

GMSB 237

[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.

[00:00:28] **Antony Whitaker:** Hey, it's Antony here and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. And whether this is your first time or perhaps you're a regular listener, thank you for tuning in today. And in case you don't already know, video versions of our podcast are now available on our YouTube channel.

[00:00:44] **Antony Whitaker:** So, if you want to put faces to the names and head on over to Grow My Salon Business on YouTube and like and subscribe to the channel. So, well that said, on with today's episode. When it comes to the hair and beauty industry, one of the biggest changes during the course of my career has been the uptake of tech, especially when it comes to the business side of running a salon.

[00:01:08] **Antony Whitaker:** Now today's guest is Jo or Joanne Burgess, former hairdresser and co-founder of Shortcuts, salon management software. And since the early nineties, Jo and her team have been at the forefront of developing tech-based solutions for the salon industry. Now, today's episode, we're going to discuss how salon software is continually adapting to suit the needs of today's consumer and salon owners.

[00:01:34] **Antony Whitaker:** And we can talk about the impact that the last three or four years have had on salon software innovations. The future role that salon management software has in developing client relationships and improving the client experience and the uses for artificial intelligence in the salon today and so much more.

[00:01:54] **Antony Whitaker:** So without further ado, Welcome to the show, Joe Burgess.

[00:01:59] **Jo Burgess:** Thank you. Lovely to be here.

[00:02:01] **Antony Whitaker:** Well, it's great to have this opportunity to talk to you. I know, you know, we have spoken before over the years, but you've never been on the podcast. And, uh, it's really great to get your, uh, you know, your insights into all things tech.

[00:02:13] **Antony Whitaker:** So in order to put everything we talk about today into context, I just want to start by going back to the beginning and ask you, The sort of the how and the why, as a young Brisbane hairdresser, you know, quite a long time ago in the early nineties, why did you decide to start a software company when tech was very much male dominated industry and hairdressing perhaps wasn't such an obvious fit?

[00:02:38] **Antony Whitaker:** So if you can sort of just give us that sort of broad overview, and then we can work forward.

[00:02:43] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, sure. Awesome. I'd love to. Gosh, that's taken me back a bit. Uh, so yes, I was, um, in my early 20s and I was a hairdresser and I had just actually come back from a trip to Australia. Um, to Europe, I went backpacking and I came back and stumbled across a salon and, you know, I was 20, I was actually 21 at the time when I bought my first salon.

[00:03:08] **Jo Burgess:** I actually went back to get a job from the, uh, from the salon that I worked at. And since I'd been away, the owner said, you know, I don't really have a role for you, but I bought this other salon and I'm really struggling with it. Um, how about. You know, what would you like to, you know, take it over? And I was like, Oh, wow.

[00:03:24] **Jo Burgess:** I had no money, just came back from Europe. And I spoke to my dad about it at the time. And I thought, you know, maybe I could do this. How could we, you know, how could we make this happen? And so I managed to broker a deal with my old boss to take over the expenses of this salon. And I paid it off out of the taking.

[00:03:41] **Jo Burgess:** So I didn't have any money to buy a salon, but I relieved him of his expenses straight away. And I started doing hair and I started paying him off. So I accidentally became a salon owner is kind of the short version of the long story. And at 21, I found myself having to figure out how to run a business, how to attract customers, how to get them to keep coming back and how to grow a team.

[00:04:04] **Jo Burgess:** And so I started to Learn those skills and, you know, figure out how I needed to grow my business. And the two things that were really important for me that helped me grow my business was data reporting and knowing what was happening and marketing, being able to get my customers to come back in on a regular basis and remind them and send them gifts for their birthdays and all those kinds of things.

[00:04:28] **Jo Burgess:** And if you think back, maybe none of your listeners may not be as old as I. But back then there, there were no computer systems. Everything was manual. And I had, um, a filing system that was those index cards and everything was filed alphabetically with little index tabs. I don't know if anybody else used to do that, but I had a system.

[00:04:48] **Jo Burgess:** So I had this manual system that worked for me. And my staff, when I started to grow the team would do things like go through everybody's birthdays in January and we would handwrite cards and we would put the little date behind the stamp and it would sit in a, you know, in a file or the, in the back room.

[00:05:05] **Jo Burgess:** And every day we would drop off to the post office so that the customer would receive their birthday card on their birthday. Um, and that really worked for my business, but it wasn't really scalable and it was taking a lot of time to do those marketing activities. And same with my reporting.

[00:05:21] **Jo Burgess:** I've still actually got copies of, I used to draw up, before Excel was even a thing, draw up a table and we would hand write the customer's name and we'd tick whether they had a cut or a blow dry and whether they bought retail and what was the total and we'd add it all up and we had carbon paper in between the pieces of A4 paper that would add that up.

[00:05:41] **Jo Burgess:** Um, but I invented these systems basically that helped me figure out the data and the reporting I need to grow my business and to be able to pay the bills and marketing to be able to get my customers to come back in by sending them direct mail and letters. We would print them out and photocopy them and handwrite the name up the top and we post out promotions.

[00:06:01] **Jo Burgess:** So, um, that's a long, a long answer to your question, which is what drove me to look for computers. It was data for reporting and marketing.

[00:06:13] **Antony Whitaker:** So, so you had a love of data and marketing, but did you have a love of tech? Was that

[00:06:18] **Jo Burgess:** no, I knew absolutely nothing about tech. I knew absolutely nothing. I'd never even used a computer at school.

[00:06:25] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. Okay.

[00:06:27] **Jo Burgess:** the, the, how it came to be was, um, my dad had met somebody and, uh, her son was the same age as me and he had just finished university and he just finished, uh, an IT degree. So, he was a software developer.

[00:06:41] **Jo Burgess:** And so I was interested in it. And dad said, you need to talk to this fellow. His name's Kane Escott. And he became a founder of Shortcuts. And I said to him, look, I want. to grow my business. And I'm I think a computer system will help me. I need a database. I want to do mail merging so that I can print letters and they're a bit more personalized.

[00:07:00] **Jo Burgess:** I want to use a database and Excel and so that I can do my reporting in a more efficient way. And you know, he started talking to me about technology, how it would work. And I said, look, would you come along with me to demonstrations of software that that there is in this hairdressing industry. And he said, yep.

[00:07:18] **Jo Burgess:** And so, I researched without the internet who had, you know, where I could buy a computer system for salons. And there was a couple of, um, options in Australia, which is where I'm based. And he came along, uh, to the demonstration of this software. And if you think back to that time, at that time, computer systems were all DOS based.

[00:07:37] **Jo Burgess:** So, they were black screens with a blinking cursor and the F keys that did different things. Like we, when I had this demonstration of this software, it had a piece of cardboard that sat across the top of the F keys in the keyboard. And it was like, F1 to add a new client, F2 to end sale, F3. Three to open the till, like it was, that was what computers were at that time.

