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The Show Business Side of Service Design
Guest was Adam St. John (aka Adam Lawrence)

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At [Work•Play•Experience](#) Adam St. John (aka Adam Lawrence) **turns good services into memorable service experiences** that start people talking. Adam says, "Your customers will feel better served, will appreciate the value of your work and will be more loyal to your company. And they will have great service stories to share with the world." In the Business901 podcast this week, Adam and I discuss the theatrical aspect of Service Design and how theater can play a vital role in developing your customer experience.

Adam is a professional comedian, business consultant and writer with a background in psychology and the automotive industry. For years, he has been using expertise gained in the world of theater and film to help companies influence their customers.

The Work•Play•Experience approach to service experience uses proven and successful methods, many of them drawn and adapted from the world of theater and film. Read more about our unique, highly praised approach at the Work•Play•Experience blog: http://workplayexperience.blogspot.com/.

Transcription of Podcast

Joe Dager: Welcome everyone. This is Joe Dager, the host of the Business901 podcast. With me today is Adam Lawrence. He's a professional comedian, business consultant, and writer with a background in psychology and the automotive industry. For

years, he's been using his expertise gained in the world of theater and film to help companies influence their customers. His company, Work, Play, Experience, is a Service Design and customer experience consultancy with a unique approach. Based in Germany, he advises companies and agencies worldwide. Adam, thanks for joining me, and the obvious question how does a comedian turn into a customer experience consultant?

Adam: You know, Joe, I think it's all the same thing really. I say that kind of as a trite answer, but I kind of believe that. Let's think about it. What is comedy? Comedy is about understanding what people think and how they're feeling in the moment and how you can, sometimes, with a little trick make them laugh by faking them, wrong footing them on what they think is going to happen next. It's all about understanding what is going on in someone's head, and I think service, customer experience, all those kind of things, is very much the same thing. It's about producing an experience which somebody finds good. Not necessarily amusing that wouldn't be appropriate in many cases, but it's all about what are they thinking right now, what are they feeling right now, and how can I connect with that?

Joe: Is that what brought you into Service Design? You were doing this previous to the Service Design; I don't want to say craze, but as the methodology started to develop?

Adam: We sort of bumped into it. When I say we I always speak of my colleague, Marcus Holmes, and myself. We're a Stan and Ollie kind of deal you get with us two. We're a duo really. We did some plays together over the years. We met on stage. I'm an actor; he's also a musician, and we met on stage doing a musical and got on really well and started doing various projects. There was one thing that always interested us, "What's the experience like here?" I started writing a blog, actually, about where is theater turning up in business or where is show business turning up in business. That was fun to write, and people started popping

up saying this is cool and talk to these guys, or you might enjoy reading this, which was really helpful.

At the same time, Marcus went off to India on a conference with John Facker of the Doors of Perception conference and bumped into some guys there from a company called Live Work. He comes back and says I discovered this thing called Service Design and in the same breath I say there's a thing called Service Design. We kind of discovered it at the same time at different points in the world from two different directions.

It gave us a name for what we were doing and, of course, it gave us a wonderful group of people to connect with and a community to join and learn lots and lots from. That's been a really, really great experience, actually.

Joe: Theater seems to be the convenient analogy. Is there a deeper relationship between that, between Service Design and theater?

Adam: Very much. I always say it's not a metaphor; it's the same thing. I really do fervently believe that. That's my first point, again, really with the comedy. Let's widen up comedy and talk about all kinds of show business whether it's theater or film or music or dance or any of these things. What are they all about? They're all about setting up a process, if you like, or a set of stimuli or a story, whatever you want to call it, setting up a sequence of events which influences somebody's emotion and makes them feel the way you hope they will feel. It always interacts with their own experience, of course, but you're trying to guide them along a certain emotional path. I think Service Design is the same thing. The experience end of it is very clear parallel. What do I see, what do I feel, how is it presented to me? That's very clear.

You've got to understand, also, theater is not just performance. Theater is a development tool. Theater is a tool which you can

use to model any kind of human interaction very, very quickly, very, very cheaply, and actually quite effectively. It's not just the performance side of theater which interests us; in fact in our work we hardly ever use performance techniques.

What we use are rehearsal techniques which is how a theater goes out there and uses the resources it has on a limited time frame asks itself a question. OK, we have a process here. It's a play in this case, but it could be a Service Design, of course. It says how might this be, how might this turn out in the end, and looks at all the options of doing that in a very fast, very iterative, very full bodied -- they use their whole body; you don't sit down and think and rehearse, you get up and do.

That brings in much bigger emotional level, as well. I think that really is a very big overlap there. We took these tools out of the theater, like the rehearsal and other things we can talk about, and said let's apply these to business processes. How can we rehearse a business process?

