

Lucas: Welcome to Bridge the Gap podcast, the senior living podcast with Josh and Lucas. We want to come today with a very special episode to tell our listeners about a very interesting new series that we are spinning up called Contributor Wednesday. Josh, a lot of things have changed in not just our world but the world at large and we've been able to reposition how we're able to talk to people. But one of those things is following through on a commitment that we made to our listeners back at the beginning of the year, which was to bring them more content.

Josh: You're exactly right, Lucas. You know, following kind of the evolution of our podcast platform where it began several years ago is just this big idea we had and to see if we could do it. And it caught a lot of traction. And as our listeners have grown, we keep hearing more and more requests for more content. And we've had some incredible guests, some incredible thought leaders and discussed some amazing topics over the last couple of years. And as you said at the beginning of this year, I think we were actually somewhere in Palm Desert, in a hot air balloon. And we told our listeners this year, it's all about them. And what we hear is we need more content. So in addition to our Monday shows, it's going to be really exciting to bring people much more than just Josh and Lucas and our thought leaders on Monday shows. We're going to be adding even more content starting in June through the end of the year. It's super exciting.

Lucas: Yeah, I would have never dreamed that. Now looking back, this is season three. Looking back at the beginning, we got together as a group and just said, why are we going to do this? And we really felt that the industry needed a platform for people to have a voice for the industry, a thought leadership platform to inform, educate and influence freely. And that morphed into something that became very intentional. You and I, and our team and our producer Sara, we would go to the conferences and we got all this great information. We thought everybody else needs to be able to interact in this and hear this. And so we started setting up at the conferences and doing all of our interviews face to face. Now, many of our plans for this year have been diverted, changed, canceled you know, or postponed from the conference sector. And we've been able to set up our remote studios, which has allowed us really on a positive flip side to spend the time that we have needed to help outline this new Contributor Wednesday.

And so let's talk to our audience about the reasons why we want to build a bigger umbrella, so to speak, to invite more people in on the platform.

Josh: Well, you're exactly right. And you know, before we get into talking about Contributor Wednesday, I was just thinking the other day you know, the timing, it's amazing how just a couple of years ago we even talked and the reason why we started the podcast was because there was not much conversation outside of the conferences. So we set out to change that and create a more digital platform. And it's really exciting. One of the things that we've been asked about so many times is what happens when other people start podcasting? And we were like, that's great because that's part of why we're doing it is to try to help lead the way. And just three short years later, really two and a half now if you get on Google, you can actually search and there's multiple podcasts, which is really exciting.

And coming into this, I just think had we not started and we tried to put all this together as quickly as the changes happened this year, we would have been really behind. And so I'm really thankful that we were literally, you know, Lucas, we've talked about this, we were able to pivot in about 48 hours and spin up virtual shows and virtual happy hours and all the things that has now led us to, as we talked about, really kind of creating what we're referring to as the Bridge the Gap network. And it's a network of shows. It's a network of content and media and things that are happening in and around our industry and thought leadership. That again, this has always been bigger than the Josh and Lucas show. It's always been about the topics. It's always been about the guests and it's always been about the thought leaders.

So Wednesday Contributors starting in June is just that. And we're super excited to bring four great thought leaders rotating every Wednesday, starting the first Wednesday in June through the end of the year.

Lucas: Yes. And when we sat down we thought, who do we align with the most? Who in the industry has a voice that people that really resonates with people and who do we think that would come alongside the mission of what Bridge the Gap is trying to accomplish. And we picked four people and we methodically went and talked to each of these four people not knowing if they would say yes or no or don't call me again. And across the board, all four of them said absolutely yes, this is something that they believe in as well and think that it's going to be an incredible opportunity to bring a more diverse set of content and different people that are already the thought leaders.

Josh, our Monday shows are typically very guest driven where you and I have front row seats to all of these amazing leaders in the business. These Contributor Wednesday shows are going to be a little bit different. These are the leaders in the business and we're going to hear directly from their voices about specific topics that are related to the industry on a very diverse scale across the board and people, our audience are going to get to hear and be able to see this catalog of Contributor Wednesday folks start to build and it's going to help impact their daily life in this industry and the things that they want to do on a very diverse level. So let's start down the roster here and we'll talk about who the people are and what their topics are from a high level.