[00:07:56] **Jo Burgess:** And I saw the demonstration of this software and I thought it was fantastic. It was actually going to cost me about twice as much as I bought the entire salon for, but something in me clicked and I thought, this is, Brilliant. And Kane Escott, who was with me at the time, after this guy had packed up his kit off my dining room table and got in his Mercedes Benz and drove off, he said to me, Are you serious?

[00:08:20] **Jo Burgess:** Is this the best thing there is in the, in the hairdressing industry for salons? And I said, yes, I've searched the whole world. As far as I can worldwide. And, you know, this is, this is it. And he said, you know, what if it was windows? What if it was touchscreen? What if it was, and he started to talk to me about what he'd learned in university about the latest technologies coming out.

[00:08:39] **Jo Burgess:** And in, in this year, which was 1993, uh, windows 3. 11 had just been released. So we, we had for the very first time saw software that allowed multitasking and it wasn't a black screen with a cursor, but it was software that So brand new in 1993. So he sold me on this vision. He said, look, let's go down to Harvey Norman and buy a computer and I will teach you how to use word and mail merge.

[00:09:03] **Jo Burgess:** And I'll teach you how to use Excel to solve your immediate problem, which is marketing to your customers and having a better way of doing reporting and building graphs, and he actually taught me how to use Excel and how to use a database and how to do mail merge. And it kind of solved my problem. for a short period of time.

[00:09:20] **Jo Burgess:** And he and one of his good mates from university, Paul Gordon, went off and started to develop salon management software. And meanwhile, I just kept going in my salon, um, and it started to automate some things and learned computers like just from, from those boys teaching me, um, and figuring it out for myself.

[00:09:42] **Jo Burgess:** And, uh, they decided that they wanted to build a touchscreen. So, you know, fingers instead of keyboards, and I thought, that sounds amazing. Hairdressers love to use their hands, you know, they're really creative, it'd look colorful, that'd be great. Um, the thing was there were no touchscreens in Australia, like it wasn't a thing, like they're everywhere now and it's hard to even believe that we didn't have touchscreens.

[00:10:06] **Jo Burgess:** Um, so I bought a touchscreen and it was imported from America. So that the boys could use it to develop. Now we didn't, we weren't planning to build software to sell all over the world. I kind of thought I had my own personal developers writing something for me. It was like brilliant. So, all I had to do was buy the touchscreen and then they would build the software and you know, and then I'd have software for my salons.

[00:10:27] **Jo Burgess:** I was on a trajectory of buying multiple salons and, you know, growing a chain of salons that was, that was my vision. Um, and so that's how it started really. Um, and they would just. talk to me about what did I need? What were the manual systems? How did it work in a salon? And they were honestly the brains behind creating it.

[00:10:46] **Jo Burgess:** Like I didn't design the software. I was just happened to be, uh, the hairdresser that was looking for, um, tech. So, I just became obsessed with it. I became obsessed with the fact that, you know, one day there was nothing. And then the next day there was something and it worked and it was on the screen. And like the, the, uh, building of the software in its early days was super rapid.

[00:11:07] **Jo Burgess:** So, before I knew it, I had software in my salon.

[00:11:11] **Antony Whitaker:** Wow. So, at what point did you form a company, the three of you or am I jumping the gun?

[00:11:15] **Jo Burgess:** Well, the,

[00:11:16] **Antony Whitaker:** did you even form a company? How did that work?

[00:11:18] **Jo Burgess:** the boys did, not me. I had my salons and I was building, I was just helping them build the software. So that was Kane Escott and Paul Gordon who were really, they were, they are really the founders of Shortcuts. I just happened to be the hairdresser that was the one that was using it first.

[00:11:34] **Jo Burgess:** Um, so they formed a company and I still had my salons and it was sort of down the track that I ended up selling the salons. It was about two and a half years later. I had, I bought another salon, starting to grow my business. And, um, they said, look, you know what, we really need you. What are you going to do?

[00:11:51] **Jo Burgess:** You know, you're going to join us or are you going to keep going with the salons? And I thought, well, I know how to. Build a salon up from scratch, because I've done that. I can always go back and do that, so I decided to give it a crack.

[00:12:03] **Antony Whitaker:** well, that's a fantastic story. So then the three of you had Shortcuts and from that point on, it's the rest of its history, so to speak,

[00:12:11] **Jo Burgess:** Mm hmm. Mm

[00:12:12] **Antony Whitaker:** you built this amazing business, which is fantastic. Okay. Um, it was intriguing hearing you talk about that. You sort of threw in this little line about in the early nineties, you had to research it and.

[00:12:23] **Antony Whitaker:** I'm not sure exactly what the words were you used, but you literally said, and this was before the internet. Do you know what I mean? Like, because that is that literally what you mean that it wasn't just a case of going on to Google like we have now. And you could just research everything. Even in the early nineties, you didn't have the luxury of that.

[00:12:40] **Antony Whitaker:** That was sort of pre, you know, internet in the way that we now know it.

[00:12:44] **Jo Burgess:** but no, I was reading magazines. I was reading, magazines from from America to find out what people were publishing about companies. You know, that was the only way we could really do it. Like, you know, it really was. It was later. In the nineties, when the internet came and then, you know, we started to talk about what that would look like.

[00:13:05] **Jo Burgess:** So yeah, it was, it was before that it was, there was no email, there was no texting. It was just, we were mailing letters and phone calls, you know, our customers were calling and making appointments and we were sending them letters to say, we miss you, come back. And we were, we were handwriting those cards, you know, and then we, then when I got the computer in 1993, which was a 486 for all people that remember it.

[00:13:30] **Jo Burgess:** Um, You know, I was able to mail merge. I had a database and I was able to insert fields into, to personalize, you know, and print out on mass and, but we were still direct mailing. We were still, my team

was still folding and putting stamps on letters to send out. My marketing was very manual. So, when the, when, when email came out and that became a thing that was a game changer.

[00:13:53] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah. Well, so that leads me to the next thing I want to ask you about was that, you know, when you think back to when you're starting 1993, here we are now 2024. I mean, it's sort of, it goes like that. It doesn't take long, does it? You know, 30 years just flies by, you know, it's when you think back, I mean, I've just said about literally that's pre internet. Obviously, it was pre iPhone. It was pre, um, social media and all these other things. So just give us a sort of an overview of what have been the sort of major milestones Not just for Shortcuts, but for tech in the salon industry since you started, because going from what you're talking about in 1993, there are all these huge milestones.

[00:14:38] **Antony Whitaker:** I've just mentioned two of them, the iPhone, social media, what have been some of the other big turning points?

[00:14:44] **Jo Burgess:** Well, the internet. So, when the internet came out, um, but I would say even before that was SMS and the ability to do appointment reminders via SMS. We were the first. In the market to do that in the world, um, and now it's just, you know, you wouldn't buy software without being able to automatically confirm your appointments by SMS.