I just want to point out there rehearsal is not practicing something but it's always the same. Rehearsal, again, is developmental, how might it be. Then you start getting these really, really great insights into the emotionality of things and also the options that you have open to you.

Joe: Are we scripting everything?

Adam: That's a very good question because absolutely, emphatically maybe. It depends what you mean by script. I never believe in giving somebody words they have to say. As an actor, of course, I get that all the time. I have a job as acting still, and then I get precise words I have to say, but it's always up to me to interpret those. I think in a service environment customers have a very, very good nose for anything which is inauthentic, anything which is not your own words in a very simple level. We believe not in scripting a process down to the word but in

exploring the ways it might be. Maybe, setting up a palette of options that somebody in the front line situation could use with this service and then encouraging them and helping them, again through a rehearsal process, to find their own way to make it authentically theirs and bring it to life.

There's a tension in many people's lives between show business and authenticity because a lot of people think show business is fake. They think it's about a facade, about being sleek, about pretending to do something. That's not a good understanding of actually what show business is.

I love Anthony Hopkins. Sir Anthony Hopkins, one of my favorite actors. When Sir Anthony Hopkins plays Hannibal Lector if he was not pretending it wouldn't be scary. The reason it's scary is because he shows part of himself, something that's inside all of us, to make that role possible.

Theater is really not about pretending to be something. It's about choosing which aspect of yourself to show. It's actually about getting better at showing who you really are and that, I think, is something Service Design can really use, that point of what values do we have here? How can we show those values in a controlled, conscious way to make a rock and roll experience for our customer?

Joe: I think it's interesting you say that because when you look at those roles, those great roles that people have, Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones, you're saying that it's really part of them in acting. It's not script roleplaying; it's really becoming part of the experience.

Adam: That's right. I think every one of us is a personality that has very many facets, and we always choose which facets that we show. They vary from role to role in life. We show different facets from ourselves at work, at home, and even, for example, at work a different facet of myself at a board meeting than in a

coffee break with colleagues. I'm always rotating this jewel and deciding which facets to show. What you do when you're an actor, maybe, is you rotate the jewel a bit further and show the dark side sometimes or the very, very blindingly bright side. You get experienced at showing other sides of yourself which people don't normally see. Of course, we don't want people doing service to turn into Hannibal Lector. That's just a very strong example of it.

It's about saying I'm fulfilling a role here and deciding which part of myself to bring into that role to fit it with life. That's not fake. In fact, that's a very honest thing to do, and that is one of the things we really discover in our work. We work as much as we can with front line staff, people that have customer contact whether it's internal customer, external customer. We don't care. People that are dealing with the next level, the user.

People are very, very excited to discover how much freedom they have in what might sometimes seem like a fairly tightly scripted service and how much of themselves they can bring into that, they often find it quite a liberating experience.

Joe: An organization, is this how they develop their brand? Do you want to develop your brand through this roleplaying, maybe, and identify Kleenex with paper tissue, ketchup with Heinz? Is this taking on that persona that brand? Is that possible for a larger company?

Adam: You mean in terms of acting out the brand? I think that's certainly a valued thing to do. That's not the way we work. What we look at is any set of values or any brand ultimately reflects itself or must reflect itself in behavior. It must come down to things that you and I experience on a day to day level. Interactions, if you like, whether it's human/machine or human/human interactions. What we do is we certainly would look at often quite trivial interactions very, very closely, by

recreating them in a rehearsal situation. We don't use the 'R' word, roleplay, by the way. It's an evil word. We don't use it. No, it's not a bad word but it scares people off and doesn't quite describe what we do, so we try and avoid that one. In our rehearsal situations, we will take what might seem to be very everyday scenes and look at them with a very, very close eye.

The people who are new to this, our co-creative partners, are amazed at how much they can discover in a small scene about the whole ecosystem of that scene, about the process around it, about the values behind it, and then moving up and up and up basically down to the standards, the belief, the world view, if you'd like, of the brand.

That's really exciting to find, and that's the other thing, as well. They say that the theater, the whole of the world is enclosed within the stage, and that sounds terrible Kenneth Brannagh "O Darling" sort of thing. In a way, it's true. A good theater play tells you so much more about what's around it than the one and a half hours could possible contain.

We find the same thing in Service Design. Looking at the very small scenes with the people who have lived through them hundreds of times can tell us enormously much about the whole ecosystem and the values behind it. Of course, you can then talk about those values once you've got that point and try something else and try something else and say this feels more like us. That's where it gets really valuable.

Joe: You mentioned the word; co-create. Using a theater analogy, I'm thinking there's a real definable separation from the audience and the actors on stage. How does co-create relate to theater?

