the salon that are comparable to generating the same sort of revenue figures that you

[00:08:50] **Denise D.:** Yes. We have some master stylist and yes, they have the potential to generate the same amount. They also receive like high performer bonuses, and so it is achievable, definitely, but also a lot of the stylists tend to also do extensions, which definitely adds a lot more revenue.

[00:09:13] **Antony W.:** Adds a lot more. Yeah. Okay. So, I know you touched on extensions, color and extensions, and I think you said keratin treatments. is there any specific service that you focus on that is your sort of, this is the, the key to being highly productive? Is there anything in particular that you'd like to focus on?

[00:09:36] **Denise D.:** I have to say most of my revenue comes from color and I have a pretty large clientele of like the tape in extensions cause they're, it's quick money and it's pretty easy to, do like, put 'em in and take 'em out. But, cause I, I have that service and I do a lot just for fullness and so it's pretty easy.

[00:09:58] **Antony W.:** Yep. Okay. And what sort of, over the years, 28 years behind the chair, you obviously find a lot of, shortcuts, a lot of time hacks, et cetera. and there's an inevitability about this as well in that, I often say to

people, I've been hairdressing, me personally, 40 odd years. and the first, I don't know, two or three years, if you got me to do a, let's say a Bob, just to give it a description, it might have taken me 45 minutes to an hour from start to finish. But 20 years into my career, or 30 years into my career, it doesn't take you that long to do the same thing because you've done hundreds of them, if not thousands of them. So, you know your way around ahead of here a bit quicker. I suppose what I wanted to ask you about trying to understand how you are so productive. What sort of hacks have you found to manage your time efficiently and to, to get a lot done in the same amount of hours that everybody else has a lot?

[00:10:59] **Denise D.:** So, I think the biggest thing and what I'm kind of known for is my time management, I believe. it was a lot on how I was trained actually. So, when I was, going through the training program, the at Juut at the time hours we had an assistant program and I had to assist like two colorists and two stylists, and I was responsible for doing all their pressure point massages for every guest the shampoos. back then there was a lot of perms, so I was responsible to take down the perms and neutralize them. And then at the same time, I was also responsible for doing the towels and the gowns and the coffee. And so, I really had to, teach myself the time management. But I really feel that's what, helped me in my career to be able to work the way that I work because a lot of people can't, it's a lot of multitasking. there'll be any given time that I'll have maybe two or three guests at a time. And so, it's really on just like managing my time, how I do that I'm always checking my schedule. I check it weeks out. I make sure that everything is lined up. I'm every up.

[00:12:13] **Denise D.:** My biggest, fans are the front desk because they're the ones that know how to book my appointments and I try to, mine. book everything. So, it's pretty much like back-to-back. I can do tints, I can do anywhere from 15 minutes to say 45 depending on the amount of hair, but if it's like a regular guest, the front desk knows how to book them. So, if they need to come in a 15- or 30-minute spot, a highlights range, anywhere between, depending if it's a partial or full, but anywhere between 30 minutes to an hour and I do blocked booking. So, what that means is all of my appointment times, of my finishes are built in, so let's say if I have a 30-minute tent, technically the 30 minutes is broken up. So, 15 would be for my application, and that next 15 would be for me to style my guests prior to that. And so that's how I go. I just keep going like that. if someone's getting a haircut though, then that means I don't have to do the finish. So, I have, to me, that's, I have extra time to either get another guest in or do some add-on services.

[00:13:28] **Antony W.:** Okay. So, do you have a dedicated assistant or more than one dedicated assistant?

[00:13:36] **Denise D.:** Nope. I'm my own assistant, so I work without an assistant. so, I do everything myself, all my shampoos, all whatever you'd say. Toners or glosses. And I do all my blow dries. So, it's all me party of one, I guess

[00:13:53] **Antony W.:** That's incredible. Yeah, I see I was convinced you were gonna say, oh yeah, I've got two full-time assistants and they just are there to do everything for me. So, you, that, that's even more impressive that you actually do all the assisting stuff. cause you can spend a lot of time, gowning a client up, seating a client, getting them a coffee, getting them a magazine, walking them to the front desk. There's a lot of time involved in doing that. So, you are doing all that stuff as well as being this, productivity machine.