[00:15:05] **Jo Burgess:** Prior to that, everybody was calling, trying to talk to customers and get them to confirm. So that would be one. Um, then with the internet came, it was like a, massive things all at once. So booking was obviously one of them. So that was something that we saw happening in other industries and we wanted to bring, well, first of all, it was the appointment book.

[00:15:26] **Jo Burgess:** That was, that was the hardest thing in those early days for salons to give up. Because remember we had this handwritten appointment book. It was, everybody peered, it was like the customers were going to appear out of the appointment book if you lost it, it was terrible, you know, it was, so even putting that into a computer, I remember saying to Cain and Paul, I don't want the appointment book in the computer.

[00:15:49] **Jo Burgess:** Everything else, yes, the point is, I want you to replace my cash register and I want you to give me data and reports, but my

appointment books, my appointment book, I need to pick it up. I need to touch it. I need to take it out the back room. I need to be able to show it to people. Like, it's a, it's a paper thing. Don't take that away from me.

[00:16:03] **Jo Burgess:** So that took a really long time. And the, the way they designed that appointment book, you know, because I would say to them, look, you need to be able to, I want to be able to move this this thing from this column to this column, you know, cause at the moment I rub it out and I rewrite it in over there, you know, and they're like, God, how are we going to make that happen?

[00:16:20] **Jo Burgess:** You know, and they were just so genius that they came up with the solutions to all of the problems that I couldn't say no. So, first of all, it was the appointment book. And then when we got the internet, it was, it was how do we self-serve? How do we provide an environment where clients can book themselves in?

[00:16:36] **Jo Burgess:** How can they make appointments outside of hours? Um, and so we built online booking and that was still very long, long time ago. The problem was we built online booking, but no salons had a website. So, there was nowhere for the customers to go to to use the online booking. Yes, they could send them an email.

[00:16:56] **Jo Burgess:** But again, it took a while before everybody started using email just because one day we could we've got the Internet and we can email. It takes years for people to adopt these things and for it to be kind of normal. So, we had a lot of tech. And, uh, we had a lot of vision and we had a lot of innovation.

[00:17:13] **Jo Burgess:** It was a little bit ahead of its time. And so, we had to drag our customers with us and the early adopters would take it. And, you know, the big salons that were really innovative would start doing those things and then others would start doing it. So, it was email marketing. It was, um, online booking, it was mobile apps when mobile phones came out, that was a big thing.

[00:17:34] **Jo Burgess:** So yeah, there was a lot of those sort of milestones along the way. The big one was the internet.

[00:17:42] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah, that's just huge. It's huge. I mean, you know, you often hear hairdressers talk about the changes that are going on in the industry. When you compare it to the changes that have gone on in tech, it's just, I mean, our changes up. A minimal compared to when we talk about what's happened in tech.

[00:17:57] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, just to get to give some to sort of wrap that up. I just wrote down a couple of points. Uh, first thing was just so that our listeners realize is that I think it was about 10 years ago. That you sold the company, but you still effectively, what, what, what is your title in the company now and other, other two partners that you had, are they still involved or,

[00:18:18] **Jo Burgess:** Yes. No, they, no, they not, they've moved on a while ago, um, at different, at different times for different reasons and onto, you know, bigger and better and wonderful things. Um, yes, the company was acquired by Constellation Software, which is a company based out of, um, Canada, um, 10 years ago. And I stayed on as a founder.

[00:18:39] **Jo Burgess:** I worked three days a week and I'm on the executive team and I look after marketing and product. So, roadmap, innovation. And I love it. Yeah. Mm

[00:18:49] **Antony Whitaker:** So, so Constellation is based in Canada, but Shortcuts is based in Brisbane, Australia, which is where you are and we're head offices and that's where the whole

[00:19:00] **Jo Burgess:** thing

[00:19:00] **Jo Burgess:** Yes, that's right. Yeah.

[00:19:01] **Antony Whitaker:** right. Okay. Um, just another one. I'm going to blindsides you with, um, is there an, and this industry is notoriously bad for having good data, but what percentage of salons today. Would you say have a point-of-sale system?

[00:19:18] **Jo Burgess:** Oh gosh, I don't know, I would really be guessing to say that, um, it's hard.

[00:19:26] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. Okay. Yeah. I mean, I'm always intrigued by that because I'm amazed that I'm amazed at the number of salons, no matter where I am, you know, us, Europe, Australia, whatever that aren't computerized.

[00:19:37] **Jo Burgess:** that's totally, it's right.

[00:19:40] **Antony Whitaker:** I mean, it's 2024. You're talking about what it was like in 1991 when you first opened these salons or opened your first salon.

[00:19:48] **Antony Whitaker:** And it's like, they're still running a business like that. And I just shake my head and absolute wonder as to how anyone is really capable of running anything that you could legitimately call a business without some sort of software to, you know, if, if you, if you want to grow it and, you know, you talked about marketing and financial management, people management.

[00:20:10] **Antony Whitaker:** I mean, it just explodes the potential, you know, when you do

[00:20:14] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, I used to do my accounting, my, you know, my ledgers were all manual. They were in a book, you know, it's just, I can't even fathom that these days. I think there are a lot, um, and I think there are a lot of people that are using bits and pieces of technology, you know, like they might be using social media and they're doing messaging that way.

[00:20:31] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah. using something to just take payments, but they don't have records. They're not, they're not really able to grow their business. They're probably using technology in some way, shape or form. Um, but they're not using a, a sell on management system, you know, yep. And you're, I don't know the number, but if I had to guess, I'd probably say 50 percent don't, you know,

[00:20:49] **Antony Whitaker:** Good. That's what I have say

[00:20:50] **Jo Burgess:** staggering.

[00:20:51] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah.

[00:20:52] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. It's impossible. I mean, and it depends what part of industry we're looking at as well

[00:20:56] **Jo Burgess:** right.

[00:20:56] **Antony Whitaker:** you know, whether you're looking at barbershops or whether you're looking at, you know, spas or whatever, there's so many variations in there. Okay. Well, let's, let's sort of jump forward to, um, this decade.

[00:21:08] **Antony Whitaker:** Uh, and there was this little thing that happened at the beginning of this decade. You might've heard of it. It started with C and it created absolute mayhem in the world. Uh, let's just use that as a turning point because. I'm curious to know what impact did COVID have on advancements in salon software, um, in, in, you know, because obviously it had an impact.

[00:21:34] **Antony Whitaker:** Like I'm sure there were a lot of things that you were working on anyway, but when COVID happened, it must've put a lot of things to the top of the list. So, uh, talk to us about that for a minute.

[00:21:44] **Jo Burgess:** absolutely. Um, there was definitely a massive uptake in online booking and putting cards on file for payments. All of a sudden it was, um, acceptable by consumers to do so. Whereas maybe prior they didn't like to do that. They liked to call up or they like to walk in or they like to get the card out of their wallet.