Adam: I think if I have my theater hat on, my acting hat on there are two things I would say. One is that the rehearsal process depends a lot on the director's style. Some directors are

quite authoritative, and they say no, this is the way it's going to be, but it always is an interpretive art. They can't move my mouth for me; they can't move my body for me, so I always interpret their instructions like that. There's a co-creative aspect within the rehearsal process in the theater. There's also quite important co-creative aspect each night during the performance.

Even though I'm standing there on stage with the bright lights in my eyes, and you can't often see much of the audience, I can hear them. I can sense. I don't want to get too esoteric here, but I get a feeling for how they're feeling and if they're enjoying it. We establish a mutual rhythm, myself and the audience or the ensemble and the audience. There's a co-creative process.

If we switch that over to what we do in Service Design, our co-creative work there is pretty much typical for any other Service Design process. We work with members of the organization we're dealing with, front line, back stage people, decision makers. If we can, we get customers in the room.

That's not always possible, but we find that the people who are working with the customers know them very well. Once we can get them more literally to step into the customer's shoes and become the customer, then we do, actually, get the customer in the room, even if we can't have them there. If we can get them there, that's even better, of course.

What you've got is a mixed palette of people from all different viewpoints, if you like, working on this thing, and with the designers, that's us, very much in a guiding role by trying to help them discover.

One of the big parallels, also, I think, between theater and design are the difference between the director and the actor. This is similar, by the way, in, for example, a programming environment, like in a software company.

The director is directing a group of people who can do things that they cannot do, with a number of very notable exceptions, like Clint Eastwood, people like that. Most directors are not actors, and most designers are not the people they're designing for. If I, sometimes, get annoyed with some colleagues of mine, it's because I sometimes think they forget that.

The people in the room, the guy who's working in the bicycle shops selling the bicycles every day, knows his business so much more than me, the expensive consultant who comes in with a nice suit on. I must remember that. He knows the business, and I don't. All I've got are some tools, some ideas and some processes to help him discover more about his business.

Joe: I look at the fact that, let's say; I'm a designer. I'm working. I put myself in the customer's shoes. I'm thinking how I'm going to act, so I really don't develop a customer experience. Somehow, you have to include the customer, don't you?

Adam: I think you certainly do, as much as you possibly can. There is a second best, and the second best is working with the people who are close to the customers. There's a big difference there between putting yourself in the customer's shoes in, let's say, a mental way and thinking about what the customer wants or even observing the customer, which is massively valuable -- we love to that a lot as well -- and actually physically doing it, even in an approximated, jury rigged, lashed together way.

As you read before, by background I'm a psychologist. I'm more of the hard-end psychology. I was the guy with the electrodes who was scary. I'm quite careful to talk about what people feel and perceive and stuff like that.

It's certainly true that when we physically go through motions, postures, processes, that the emotional aspect of that is much

stronger than if we go through it, for example, with Lego people or just in our heads or as a film or whatever that is.

One of our big things that we always push is doing, not talking. That makes it much more emotional and makes it much more enlightening. We really find that people involved in this process forget that they're on a stage. They forget that they are normally on the other side of the counter, if you like.

They start getting, for example, quite annoyed. "Why do we do that like that? It's stupid!" They might say that in a more intellectual way when they're discussing it. "That's not a very clever idea. We should do that differently." When you get them actually doing this stuff they start going, "No! This is really stupid," and they start banging their hands on tables.

That, for me, is a qualitative difference which comes from this tool set which involves your whole body and getting up and doing stuff and experiencing it, with all senses, as much as possible.

Joe: Our mutual colleague, Graham Hill, he asked a couple of questions, which I thought were right on spot, as typical Grahamistic. The best service is one that goes smoothly in that you don't notice at all. You get through the experience, and you just end up with a result, because you always remember the bad, but very few times do you really think about the good things that all happened in your last shopping experience, let's say. Do you have to turn all these things into an experience?

Adam: Absolutely not and I think that would be a mistake, as well. We talk about, a lot, in our work dramatic arcs, which is the flow of a song or of a movie or of a play. When is it exciting? When is it calm? Let's take the example of James Bond. At the start of a James Bond movie, you've got this huge stunt scene every time where something blows up, and somebody usually gets shot or something, and James is usually solving the previous case. It doesn't matter. It's just a big eye candy, explosive scene,

but it's quite exciting. James jumps from the motorcycle into the plane, whatever it is.

Then, James goes back to London and goes to Miss Moneypenny and has a flirt. Then, goes to M. Gets his mission. Goes to Q. Gets his gadgets. That calming down is just what you need in that moment.

If James Bond were only the action scenes all the way through, without being too meaningful, it becomes a Michael Bay movie. It's just bang, bang, bang all the time. That's not fun.