[00:14:20] **Denise D.:** Yes. Yeah. so, I do all of them.

[00:14:24] **Antony W.:** Okay, so, with the Palo Alto stuff, this is to satisfy my, I mean I know that JUUT is at the, the upper end of the pricing scale. But just to give us some sort of ballpark reference points so people understand. Cause oftentimes people think that when there's someone who does that much money, they must be charging, like, like Ted Gibson in, Los Angeles. I had Ted on the podcast and Ted charges, \$2,400 per a haircut. So, people often think that someone does half a million dollars a year. They must be charging a thousand dollars for a head of highlights or something. Just give us a ballpark breakdown of what sort of price points there are in the salon.

[00:15:06] **Denise D.:** Yeah, so for my, like a one-step retouch that's at 190, if it's a full color, it'd be more like 260. my full highlight is, like 390. And if you were to, so it's all like A la carte. So, if you were to do a tint and a highlight together, then roughly could be around 500 plus around 500. then if you add on glosses. and that's kind of the, so my, I guess my lowest price would be 190 for a one step.

[00:15:36] **Antony W.:** Right? Okay. Yeah. A one step application. Yeah. Got it. Okay. And in, so you were in Minneapolis, very different place to Palo Alto. Same sort of price points there.

[00:15:49] **Denise D.:** I was, I've been in Palo Alto for 23 years, so that's definitely changed. But as like now, yeah, we have definitely some stylists and colors that are, at those levels or they, charge like 200 for haircut or, yep.

[00:16:06] **Antony W.:** Yeah, so It's definitely one of the more expensive salons in town, but it is not, it's not telephone numbers for a haircut. it's the affordable, it's what I often refer to as the affordable luxury category. So yes, it's high end, but it's not, unaffordable. okay. Alright. So let me ask you this. What is it that motivates you? you've been doing this for 28 years. you are very successful. you are, paid. before we started recording, do you mind sharing with us again, but didn't say this since we've pushed a record button, but how much do you generate in tips a year?

[00:16:39] **Denise D.:** I generate around 80,000 in tips.

[00:16:43] **Antony W.:** In tips. Yeah. See, that's phenomenal. lot of people, they don't even make. There's a lot of people that don't even make half that in terms of their income. Never mind, just say gratuities, and you're getting another 80,000 US dollars a year in tips, which is, fantastic and testimony to the fact that you do a great job, that people love what you do and, are very happy to, reward you for that. okay. What, so what is it that, after 28 years that keeps you motivated and passionate about?

[00:17:12] **Denise D.:** Yeah, I get that question all the time. even from older stylists and colorists. But I think the number one thing is that I am very passionate about my job. And the one thing I think that has, I've had my longevity through it, which I'm so grateful for, but it doesn't feel like work to me. I love what I do. And I've always told David if I could work longer hours, I would, but he's like, you work as many hours as you can, so yeah, I, I love what I do, so it doesn't feel like work, but the things that motivate me are, I get inspiration from a lot of the, know, like the new trainees that come in. I'm so inspired by them cause they have so much that I can learn from and vice versa. But it's always nice to have like, some new blood in the salon because that's what I feel like just energizes everything and keeps everything fresh and it's like up to dat. But not only that, but I also, I do a lot of education outside. JUUT brings in a lot of education, which is great. So, we have a lot of in-house stuff. Obviously, we're an Aveda salon, so I do a lot of the Aveda education, but for myself, I always like to see what's going on in the industry. So, I have a tendency to network outside of Aveda in JUUT to just be inspired by other, stylists, colorists. And I like to see what they're doing and because, that's what you need to do. And I really believe

that's one big part of it that's kept me motivated through the years, is to be inspired by, other, I say mentors, but I always tell people when they first start, I always find a mentor could be young, it can be old. I have mentors that are older than me. I have mentors and I always say this like my nieces and my nephews are also my mentors cause I learned so much on at any level really. And so, I just feel that's really important to stay inspired. one of the big things that I do every year is every January there's a, conference. It's a New Orleans and it's called Serious Business. And I love going to that conference because to me that's the number one way that I can refill my cup up is cause I have great motivational speakers and there's so many great people that attend that conference from our industry and I've, I, yeah, I just love that conference. So, they've just had their 25th.