[00:22:04] **Jo Burgess:** So it was about, um, automating the booking and payments process. Instantly grew, instantly grew massively. Um, and also communication. So texting, you know, we had to, we built functionality when COVID first hit so that salons were able to send a message to clients to say, you can come into the salon now, you know, wait in the car park and when our, when the last customer leaves, we'll send you a message to come in and, you know, things like that.

[00:22:31] **Jo Burgess:** We had to kind of think on our feet and go, what do salons need for social distancing. What do they need to make sure that clients arrive on time? What do they need to do to, you know, uh, make that experience less cluttered in the reception? We know we didn't want hands on, on iPads and people sharing iPads.

[00:22:49] **Jo Burgess:** So we had to use the customer's device. But the great thing about that was that consumers embraced it of kind of, of all ages. It became normal. to book online. It became normal to put your card on file. Um, and so that was a really, that was probably the biggest shift that we saw.

[00:23:06] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Yeah. Have you noticed, uh, you know, like if you, you don't have to scroll along on social media to, to, you know, see lots of people commenting about no shows and getting deposits. And it was right for a long time. It's always, it's always been a thing in the industry. It really became, you know, a big deal, uh, more recently.

[00:23:27] **Antony Whitaker:** I'm curious about what you saw about that, because as you've said, clients, all of a sudden, they're putting their card on file and they got used to that. And the next step or part and parcel of that was, and we take a 50 percent deposit as a holding. And if you cancel with less than 24 hours' notice, you forfeit that deposit.

[00:23:44] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, I know I'm, I'm asking you to stroll a bit into the salon owner's mindset with that. Um, but what sort of impact does that had? What are you, what are you sort of seeing with that?

[00:23:56] **Jo Burgess:** Well, it's definitely reduced no shows. It's increased productivity. Um, it's, you know, clients are more aware of it. So, a couple of things. they're not booking, they're not rebooking as much as they used to because they don't want to commit to being able to come and they don't want to put a deposit if they're not entirely sure, because they were, it was very much in the hands of the client before, right?

[00:24:16] **Jo Burgess:** They would book, they would leave and they would book in six weeks' time. And if they couldn't make it, they call it the last minute and rearrange. And that sort of rearranging thing happened all of the time. And that was at the expense of the business owners. Now, when a whole lot of salons closed down and a whole lot of people left salons and went out on their own and everyone had been in lockdown for weeks and weeks and weeks.

[00:24:35] **Jo Burgess:** The demand was massive, right? So, when they were coming out of lockdowns, as you know, everyone wanted to get their hair done. There's only a certain number of hairdressers. A lot of people have left the industry. It was, um, critical that you didn't miss any revenue opportunity

in the calendar. So therefore, that's why salons were, yep, we're going to charge up front.

[00:24:55] **Jo Burgess:** And if you don't show, we're going to take, you know, full payment within 24 hours or, you know, whatever their, whatever their booking policy was and consumers accepted it because they were desperate to get their hair done.

[00:25:05] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, exactly and obviously some of these things you've spoken about in the COVID context, you know, like texting people when they're in the car, yes, you can come in now, you know, that sort of thing is, is arguably redundant now because we don't live in a COVID world. Um, but then other things like the, you know, the card on file and deposits and all that sort of stuff, I suppose I'm asking you, has there been any pushback that you can sort of see in terms of

[00:25:32] **Antony Whitaker:** you know, the data that you look at, has there been any pushback about that

[00:25:36] **Jo Burgess:** some clients?

[00:25:36] **Antony Whitaker:** Or people? Yeah. Yeah. And, and salon owners in general, or have they just gone? This is a new reality. You have your card on file. They take a deposit. If you don't turn up, you lose it. I. E. just like restaurants, et cetera. I'm just curious as to whether that, that momentum has continued or whether you've seen, you know, uh, sort of a rewinding of that of people going back to how it was before.

[00:25:58] **Jo Burgess:** No, I, it is definitely still, um, continuing, but it has slowed. It has slowed.

[00:26:05] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. Uh, and you, you said, which is interesting, you said that people are rebooking less because it's not in their control as much any, any more, whereas before it was totally in the client's control. So, you're seeing data that says rebooking is less.

[00:26:22] **Jo Burgess:** yes, rebooking is definitely less and people are booking closer to the time of their visit. So, it's about 60 percent of people are booking within a month and then it, you know, it gets closer and closer as far as the

percentage and a lot of people are booking within a day or within a week of visiting.

[00:26:39] **Jo Burgess:** Um, now, whereas they used to, you know, that used to be a lot bigger. So, if we look at that from like 2018, 19, 20, you know, then past COVID, more and more people are booking closer to the time of their arrival. So I think that what that means for salon owners is that they need to be aware of that. They need to make sure that they have enough, labor,

[00:27:01] **Jo Burgess:** forecasting available to take the people that have booked in and the people that they know are going to book at the last minute, because if they can't fit them in, they're going to go somewhere else. So, there's that whole change in, you know, it's a, it's a blended model. I call it blended model. So those businesses that are traditionally walking and like a barber, you, you rock up and you stand and you wait in the queue and then you get your hair done.

[00:27:22] **Jo Burgess:** When you get to the top of the queue, people are not going to stand in queues all day long anymore. Neither are people going to be organized six weeks in advance and book all of their appointments till Christmas. So somewhere in between, you have to cater for both. You have to have the people that need the last-minute visits and the people that book into the future.

[00:27:42] **Jo Burgess:** So, it's very much blended and it's a hard thing to work out to make sure that you've got the right staff on board and you've got the right, um, capacity to take, not to turn away customers that are used to booking at the last minute because they will go somewhere else.

[00:27:59] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:27:59] **Jo Burgess:** it's a real shift in behavior.

[00:28:02] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, I mean, I could dig into that a lot with you because I'm really curious about a lot of that stuff around rebooking. But in the interest of time, I'm going to move on because there's so many good things to talk about here. One of them is I've written down to ask you, what are your thoughts about the cashless future?

[00:28:18] **Antony Whitaker:** Because, you know, COVID really made cash a dirty thing. And so many people I talk to now never have any cash. Everything is on the card. Um, so from your perspective, and this is one of the reasons I love talking to you, is that you have all the data. So you don't just have the, the data as in the numbers, but you're also very in tune with, you know, consumer Habits the sort of psychology behind it and stuff.

[00:28:44] **Antony Whitaker:** So so what are your thoughts about cashless future because I know a lot of salons now uh will not Uh take cash. So, um, how does that fit with your view of the world?

[00:28:54] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, I agree. I think the salon of the future is there's no paper. There's no cash. There's no reception desk It's highly driven by technology, but it's hardly seen So the technology instead of being a big monitor that's sitting on a front desk the technology is injected at tiny little touch points throughout the client's experience from, from when they arrived or when they're in the chair to purchasing retail and having it available for them to pick up on the way out.