Josh: Yeah, so it's really exciting. You know, as you mentioned it was hard to narrow down to the first four list. These folks, many will not be strangers to our listeners because we've had them on our show before. We've gotten great reviews and we consume their content and we know a lot of people consume the content. So super excited to have Traci Bild with Bild & Co. And one of the topics that we've heard that she'll be discussing. A couple of the topics are sales and marketing. So this whole show on Wednesdays that Traci will be hosting as an expert on sales and marketing. She goes around the country in many different communities, many different teams. And so she's going to be sharing her ideas, her best practice and leading the industry forward. And it's amazing that during this time when we're all kind of pivoting, we're all kind of re-imagining what senior living is moving forward and how we can do better. She's going to help lead us through that. So super excited to have Traci on the show.

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Lucas: What a great thought leader. And we had an amazing time with her last year in Atlanta and people can go back and listen to that episode as well as see she was a part of the Mastermind that we did in Atlanta with a great group of people. So excited about Traci. Next up is going to be James Lee with Aventine Senior Living and many people know who James is. He is really built an audience on LinkedIn with his thought leadership posts that he does on a weekly basis. Tons of engagement, tons of comments. His his ability to put into words what other people think and feel about issues and challenges that people face in the senior living industry is by no one else I believe. So really excited about James.

Josh: Yeah. And I think about James and I can still remember when you kind of turned me on to checking him out on LinkedIn and it's been probably a couple years ago when you first told me about James and I hadn't met him. I got to meet him last year. It was about this time at Argentum in San Antonio. It's hard to believe that's already been over a year ago. And he was able to attend our Mastermind there, which was an amazing event. And so I've been following James on LinkedIn since you told me about him. Thought provoking content, always very thoughtful, very intentional heart of gold and just a brilliant mind. So can't wait to hear his episodes on Wednesday Contributors as well.

Lucas: Absolutely. Next step. We've got Meredith Mills, COO of country Meadows, another alumni to the podcast. People can go and hear a very recent episode from Meredith. A great leader, outspoken leader and very passionate about the older adults and her position there in the family business. A very great story with Meredith. Well, and Meredith is an extremely passionate leader. That came through even in the podcast that we had her on the show that just recently was published. And so had the opportunity to spend a lot of time with her. She's right in the thick of it. You know, she's in a high level position but very hands on and her family ran business and senior living. They're very intentional, very thoughtful and doing great things at country Meadows. She's going to hit some hot button topics that everybody wants to be staying tuned on, on healthcare and policy. So it promises to be entertaining. It promises to be informative and I think it will be thought provoking as well. She's got some excellent ideas and some out of the box concepts and ideas that will help push us all forward.

Lucas: Another great, phenomenal younger leader in the business. I really look up to and respect Meredith as a leader in any category. But it's also great to have another great female leader on our network. I think that that is one of the things I respect at a very, very high level. Probably one of the top things on my list about senior living is that there's a great deal of wonderful female leaders in this business from CEO on down and Meredith is no different. Next up to round out the Contributor Wednesday pilot program that we're launching in June is a good friend of ours and a multiple alumni to our program. The one and only Charles Turner.

Josh: So Charles is no stranger to our industry been on our show several times keynote speaker all around the country at multiple conferences and also just a lot of fun to hang out with and listen to. Always entertaining, always thought provoking, a broad range of background and experience from operations to technology to labor. Has an amazing rapidly growing platform that he's created at Kare and really excited that Charles has taken time out of his extremely busy schedule to be doing deep dives and talk about labor and technology. How relevant is that? So rounding out the number four, Charles Turner on Contributor Wednesday as I hope our listeners can identify with these are four amazing folks and this is going to be really cool, Lucas, because usually you and I on these Monday shows, traditionally we have a thought leader in the middle of us and we're just sitting there learning and asking questions. On this, we're going to be able to just sit back and relax and watch them lead us and give us thought provoking ideas and discuss. I look forward to our listeners being able to directly connect with these individuals and keep the conversation going. As these podcasts begin to be launched in June.