[00:19:48] **Antony W.:** Yeah, it's a good, it's one of my favorites.

[00:19:51] **Denise D.:** So, I do things like that to just stay inspired. I feel it's really important too.

[00:19:56] **Antony W.:** Okay. How do you motivate yourself? When you wake up or does this never happen to you? I suppose what I'm asking you is this, it's great how you've just said how you're always filling up your own cup, so to speak, in terms of, I need education, I'm a sponge for knowledge and I'm receptive to it. But do you ever have days where you wake up and you just think, oh, I really don't wanna go to work. really like, does that ever happen to you? and if it does, how do you motivate yourself? How do you get yourself to, get in there and get it done?

[00:20:29] **Denise D.:** I'm very, I have a routine. I like to start, I don't like to be rushed. I like to settle in and make sure I have everything done and plan for the day or the week. So, a typical day for me would be, I get at 4:30 and I usually do like a short workout. I make my breakfast, I make my lunch for the day. and then also during that time, I. also during time, I check emails and stuff because I can't typically do that while I'm at work.

[00:21:00] So I get all my personal stuff done before I go to work. And then I'm typically out the door around 6:30, cause I usually start at work around, eight. And so I like to get to work 30 minutes prior because we have a, I call it a daily 30. And what I do during that time is I set up everything. I disinfect my tools, I make sure I have all my client cards pulled for the day. I make sure all my, supplies is prepared like foils and whatnot. And that's what I do before I even

start my day. Cause once I start my day, I won't have time to do stuff like that. And so I just like to be ready and have everything set up. But I.

[00:21:48] **Antony W.:** That is amazing. I'm still sat here thinking she gets up at 4:30 , there's a lot of people listening to this that they get home at 4:30

[00:21:59] **Denise D.:** Exactly the commute to Palo Alto. Cause I live in San Francisco, so I commute. So, it's can be anywhere between 45 minutes to an hour commute. And then, that's my time to do whatever I need to do in my car. Like listen to podcast or, so it's a good time. And then when I'm off of work, then that's my time to decompress on my way home.

[00:22:27] So Yeah. that commute time is kind of my time to like decompress and just to kind of go over my day, like how did my day go and, just kind of get an overview and see what the things that were great and maybe things that I had to work on.

[00:22:42] **Antony W.:** Let me ask you this. are you competitive with your colleagues in the salon? if there's another colorist. Doing the numbers that you are doing, or heaven forbid, doing more than you does that, fire you up to go, hang on, I'm the top dog here. And that's, the way it's meant to be.

[00:23:00] **Denise D.:** No, I don't, I'm not competitive that way. I'm, if anything, I'm more competitive with myself cause I'm like, can I do more? Can I do more? But, I mean I'm a goal oriented person, so I'm always setting goals. So I'm always wanting to do better. I can remember when I first started in Minneapolis and that was my goal. I wanted to be the top in the company and I was, every week I would. Obviously, this is before all the computer stuff, but I would have a tally sheet in my apron and I would have every day of the week lined up and then I would add up all my services each day, cause I had a target number by the end. And so, I would just be like, oh, I'm this far away from my goal. I need to do more add-ons or do add-on highlight or something. And so, I have, I'm very number oriented. I look at my numbers every week, every day. even now. I my goal is, I usually try to average at least 10,000 a week or more in services. And so, I'm really like aimed to reach those numbers. Then I also have my retail goal as well. And so, I'm always looking, okay, how can I do reach this goal? But yeah, so I'm always, looking at that. I'm not competitive as much, but what I really enjoy doing is the people that are just starting out. I really like to see them grow and it inspires me for them to see them get to the next level. And yeah, that it gives me, it gives me a nice sort of energy would you say, because there's something

nice about seeing people achieve their goals as well, and if I can help them do that. So, it's nice to see them go to the next level.