[00:29:22] **Jo Burgess:** Um, I think accessing information is, you know, you know, we, when we first designed Shortcuts, you know, we had the client profile card and we would get all the details and we would analyze everything before the client came in. Now you just need to know, um, how does she like her coffee? How often does she get her hair done?

[00:29:40] **Jo Burgess:** What products is she using? And are they likely to be, is she likely to need it again? Um, she's just been on a holiday. You know, what are the things we need to make the experience beautiful for this client and frictionless. And so that's why I think that it's more highly driven by tech, but it's hardly seen if that makes sense.

[00:30:00] **Jo Burgess:** It's like Uber, right? You, you, you, once you've booked your car, you jump in, it's in your pocket. You're not sitting there looking at the technology. It's you, you jump out and you pay and it's gone. And that's the experience that's translating into the salon space as well.

[00:30:15] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah, that's, that's really interesting. And I, I talked to lots of different people about this and, um, it's been a real buzzword. I think, I mean, obviously it's the Apple store, which started this whole idea of

do away with the front desk, do away with reception and, salons all over the world have sort of looked at that and thought, Wow, that's a fantastic idea.

[00:30:33] **Antony Whitaker:** Do away with the front desk, um, and have a roving concierge. And I know a couple of salons. I know more than a couple who do that. Well, that they, they haven't done away with the receptionist, um, you know, for, for want of a better word, um, they have taken them out from behind the desk and they've given them an iPad and there's more chair side checkout and that sort of stuff.

[00:30:55] **Antony Whitaker:** So. I know some salons that have done that and done it really well, and I look at it and I go, that is super cool. That is the future. But then I talked to a guy, um, on a podcast, uh, I think it was towards the end of last year, Sam Brocato, you might know, Sam, he's got a salon in New York. And, he sort of pointed out, he said, you know what, Antony, I don't want to do that.

[00:31:16] **Antony Whitaker:** He said, I want to increase the human touch points, not decrease the human touch points. And, and the way he said it made so much sense to me because like, I'll give you a real example. this is always a good example of how not to do it, I think is just go to any doctors I've moved doctor recently at the new doctor has a automated check in, you know, like self check in, um, And boy, do they need your help because from a design element, it is so unhuman, unfriendly, unwelcoming.

[00:31:50] **Antony Whitaker:** You can imagine that someone's gone. This is great. We now don't need to receptionist. We get only need to have one. But they've taken away the I don't know this human element. I don't know if that's me or my generation or whatever, but there's some sort of middle ground where I really got what Sam was talking about when he was saying, I want to increase the human touch points, not decrease them because we are in the people business.

[00:32:15] **Antony Whitaker:** So I'm sort of. I'm asking you, what are your, what are your comments about that? Because I love what you just said. Also, you know, it's trying to see the balance between the two

[00:32:23] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah. Oh no, I, I, I see it as that. I see it as that. I'm a thousand percent agree with that. It is, you know, AI is not going to replace, uh, you know, human connection, and if we can get the technology and the

friction points out of the way then we can actually deliver a more personalized experience. I don't want the stylist to have to leave, the client in front of the chair to go check something on the computer or go, you know, if we can keep them connected, it's going to be a better experience for the client and it's likely going to be a, be a bigger ticket spend as well.

[00:32:56] **Jo Burgess:** So, I a thousand percent agree with that. And it is about how do we use technology to enable a more personalized experience between humans.

[00:33:05] **Antony Whitaker:** Yep. I want to change course a little bit here. I no longer have salons as you know, but as a former salon owner, I was always a bit frustrated between the lack of integration between the salon management systems, i. e. Shortcuts, uh, and accounting packages like QuickBooks or Xero or whatever.

[00:33:30] **Antony Whitaker:** Talk to me about how that's evolving, because I think that's a really important part of the puzzle.

[00:33:35] **Jo Burgess:** Yes, totally. Well, APIs, you would have heard of APIs and everybody's building now platforms and APIs, and it is wonderful that platforms are able to be best of breed at what they are and then provide easy access to send data between APIs. I always say API is like a waiter. You know, you, the person at the, At the table orders a sandwich and the waiter goes to the kitchen and says, we need a sandwich and brings a sandwich back, right?

[00:33:59] **Jo Burgess:** That's literally what an API does between two systems. So that has changed the game for everybody. Now, initially when those sorts of things came out, all of us, including Shortcuts and, and others in our industry went, no, we're not giving anyone any of our stuff. We're going to keep it all behind locked doors.

[00:34:15] **Jo Burgess:** Right. But what they realize is like, unless we're going to build another zero platform or another quick book system. platform or another mild platform. We're never going to be able to compete. We cannot build software for all of those things. We're not going to build another Facebook. We're not going to build, um, you know, we're not going to build a payments provider, but if we build smart software with APIs that can connect to those, then, then the customer can build a solution that suits them.

[00:34:42] **Jo Burgess:** So, we do all of that. We integrate with payment providers. We integrate with social media platforms. We integrate with accounting packages. We integrate with marketing tools. Um, so that the seller and owner can design an experience to suit them and their brand.

[00:34:56] **Jo Burgess:** Okay. All right. Um, let's move on a little bit with One of the big things that's happening in the industry at the moment, you know, no matter where you are in the world, the buzzwords are flexibility and autonomy. Um, and so the business model is changing dramatically. It was changing anyway. I think COVID put that on steroids.

[00:35:16] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, how is Salon software evolving to accommodate or to respond to, you know, more flexibility and more autonomy?

[00:35:28] **Jo Burgess:** That's a great question and it's something that we're really focusing on at Shortcuts. Um, when we first started, um, building software, we were building it for the salon owner, the business owner. They were the number one stakeholder. It was what does the business owner need to be able to grow their business?

[00:35:45] **Jo Burgess:** Um, then there was a big shift when the internet came to. Um, the customer and the client. So, we spent a lot of time making sure that the experience for the client was good and that it was able to be, um, you know, portrayed in a way that suited the business owner and the brand of the salon. And now we have the stylist.

[00:36:03] **Jo Burgess:** So whether it's a stylist, a beauty therapist, a barber. So the actual technician, um, is highly engaging in our technology and They are the ones that want the flexibility and autonomy. So whether they're stepping away and becoming a solo operator or a freelancer, or they're working in a salon environment, they want more flexibility in their lives pre COVID or post COVID, I should say, and they want autonomy to be able to make decisions.

[00:36:30] **Jo Burgess:** So what we are thinking about is Shortcuts. It's like, how do we provide environments that enable that, whether it's in a salon that's run by a business owner, or Or it's a solopreneur that's running their own business. So things like hours, they want to work, um, days, they want to work prices. They want to charge services that they want to charge that it's, it's not a cookie cutter approach anymore.