Lucas: I couldn't be more excited about these four people and these four diverse sectors of topics. Again, we're going to be hitting sales and marketing with Traci. We're going to be hitting leadership and culture with James and we're going to be hitting healthcare and policy with Meredith. And then we're going to be hitting labor and technology with Charles. I mean, these four buckets have proven out over now into season three when we look back at some of the highest downloaded and engaged content that we put out, they're in these four buckets.

And so we really hope that our audience that is so committed to following Bridge the Gap and learning from Bridge the Gap that they are able to understand this network of build-out to bring these diverse and new content to them so that they can continue to learn and grow from more people on the Bridge the Gap network.

Josh: It's really exciting. It's hard to believe that we turn out a minimum and every year it's been more of 52 episodes or more a year. Well, now adding an additional show every single week with additional topics, additional hosts, it's a huge feat. Not possible without our producer, Sara Mitchell, the amazing team that's producing this behind the scenes. And I'm excited for our listeners and I'm excited for us, that we get to hear ourselves and other people talk about amazing topics and this industry that we love. It's going to be exciting way to finish the year strong for sure.

Lucas: No doubt. And so this is a pilot program that we're going to run starting in June through the remainder of the year and that we're committed to bringing this content every single Wednesday with these four individuals. And we're just going to see this is a pilot program. We're going to see where this goes. And so the power is back in the audience's hands, which is what we've made the theme of all year for this year, even before our world changed. We wanted to make this year really all about the listeners. And so we, our, our call to action to our listeners is we want you to listen to these programs and then we want your feedback. We want to hear what you have to say. These are brand new shows coming from the first person perspective of these great leaders in our industry.

And we want to see some engagement and get some feedback so that we know where to put our time and attention going forward as we roll this out.

Josh: To our listeners, those of you that may just be listening on iTunes, we also want to challenge you to connect with us in a variety of ways. There's so many easy ways to connect on multiple socials, connect with us, follow Bridge the Gap on LinkedIn, on Instagram, on Twitter, on Facebook. There's a variety of different type of content that we put out, easy ways to connect with us. And don't forget if you want to watch the episodes, you can do that on our YouTube page. So we are committed to providing this great, great thought leadership on a variety of platforms to make it easy and convenient no matter where you are.

Lucas: And absolutely they can go to the mothership, which is BTGvoice.com. Get access to all of our content from there, all of the links from there. And you know, we've heard from different people that they'll go on and binge listen to get caught back up and there is a ton of bingeing that people can do now because season three has brought, I would say probably three X the amount of content that we've done in the previous years. And so this is another avenue for us to continue to more than double the amount of content that's going out. So a ton of resources right at everybody's fingertips.

Josh: You know, a great benefit that some of our listeners may not be aware either is that we actually transcribe each episode. So especially these Contributor Wednesday shows where they're going to be giving you some easy quick takeaways to apply immediately to your team. You may find those on our website at btgvoice.com. You may want to print those.

You may want to highlight and go back to your teams and have a document that you can share with them. So please feel free to check that out as well.

Lucas: And they're going to be able to have access to that and they're going to want to with this next round of content on this pilot program. So Contributor Wednesday, Josh our goals and vision to make this bigger than what we could ever imagine are continuing to work its way out. And I would just say from all of us at Bridge the Gap, we're just so thankful that we do have listeners that, that people, this resonates with people. We get messages from our social pages, DMs and emails off of our website from people every single week that our content has resonated with. And it just validates all the hard work. And it also validates the importance of content like this for an industry that is so wonderful. There's so many great love stories, there's so many heroes and now more than ever, we want to amplify that message and expand our platform and our umbrella to bring more people in to impact everybody that is listening.

Josh: That's right. So be sure and tune in to Contributor Wednesday starting in June through the end of the year, every Wednesday, a fresh new episode for you from a Wednesday Contributor, a thought leader. Very excited. Can't wait Lucas.

Lucas: I'm going to be listening just like you are my friend. Good to see you buddy. And thanks for everybody for listening to Bridge the Gap.