[00:24:50] **Antony W.:** How do you track your numbers now? okay, a long time ago you didn't have a computer, you had a piece of paper. What do you use these days? Have you got some app that you use or is it still a piece of?

[00:25:01] **Denise D.:** No, we have the spa biz and so it pulls up all of our numbers. it gives you the breakdown of everything like, retail progressed, and it shows you the break.

[00:25:11] **Antony W.:** So that's on your phone. You've got their, everyone's got that on their phone so they can see their own numbers in real time.

[00:25:17] **Denise D.:** Yeah. and then you can break it down. You can break it down to the day, the week, the quarter. Cause I always wanna make sure I'm gonna get my quarter a bonus and then obviously the year. Yep.

[00:25:29] **Antony W.:** Obviously, yep. Okay. Tell me about consultations. what are your consultations like, how important are they or have they been for you to become, the person that you've become?

[00:25:42] **Denise D.:** Yes. consultations are very important, especially for colorist. and as we know, we've had, even with Covid, we had, a lot of hair color fixes, would you say? So, they're very important, I think. they're very the most important thing about a consultation is just listening to the guest. If you just listen to what they say, you get a lot out of it. Cause I know a lot of people, sometimes will interrupt or that they wanna give them their ideas. But what I've found most often is that if you listen to the guests, you can hear the whole story, you can hear their history, you can, and then you can finally understand like what they want. But also in my consultation, I find, photos, headshot are very important because especially for a colorist, what you may think, magenta or Auburn is they may think it's something else. So I really work, with visuals just to establish, okay, what does this look like to you or feel like to you? but I do consultations with everybody. even my, longstanding guests that I've been doing for years, you always want to consult with them. Cause you never know if they're ready for change or if they have something going on in their life and they need something else, could be anything if it's health issues or whatnot. But, so I consult with them all the time, and the other reason why you wanna consult even with your long-term guests is because obviously trends change, but also

the seasons change. people want different looks for different seasons. And so, I just feel it's really important.

[00:27:18] **Antony W.:** So, I Do you have a phrase that your sort of go-to phrase that serves you well as a consultation? I know I used to, as a stylist, that's something that I just used to say, and it was me. I'd made it who I were, so to speak, but it was that sort of magic phrase that opened the door. I'm just curious as to what you might have.

[00:27:39] **Denise D.:** Yeah. I think for a new guest I always say, I always just start with, I let them open it up. I just say, so tell me a little bit about your hair. And then they'll give you their whole life story, usually. But so, for a new guest, I let them talk just so I can get to know them. And the other thing that I feel is important for a new guest is, don't stand behind the chair. I come out from behind the chair and look at them face to face. Cause I, if you have that connection, cause you want that connection in order for, to build that trust. Trust is gonna be the biggest thing. If you can build a trust with a guest, that's your gold right there. But, and if it's just like a regular guest, cause you have a relationship established already. So, with them, that's when I bring in more of like, okay, so what are you feeling? Like since we're coming closer to spring and summer, and I just ask them, do you want to do a change today? So, I do ask that. So, like I said, I base it on like the seasons or what's going on in their life too. Whether they have maybe a child's wedding to go to or, so if there's events coming up.

[00:28:53] **Antony W.:** Sure. Yeah. Do you find yourself upselling a lot in consultations? Do you consciously do that or not do that? Or how does that sort of?

[00:29:03] **Denise D.:** Oh yeah. I'll do it all the time. Like say if they're coming in, like, just for a one step color, and then I'll just say, hey, if, why don't we do some highlights today? Or, I feel like you need the highlights or low lights. And so I do that all the time. Or I sell a lot of glosses too, a lot gloss add-ons. So, I feel like every guest should leave with a gloss, loss. or conditioning treatment.

[00:29:27] **Antony W.:** Condition. Sure. Do you, do you have a figure for an average bill that you like to aim for?