[00:36:57] **Jo Burgess:** And I think that some salons, um, the innovative salons are moving around towards that. They, they have, they have outcomes they want from their team, they want their team to stay with them. And if they want them to stay, they need to give them that flexibility and autonomy. So that's things like choosing their own hours.

[00:37:13] **Jo Burgess:** There's parameters around that. They need, there's an expectation that they're there for a certain number of hours and they're generating a certain amount of revenue. But if the stylist can do that with smart things like dynamic pricing, you know, they can charge more on a Saturday when they're full, when they're working and they can do promotions when they're not busy.

[00:37:31] **Jo Burgess:** And they've got control over driving their own customers back, whether they're in a salon environment or they work for themselves is, is super important, and that is, you know, more and more stylists have got their own Instagram page that they're doing their own DM chats, their, whether they work in a salon or not.

[00:37:50] **Jo Burgess:** So we're working out the ways to be able to provide a business owner in that environment with the tools that they need to empower their team to the level that suits them, as well as have a stylist take control of their day and their earning capacity and the hours that they want to work and the clients that they want to see and the prices that they want to charge.

[00:38:10] **Jo Burgess:** So, there's, we're doing a lot of research and thinking along those lines.

[00:38:16] **Antony Whitaker:** Yes. okay that's interesting and you touch on something I was gonna ask you about and that was dynamic pricing.

[00:38:22] **Antony Whitaker:** And a lot of people are probably thinking, what does he mean by that? Or what do you mean by that? And we've, we've talked about a couple of different brands. You've mentioned Uber. Um, I mentioned Apple earlier on and, um, you were also, you know, we, I think we've mentioned hotels and airlines, et cetera, and lots of, I suppose what I was going to ask you was that obviously you look at how other industries are handling certain predicaments and looking at, well, what can we learn about that within the hairdressing industry? I'm all for dynamic pricing. Like, if your

salon is only half full on a Tuesday, uh, but you're always rammed on a fill in the blank Saturday, whatever the day is you want.

[00:39:03] **Antony Whitaker:** Well, wouldn't it make sense to perhaps have a different price point, um, on a Tuesday, if not for everybody, with certain people to enable them to get busier and therefore people that may be, you know, a more budget conscious will make the decision to come on a Tuesday as opposed to a Saturday. Now I know a lot of salon owners I'm really resistant to that sort of thing, the dynamic pricing thing.

[00:39:31] **Antony Whitaker:** And when you point out that like airlines do it, hotels do it, some restaurants do it, um, you know, Uber is obviously the best example, which everyone is familiar with. What are your thoughts about that? I'm glad you finished up your last comment with, we're doing a lot of thinking about that. What, what are your thoughts about that?

[00:39:49] **Antony Whitaker:** Because it's not just about the tech. It's about the culture that exists in salons, to get people to, to get to grips with that as an idea.

[00:39:59] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, that's a good question. Um, we do a lot. We talk a lot to our customers. Like, we are obsessed with understanding, you know, what our customers think about things. They may not know what they want, but we, but when we come up with ideas, we want to test it and go, how does this feel? And what would be, you know, what would you think about that?

[00:40:17] **Jo Burgess:** So for me, with dynamic pricing, it's all about the levers and it's about the levers being in place at the right time that makes it dynamic. So it's not just every Tuesday it's this or every Saturday it's that. It's it might be when you hit 70 percent capacity for a day, and you've only got 30 percent left.

[00:40:36] **Jo Burgess:** You sell that last 30 percent at top prices, right? At the same time, you might have 50 percent of your day still available at 9am. You need to fill that so you want to get that promotion. You're better to have someone in there with a 20 percent discount or having a color and getting a free treatment than having that space go empty.

[00:40:55] **Jo Burgess:** So I think it's about the levers. And I also think it's about the autonomy to choose. So some ideas that we're thinking about is, You know, let's say you have something available tomorrow afternoon at two, two

o'clock or someone's just canceled, right? We've got data and we've got AI that can say to you, Hey, um, Antony Whitaker, you haven't seen him.

[00:41:22] **Jo Burgess:** He's overdue for his color. He often comes on a Thursday afternoon. How about I give him a shout out and see if he wants this spot, right? So power, really smart ways. that we can use tech to help your customer and fill your gaps and maximize the revenue for that. So we might say to you, look, we've got two spots this week.

[00:41:45] **Jo Burgess:** We can do Tuesday at this price or Friday morning at this price, whatever's going to suit you as a client, you're going to be able to take. So I think it's about providing the flexibility for business owners and stylists within a business. To choose that for themselves, depending on the maturity of their business, the type of clientele they've got, um, those sorts of things.

[00:42:07] **Jo Burgess:** So I think there's some really cool things. Like with everything else, it's complex in the beauty industry, right? You think about booking a table at a restaurant. That's easy. How many seats? 20 bucks a head. It doesn't matter. There's no, there's no dependencies. It doesn't matter who does it, how long it takes, is the color processing, do they do this first and then that afterwards?

[00:42:28] **Jo Burgess:** Like same with a seat on a plane, right? So we've got to take the simple things that we see in those industries and then figure out how do we add the sophistication we need to for a salon, where there are so many different variables, which is why salons, I think, are nervous about TICC in general, because they think, how can a computer make the decisions that a human needs to make

[00:42:50] **Jo Burgess:** because it's so complex? We know that we like to do the color first and then the cut, or we know that, you know, You know, this particular client takes longer for processing than this particular client. And so the trust in technology, it's less clear cut than it is for like a restaurant or a hotel or a, or an airline ticket.

[00:43:10] **Jo Burgess:** So that's the way I'm thinking about it is like, how do we provide the right amount of levers so that we reduce the risk of upsetting customers? Um, and Well, we're really just delivering the best experience for a customer and filling, filling those empty gaps. That's what it is for me.

Everybody says they work less hours and maximize the money they can make for those hours.

[00:43:32] **Jo Burgess:** Right? So it's like, how can we help you do that?

[00:43:35] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah, okay. And the, the bit that I picked up on right at the beginning of that was, Hey, Antony Whitaker hasn't been in for this amount of time. Let's DM, email, whatever, him

[00:43:49] **Antony Whitaker:** say it's a long time since we've seen you. We know that you're due about now and you like a Thursday night. We've got one available then.

[00:43:56] **Antony Whitaker:** So it's really pinpointed as opposed to you'll scroll through Instagram and you'll go, Mary Lou's got a cancellation tomorrow. Whoever wants it, you know, first and first served. So it's really focused. Yeah, that's, and that is the future without a doubt. That is

[00:44:12] **Jo Burgess:** nailed it, that's exactly it and, and we might look at the stylist might look at that and go, no, a bit like Tinder, not Antony, who's next? So and so also likes to come on Thursday and like, yes, offer it to him and, you know, things like give him half an hour to respond and if he doesn't respond, move to the next one in the queue and who's in the queue.