[00:29:36] **Denise D.:** Yeah. I usually try to like, say if it's like a 45-minute spot, appointment time, I usually try to aim for like 300 or more in that 45 minute spot.

[00:29:49] **Antony W.:** Okay. and you get that often? Yeah. Obviously. Good on you. That's fantastic. And what about rebooking or pre-booking? Is that something that you are big on?

[00:30:01] **Denise D.:** Yes, very big on it. So, I have a lot of guests that some come every two weeks, and obviously three to four weeks they want certain times and days. And so those guests, they actually book out the whole year. Same. Time, same day. And, but I always encourage pre-booking, so I typically will tell my guests too, like I'll, that's why I try to block out all my vacations and time off like six months plus in advance so that it doesn't interfere with their schedule. And so I'll have like, if it's like a highlight, cause highlights usually, it could be anywhere from 8 to 10 weeks. So, I have them book like two appointments out. And obviously my tents, like I said, most of them will book for the year or they'll do like four to five months out.

[00:30:55] **Antony W.:** Yeah. What's the key to, you've, obviously you got a lot of loyalty there with a lot of clients? I'm trying to, I'm trying to ask the question. What's the key to getting that degree of consistency and trust? And, maybe that's the answer. to being so solid and being so dependable and so reliable and, I haven't asked you this question, but I know the answer. If I said to you, how long have you had some of your clients? You'd be saying to me, 10, 15, 20, 25 years, whatever. And I've imagined there's quite a big percentage of that. Am I right in saying?

[00:31:29] **Denise D.:** No, I've had some clients, yeah, for 20 plus years.

[00:31:33] **Antony W.:** So, what's the key, what's the secret to that?

[00:31:36] **Denise D.:** I think the key is there, there's several things. number one is, you're building a relationship. your guest, you spend more time with your guests than they probably do with their family or their husband. So that is huge to have that relationship and being able to talk about anything when they need someone to talk to. the other thing is, thing I, i, and I think too, this is why I've been able to do what I do for as long as I have, but, back in the day at Juut, we used to have these wellness days they call and these wellness days, you

acquired them if you never called in sick. So, I have never, as long as I've been with JUUT, I've never called in sick and I feel like that's.

[00:32:21] **Antony W.:** Hang on. You're saying in 28 years you've never called in sick?

[00:32:27] **Denise D.:** And then it's kind of funny, but there was one day that I called, okay, but one of my coworkers said, oh, she would never call in sick unless she was dying, and then they were like, or they're like, either she's dying or someone else is dying. But she wouldn't call in sick. and at that day, it was only cause my younger brother was in a coma. But, and he's fine now, but it was just kind of funny. Everybody's like, she wouldn't call in, we know that, but I just but to me, that's just really important. That's why I really try to take care of myself so I don't call in sick and get sick. But, because, it's really hard to reschedule guests when you call in. and if you do that so many times, which I've seen in the past with, people and you lose that trust. The client is like, I can't rely on you cause you're not gonna be here. And I've never wanna put a guess in a situation like that unless of course it was an emergency but yeah, I feel like that's really important to also be like, flexible with your time. it's like I'm very, accommodating. I'll come in early for someone, I'll stay late. I'll, so I just make it known to the guests that, this is your appointment, this is your time and I'll do whatever I can to make it work. it's, I think that's a also a, I mean it's huge cause guests rely on that for you to be flexible and to work with them is mainly what it's about.

[00:33:51] **Antony W.:** I'm making a little bullet point list of these are the things and they're just good solid things. Do you know what I mean? Like, you look after yourself. That's an important thing. you put a lot of stock on relationships. You put a lot of stock on being flexible. You put a lot of stock on giving people a great experience on loyalty, on consistency. People often look at what do you have to do to become that person? Because that person that generates half a million dollars a year is being paid very well as well, and everyone wants to be paid well. So, what do you have to do to make that happen? And I don't wanna, I don't wanna use the word, they're just good old-fashioned things, but they are just good old-fashioned things. There's no magic wand there, is there. it's like those things stand the test of time. which sort of leads me into the next thing I wanted to touch on, which was social media. And you started hairdressing, 28 years ago. There was no social media, there were barely any salon computers at that point in time. so how important is social media to you? You alluded to the fact before that you like pictures and stuff with clients, and I didn't interrupt you because I

just wanted you to keep talking, but I wondered how much of that is on my phone or on my iPad, or is it, like, is it flicking through pages of a magazine or like, like what is it that you use as a resource?