[00:44:31] **Jo Burgess:** Yep, that makes sense, right? Because the stylist knows their customers. They know the ones that are likely to want to do those things versus not. Um, and. As technology gets smarter and AI gets smarter and it learns what you like, um, you get better and better at that. And it might be, it might be the case of, Hey, so and so's just cancelled on a Tuesday afternoon.

[00:44:54] **Jo Burgess:** We also know that your son plays cricket Tuesday afternoon what would you like me to do? Sell it or block it out? You know, so the system is asking you, To decide what do you want to do with that empty space? Do you want me to sell it or do you want to take the afternoon off? And go watch your son play cricket.

[00:45:11] **Jo Burgess:** Right? And there'll be a different kind of stylist. There'll be the ones that are like, I like to work six days a week from this time to this time and be difficult. Fill me up and others will be like, I want these types of

clients, these types of services and working three days a week and I'll work the odd

[00:45:28] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah,

[00:45:29] **Jo Burgess:** and I think that, yeah, that technology can be smart enough to provide that.

[00:45:35] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Yeah. Sorry I didn't mean to interrupt you there. I've got this nagging voice in the back of my head, which is the salon owner. Okay. And the salon owner listening to our conversation is saying to themselves. Yeah, but if that happens, then you're training clients to leave it to the last minute because I'll get it at a cheaper price.

[00:45:56] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. What, what is the argument around that? I mean, [00:46:00] because I know that some sellers will be saying, well, if, if I won't rebook, because then I know you won't be full and therefore your market directly to me at a lower price point, as long as I can be flexible about that, how would, how would you counter that?

[00:46:14] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, I think that a lot of people won't be flexible about that. There will be the ones will wait. And you, again, it's about the levers. It's like, we're not going to message you and offer you, you know, a spot at 20 percent off when you're a week overdue, but maybe when you're 3 or 4 weeks overdue, yes, because you're going to come anyway.

[00:46:31] **Jo Burgess:** We hope you're going to come anyway. We don't, yes, you cannot, it's got to be smart ways where you're not cannibalizing revenue that you're expecting, but you're maximizing it's all about the empty spaces. If you're full and everyone's coming in, then you don't need that. You should be implementing surge pricing and you don't need to worry about offering those things.

[00:46:51] **Jo Burgess:** So it just depends on the stage of the

[00:46:52] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. So it's almost like what you're building these days with salon management systems is the ability to personalize it completely. Like you put in the levers, but as the salon owner or stylist, you decide which one of those levers you want to pull. And when you want to pull it to, to, you know, change what the offer is.

[00:47:15] **Antony Whitaker:** That's that's it. Isn't it? That's

[00:47:17] **Jo Burgess:** And it learns from you, right? So, the system will learn from you. So if I ask you that, would you like to offer this to Antony? And you're like, no, he's going to ring next week. Would you like me to, you know, so then we'll go, cool. We'll space that out further next time. We, you know, that's not something that you want.

[00:47:32] **Jo Burgess:** So it's, it just learns the types of things that are good ideas or not good ideas for your business.

[00:47:40] **Antony Whitaker:** Good. Good. Okay. Um, can I ask you what, you know, as someone who is a hairdresser as well, originally, it gives you a different insight to what most, uh, software developers would have, you know, um, can I just ask you this? What surprised you about how the way the industry works? has evolved. Has it done anything different that you didn't think it would?

[00:48:02] **Jo Burgess:** Yes. It hasn't embraced technology as quickly as I expected or anticipated it.

[00:48:09] **Antony Whitaker:** okay. So that surprised you? That would, that doesn't surprise me at all.

[00:48:13] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, it surprised me because I was so confident about it and I could see it so clearly and I embraced it. I went from paper to completely, you know, software in a very short space of time.

[00:48:24] **Jo Burgess:** I opened up a second salon. I ran it completely. On the, you know, using the software and the, and the processes that we built into it and sold it eight months later for three times more than I bought it, that I just thought everybody's going to embrace this, but not everybody has. So that has surprised me.

[00:48:43] **Jo Burgess:** And it still today surprises me that so many salons don't use online booking and that so many salons don't have online booking from, you know, Instagram when it's available and it happened and it's so easy to set it up. They still continue to DM backwards and forwards at 9 o'clock at night and then get an appointment in their appointment book.

[00:49:03] **Jo Burgess:** Um, that surprises me. Mm

[00:49:07] **Antony Whitaker:** You mentioned something before, which I weren't going to bring up. It wasn't in my notes to bring up, but I think that's part of the problem. Sometimes there's no one wants to talk about it. And it was black economy. Um, I forget in what context you were talking about the black economy, but you threw that phrase in there.

[00:49:24] **Antony Whitaker:** And so I want to ask you that around. So I'm connecting what you've just spoken about and black economy, because I think a lot of headdresses are not particularly tech. Competent, savvy, but they see this computer that, you know, knows all, remembers all. If you go back to when you started hairdressing, when I started hairdressing, you know, or before

[00:49:49] **Antony Whitaker:** not just hairdressing, but lots of small businesses on the high street anywhere, whether you're talking to us, the UK, Australia, whatever, they sort of survived because it was a cash business. And bit by bit, as cash has gone out of business and tech has come into business, there is such a, a paper trail of everything.

[00:50:09] **Antony Whitaker:** And so I've often thought to myself that one of the reasons that people don't want an appointment book is that they can't rub it out and say, Oh, she canceled, she didn't come in. Do you know what I mean? Uh, am I, uh, what are your thoughts about that?

[00:50:23] **Jo Burgess:** Yeah, it's definitely still a big part. It's a, you know, it's definitely an undertone in the industry in all, all around the world in all countries. But as we talked about earlier, consumers want to be cashless. Right? And so I think that we are proving over time that the return on investment for doing things legit will give you a bigger uptake than it will for, So we're all about, you know, we're not, we don't, we don't support, we're not a product for a backyard hairdresser.

[00:50:54] **Jo Burgess:** Like we are building products for businesses that want to grow and increase their revenue and do better. And so, yeah, we don't cater for that, but it's still there. It's still there

[00:51:08] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, yeah, exactly. Well, I mean, I, I've always said to salon owners that voice that as a concern as to why they're not online

booking or point of sale system, salon management system. I always say to them, listen, if that's, if that's your biggest issue, you've got more problems that any point-of-sale system is going to help you with, you know, if the, if the only way your business can be profitable and you make a good living out of it is by running it on a black economy, then you got bigger problems.

[00:51:34] **Antony Whitaker:** Do you know what I mean? So, yeah,

[00:51:36] **Jo Burgess:** I totally agree with you. And, you know, with on those, you know, the salons that are embracing online booking are reaping the rewards. And same with taking upfront payments. 60 percent of our online bookings happen outside of business hours. So, if you're going to answer the phone or respond to, you know, Instagram messages, All hours after hours and the backward, the client doesn't want that backwards and forwards.