[00:35:15] **Denise D.:** Yeah. So honestly, I did not really get into social media until recently. I honestly did not start my, Instagram. for Instagram, I have, a professional page and it's, hair by Denise. And that one, honestly, I didn't start that till after like Covid when we reopened cause I, I was like, I really need to be inspired. And I felt like that's how everybody, that's what everybody was doing and I really, to get back into it, I started the Instagram and but prior to that it was, it's mainly myself. It was just like all word of mouth and referrals with my clients and the brand and, but it's, but for my platforms, I'm on Facebook and I have Instagram, but that's all I have so.

[00:36:15] **Antony W.:** Yep. Okay. That's all I have. yep. Okay. And do you generate much work? Do you generate new clients through Instagram?

[00:36:23] **Denise D.:** A few. I don't, I do it more like word of mouth, sending out my and stuff. But I don't generate a lot on, Instagram, a few.

[00:36:32] **Antony W.:** So again, another thing, I'm putting on my list here is that the key to your growth amongst all those other bullet points I've written down another one is that, that word of. referrals. it's not about having 20,000 followers on Instagram or 80,000 followers on Instagram. It Instagram's great. social media is fantastic. It is a great tool, but, and in, in many ways, I dunno who first said it, I've been saying it for a long time, I certainly weren't the is that social media is word of mouth on steroids , it's just people talking about you to an even bigger platform. But your business and you are fully booked all day every day is because of word of mouth from your existing clients. and I believe that for everybody. it's like, it's just a matter of, is that word of mouth over the garden fence with the next-door neighbor? Is it at the school gate when you're picking up the kids? Is it in the office or is it on your social me media feed? It is still personal recommendation by someone who has been to you, had their hair done, and they're talking about you on their feed. okay. That's fantastic.

[00:37:36] **Denise D.:** too, it's, it's the genuine connection actually. I think if you make that genuine connection, just to give you an example of, I had a new referral that came to me like two weeks ago, and she was referred to me by a client that I had done years ago, like pre Covid, but she decided to let her gray grow out. But the one thing she told her friend, the one that she referred to me

is she said, she goes, I'll never forget Denise, because she. She was like the one person and she sent me a symphony, card cause when my mom passed away, she's like, that was the nicest thing. And she's like, and I'll never forget it. And she told her friend that, and that her friend came in and had her hair done with me. So that's why I feel like you make those genuine connections and, I mean you have to do that. It's about feelings, so it's, it tells a lot and that, clients don't forget that they'll remember it for years and then when they come and tell me, I'm like, oh my gosh. Like you remembered that. And so, it's nice to have those connections like that.

[00:38:44] **Antony W.:** Yeah. That comes in under the importance of that relationship thing, doesn't it? that is fan. That is fantastic. What a beautiful story that is. what would you say your biggest strength was? or let me put it another way. What would David say your biggest strength was?

[00:39:00] **Denise D.:** Oh, my biggest strength.

[00:39:02] **Antony W.:** For anyone who doesn't know why you reflect on that for a second one, for anyone who doesn't know. When I talk about David, I'm talking about David Wagner, and I did an episode, a podcast with him, 136, which is well worth checking out. It was, has been one of our most listened to podcasts. David Wagner from the Juut Salons 136. So what would David say your biggest strength was?

[00:39:24] **Denise D.:** So, I think of, the top of my head, the number one would be my time management. But then another one, which is kind of interesting cause a lot of people think when you're at the top of your game and you're making as much money as you are, and I. for hairdressers is, a lot of people think that I haven't, there's an ego with it, right? And when people hear about me, but they haven't met me so when they meet me, they're just like, oh, that's her. That, like, they're expecting me to come out with this big ego and this big hat or something obnoxious when I'm just a normal person, and then when they meet me, they're just like, oh, they're like, you're just like a normal person. I said, yeah. I go, what? What were you expecting? I was like, I'm just like, a normal Midwest person. like, so it was just, it's kind of funny that what people, what their expectation is of what they think. And I just, I think David would say, I'm just a genuine, nice person and. I rock at my time management.

[00:40:34] **Antony W.:** Yeah. Okay. They're good. I've got quite a list going on over here. Okay. I keep writing more things down on there. It's like a secret to

success here. It is. Okay. Alright. Let me ask you this. What's the biggest lesson that you've ever learned in life? Not necessarily hairdressing.

[00:40:50] **Denise D.:** Oh, the biggest lesson. I think the biggest lesson is, you know, I look at as like, it's like a plant. In order to keep relationships and strong relationships, you have to keep watering them. It doesn't matter. Friends, family, you know, coworkers, my guests. I think that is the biggest thing I've learned in life. And if you keep watering it, you're gonna have really strong relationships And that's what it's about. Like, you know, you don't hear too many people that say like, oh, I've known this person for 20 years, or, you know, maybe there's maybe a handful. But, you know, I've kept in contact with all my friends, like in Minneapolis and, and that, that means a lot to me. And I feel like you, you need that. You know? I think that's probably one of the biggest lessons is like keeping those relationships strong.

[00:41:53] **Antony W.:** If I was talking to the other people in the salon, what would they say your secret weapon is? what's your secret weapon? What is it like? what is it, what is it that makes you successful?

[00:42:09] **Denise D.:** I think the biggest thing too is, I'm very, organized and I like things to be clean and everybody knows I'm always cleaning everything cause I, can't work in dysfunction like, so I have to have everything in order and they all know it. They're just like, oh, here comes a boss, lady cleaning again. and again. Yeah. so, it's kind of funny. it's but then as I do that though, they all know that if it's not clean, they can't function either, so they follow suit .

[00:42:43] **Antony W.:** Yeah. I'm with you on that. I can't work unless I'm organized. I've gotta have everything tidy. Every, there's a place for everything and everything has a place. You know what I mean? Like I, I'm totally with you on that. Okay. listen, we need to start wrapping up, but I just wanna ask a couple of things about advice you'd give to other people. So, if you are some young kid in beauty school, you were some young kid in beauty school at some point in life. What advice would you give to that young hairdresser who, I don't know how old they are, 18, 19. They're still in beauty school. They haven't even got a job in a salon yet. what's the piece of advice you'd give to them?

[00:43:18] **Denise D.:** I would say the biggest advice I could give someone, and this is, and I'm just looking. As perspective as like when I got out of beauty school, the one thing I was looking for when I was applying for jobs is that I wanted to be with a company that was like modern. And the biggest thing is they

always had advanced training. So my biggest thing is find a mentor as soon as you're out at beauty school and stick with that person. And it doesn't even have to be with, in hair. It could be something else like health or wellness, but definitely find a mentor and, always, do advance like education and training. And just in anything and everything, cause oh my God, it's like there's so much to knowledge and there's so much to learn and do it. To me it's like sky's the limit, that's why I'm like, I've been doing hair for 28 years. It doesn't feel like 28 years at all. And I feel like it doesn't feel that way. And doesn't knock on wood, I've never had burnout. And I think it's because I take care of myself personally, mentally. and it's, and I educate myself all the time because that's what's really gonna keep you going. And I have, I know some people, like, I have guests and their husbands, they're like 80, 90 and they're still working. And I think, oh my gosh. I'm like, I hope that's me someday. I'm like, but like I, you're only gonna get that far if you, as I say, you have to take care of your temple. So, I take care of my temple to make sure I can, physically and mentally like produce and do what I wanna do.