[00:52:01] **Jo Burgess:** They want to find what times are available. Pick that time hit submit and then, you know, add it to their calendar. Done. Right? So, yeah, they're going to lose out in the end. There's a, there's a supply and demand situation at the moment. You know, we've got, you know, it's salons are doing well. Like, people are, you know, spending more money in salons because there are less salons around the world post COVID. But yeah,

[00:52:27] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah, exactly. Okay.

[00:52:29] **Jo Burgess:** I think if you're doing, if you're focusing on cash, then you're not going to grow your business.

[00:52:34] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, that's for sure. Okay. But but I suppose just before I ask the last question of you. In the back of my mind, it's as this industry is breaking down and becoming more about independence, does that black economy thing become bigger? Because that black economy thing has been shrinking because of legitimate businesses that, uh, you know, employer doesn't staff and they've got point of sale systems and receptionists and blah, blah, blah.

[00:53:00] **Antony Whitaker:** So, by virtue of that, they're becoming more professional, well-run organizations. When it becomes more about the business unit of one, does that black economy thing start to become a bigger issue?

[00:53:13] **Jo Burgess:** Possibly, you know,

[00:53:14] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:53:15] **Jo Burgess:** people like you and us are out there to help educate those people. Because I do think that there might be, um, there might be a wave coming where people think I don't want to be told what to do anymore. I can make more money working for myself, but they don't know how to lodge their taxes.

[00:53:31] **Jo Burgess:** They don't know how to make sure they've got enough money to pay their bills. You know, they don't know they don't earning money when they're on holidays. They don't know how to manage their cash flow. They can't afford the stock, you know, there's things that are going to happen and we're going to need to help the entire industry.

[00:53:44] **Jo Burgess:** Anybody that wants to be professional to grow their business. I do think there's a lot to learn for those stepping away from salons.

[00:53:53] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Yeah. Okay. All right. Last thing I wanted to ask you about is, you know, we started off at the beginning talking about you in 1993 and the tech that was available then. Um, the future comes around really quickly. You know, last 30 years have flown by when we, you know, if we could transport ourselves back to 1993 and talk about the iPhone and talk about the internet and talk about social media, it would have just blown your mind. So, What I want to ask you about is what does the future look like? Like, what do you, what, what's going to. You know, what's going to blow your mind in five years time that we can't even imagine at the moment, you know, uh, 10 years time, what, what role do you see, we've mentioned artificial intelligence, I don't think we've mentioned augmented reality, virtual reality, but what are the other things that are, that are on the horizon that we haven't even imagined yet?

[00:54:47] **Jo Burgess:** Well, I hope, I hope we get that thing from the Jetsons where you just pop it over your head and lift it up in the morning and you're dressed and your makeup's done and you can walk out the door. You know, a lot of those things have come true, right, when you look at

[00:55:01] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:55:02] **Jo Burgess:** You know, robots, and we've got iRobots that are doing our vacuums and, you know, lawnmowers and all of these things are automated.

[00:55:09] **Jo Burgess:** So it's, it's hard really to picture what, what the future looks like from that perspective. I think there's going to be a lot more wearable tech. I think there's going to be a lot more earpieces and a lot, maybe glasses and different ways that we interact with the technology. Again, I, I honestly just believe it will be less seen.

[00:55:29] **Jo Burgess:** I feel like it's. It's in the last 30 years, it's been less and less seen. It's does more and it's there, but you can't see it. It's invisible. Um, so I think that's coming and I definitely think, you know, smart data, um, you know, we look at, I look at Fitbit, right? I think Fitbit completely changed the landscape when it came to how we use tech to motivate people, right?

[00:55:53] **Jo Burgess:** All of a sudden we've all counting our steps or we're all, and we're looking at, A small piece of data, whereas prior to [00:56:00] that, we would print out big reports and we would look at, you know, things in, in retrospect, you know, it was after the fact, whereas now we can be more proactive with everything we do because it's instant.

[00:56:11] **Jo Burgess:** We've got that instant piece of data. We've got that instant communication with, you know, we're adding something to a cart, someone's paid, their car's on file, like everything is just absolutely instant now. And I just see that getting. Faster and faster and more and more personalized. So that, that it's so that life is a delight, right?

[00:56:31] **Jo Burgess:** That it's, it's concierge style. You're just, there's no thinking involved. It just flows through the experience of being in and out of a cell and then communicating. I think, um, I think we've got to sort out the bombardment of messages we get, email, all the various different chats that we're all got. I think that's a problem.

[00:56:53] **Jo Burgess:** And I think there's a solution coming for all of that because. I don't know about you, but I'm absolutely overwhelmed by,

[00:57:00] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:57:01] **Jo Burgess:** you know, the influx of stuff. So

[00:57:03] **Jo Burgess:** how do we take that away? Right. And I think that maybe we'll do it in the same way as we did data and reporting. We used to have big data. Print out weekly summaries and monthly summaries.

[00:57:13] **Jo Burgess:** And now we just look at a dashboard and look at the dial and how close is it to where we need it to be? And what do we, and tell me what I need to do to get there. You know, it's like, it's like Fitbit. It's like, you need to stand up now and you need to walk 2000 more steps to hit your goals for the day.

[00:57:29] **Jo Burgess:** It's the same concept in a salon environment. It's like, rather than, Oh crap, I got to the end of the week and I didn't make enough money.

[00:57:39] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:57:39] **Jo Burgess:** didn't know what to do. I think we're going to get to the point where that's just always going to happen. You're always going to get your 10,000 steps and you're always going to get your revenue from your business because you're going to be prompted and motivated or your clients are going to be brought in or it's just, you know, it's just going to happen and be more

[00:57:56] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:57:58] **Jo Burgess:** I hope.

[00:57:58] **Antony Whitaker:** That's fascinating. Okay. All right. Well, listen, I could talk to you for ages, um, and it's been a fascinating conversation and I know it is way past your bedtime in Brisbane at this point in time. So where can people connect with you on Instagram or any other social media channels?

[00:58:16] **Antony Whitaker:** Where would you like to send people?

[00:58:18] **Jo Burgess:** You can find me on Instagram. You can find me on LinkedIn, um, Shortcuts websites.

[00:58:23] **Antony Whitaker:** All right. Good. All right. Well, I'll put those links on our website, growmysalonbusiness.com and in the show notes for today's podcast. So if you're listening to this podcast with Joe and have enjoyed it, 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 and review on the Apple podcast app.

[00:58:43] **Antony Whitaker:** So to wrap up, Joe Burgess, thank you very much for being on this week's episode of the Grow My Salon Business Podcast.

[00:58:51] **Jo Burgess:** My pleasure. Thank you for having me.

[00:58:54] **Antony Whitaker:** It's been great. It's been fascinating conversation.

[00:58:57] **Antony Whitaker:** 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