[00:45:04] **Antony W.:** Yeah. Fantastic. Fantastic. that's a really, a really interesting point cause you talk to a lot of young hairdressers and they, and you asked them about their future and they go, I don't wanna be doing this when I'm 30 , and I die. Or, I don't wanna do this when I'm 40. And it's like, come, I know people in their fifties, sixties who are still behind the chair five days a week, 40 hours a week and they absolutely love it. and they feel great doing what they do. and so I think it's sad sometimes you talk to young people and they go, I dunno if you're doing this when I'm 30. You know, as if you know you're. But I think too, like I said, it's a passion of mine and my job doesn't feel like work. And I just love it. I love it. So, I think it's about finding that love, right, you probably already answered this, but I'm just gonna come at it from a different way. If you are a young stylist listening to this, and you've been on the floor for a couple of years and you're earning 30 grand a year or something, do you know what I mean? Like, you are not making a lot of money here. You, you're not busy. You're spending 60% of the week, standing around, waiting for a client to come in. What would you say to that young stylist? What is it that they need to do? If there was three things, three bullet points that you'd say to them, do this, and this, what would those three things be? I've got quite a list there. There's more than three on it, you're welcome to pull.

[00:46:27] **Denise D.:** I think the number one thing is if you're wanting to like build your clientele, and I still do this, but I send out thank you cards. you wanna thank your guests for coming in. and they appreciate that, so I'd say also that

goes back to the genuine connection. So, sending a nice written thank you card. secondly, I think for somebody that's just starting, I. Just, I would just, as much as you can, like work with a mentor in your salon and just get as much information from them as you can, because they're, that's gonna be like your staple. And they'll, you'll learn a lot from them and, and how they do things, how they do it quicker, how do they make more money? and always, set goals. Goals are so important. I set goals, know, I break it down. I'll do weekly goals, monthly goals, yearly goals. And I always reevaluate them to see where I'm at and if I'm on target. But goals are so important because even if it's, lot of people think like, oh gosh, I'm not gonna get to that, to the end of it. But just set the goals, small. because when you set 'em small, they only get bigger, cause I started out in the beginning as well and I was only, say, averaging like maybe a thousand dollars a week. But, and it grew and I kept, getting like, my, price increase so I could get promoted and, but it was the little steps that got me to the bigger picture. And now all I could say is also like, don't get frustrated because it will come. The hard work always pays off. It's the hard work and it's what you put into it. And it, yeah, it can be a beautiful thing for you at the end, but just keep working at it.

[00:48:22] **Antony W.:** Good. Good. No, that's great. listen, we need to, start wrapping up, whereabouts can people connect with you on Instagram or other social media

[00:48:31] **Denise D.:** Yeah. So, I am on Facebook and then, my Instagram is Hair by Denise Deering

[00:48:36] **Antony W.:** So, they're both here by Denise Deering

[00:48:38] **Denise D.:** Just the Instagram is Hair by Denise Deering and then the then Facebook is, How does she do it? And it's Denise Deering. yep.

[00:48:48] **Antony W.:** Cool. Okay, I will, I will put those links on our website, grow my salon business.com and the show notes for today's podcast. If you're listening to this podcast with Denise and you've enjoyed it as much as I have, then do me a favor, take a screenshot on your phone, share it to your Instagram stories, and don't forget to subscribe and leave us a rating review on the Apple Podcast app. So, Denise, thank you so much for being on this week's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. I have a list of, I don't know, it looks like there's 15 things here and it's like the recipe for success. And I really wanna say thank you for sharing so openly and so honestly, and with so much warmth and sincerity. I really appreciate that.

[00:49:32] **Denise D.:** Oh, thank you so much, Antony. it's an honor to be on your podcast and I hope everybody has something to take away from this, and I hope there's some inspiration there for everyone. But yeah, thank you.

[00:49:45] **Antony W.:** Cool. Cool. Thank you.

[00:49:48] **Antony W:** Thank you for listening to today's podcast. If you'd like to connect with us, you'll find us at [Grow My Salon Business.com](https://www.growmysalonbusiness.com) or on Facebook and Instagram at [Grow My Salon Business](https://www.facebook.com/growmysalonbusiness). And if you enjoy tuning into our podcast, make sure that you subscribe, like, and share it with your friends. Until next time, this is Antony Whitaker wishing you continued success.