If we see our life as a chain of experiences sometimes, we want to have something that we're very present in, something we're very involved in the moment of experiencing a thing. Sometimes we want to leave our head where it is get on with life and just pick up the coffee with a very smooth transition that we don't notice.

I think there very much is a range of options between very, very immersive experiences or very performance like experiences if you like, down to ones which become completely invisible. I think it's important to be aware of that.

I went to an excellent restaurant last night, a little restaurant in my town, where the waiters, they just do it with a flourish. They shake your hand when you come in; they serve the table with style, not an expensive restaurant, but they really live that. That's great, and I really enjoyed that.

Yesterday at lunchtime I grabbed a tray of food from a fast food joint. Just walking past and paid and had just a smile with the person serving there. It depends what I felt like. Yesterday I wanted to make an evening of it. That restaurant was perfect. At lunchtime, I want a sip and quick food, and that other restaurant was perfect. It's a question of what you need at the time.

Joe: Not all the time are we looking for that ah-ha experience but when we start using a product it's not bad to have some type of experience that we're structuring and identifying the environment for that person to proceed in, right?

Adam: I think so. One of the dangers of invisible service is when everything is invisible it becomes a commodity. When everything works smoothly then the difference is, "How much did I pay for this?" I can start to lose identification with the customer; the brand is watered away to nothing. I think it's always a question that a designer or a Service Designer or a business person must ask themselves is, "Where do I need to show the personality of my service, my product? And where do I just need to be smoothly running away in the background?"

That's a very good question that you can talk about. During the lifecycle of a customer working with you where are the times I want to give them an ah-ha or a wow or whatever you want to call these things, and when are the times I just want to be a quiet supporter in their life.

There's certainly a potential within that process there to find also a uniqueness for your brand or for your product.

Joe: Going back to something that Graham mentioned, you separate the serious side of the business with the play acting in the theater is just as important as strengthening it.

Adam: I'm going to be a bit careful with the wording I use again. I take play very seriously. I don't contrast play with serious; I try and contrast play with solemn. Solemn is a different thing from serious. Seriousness means focus; it means moving forward with something, yeah, focusing is the most important thing about it. Now, play can be enormously focusing. Play creates energy or liberates energy. It makes me think I can do anything I want to do. I don't like to contrast play and serious. I think they are very much overlapping.

But certainly, what we try and do when we create a creative environment for people is to be playful, because when we're playing it's OK to fail. When we are playing we are measuring more creative and stuff like this. But that does not mean not taking the work seriously.

I don't want to tread on Lego's trademark rights here, but Lego has serious play. We talk about playing seriously in theater, as well. It means taking this energy that you get from a playful, creative mindset and focusing that very, very hard on the very serious or even wicked problem that you're dealing with.

I think that's a powerful combination. When you're playing very seriously then you really have the best of both worlds, a multiplicator effect.

Joe: Does theater work outside of Service Design? How do I use theater in my normal day business without that thought process of Design Thinking, Service Design?

Adam: I think you don't really think about other things from theater apart from that development process, which is what we focus on. Certainly, theater can teach you a lot about the presentation of something as well, whether it's very obvious stuff like lighting, like costume, like stage layouts. I often draw parallels between stage layouts and the entrance ways to buildings, for example; that's a fun thing to do. Also, about things that have not often thought about in business, like timing. The great master of timing in the world is a guy called Bugs Bunny. If you look at any of these movies, when he's standing there, usually not him, but usually when his woeful adversary is standing there and gets whacked by the falling anvil or whatever it is, you can say the moment this is going to happen within a tenth of a second. You can go, "And now," and it hits him. That's brilliant.

I like reading Joe Pine and James Gilmore's work about experience economy. They talk about a progression between commodities and products and services and experiences and stuff like that, which I find quite fun.

I found a similar progression in timing. For example, whenever I order the house to be built, and if it's a week late or a month late, that's pretty normal. If I order a load of brick and the load of bricks is a day late, that's OK. If I order a meal and the meal is 10 minutes late, that's OK, 20 minutes, not so OK.

When I'm on stage if I'm working with a colleague and I put out my hand to get let's say the wine glass I'm going to throw into the fire and the wine glass is half a second late the beat is gone, and the scene isn't going to work. The timing's gone. I think that one thing that business can certainly look at is timing.

When do things need to happen? When is the customer really expecting it? I used to do a lot of theater in restaurants, I still do it now and again, it's quite fun, and sometimes there a plate of food was part of the show, and it would come hot from the kitchen, that was part of the show that it was hot food. For a cook in a restaurant, when you say now that means OK, I get a plate; I put it on the table; I put the food on the plate; I add the sauce; I add the garnish; I dust off the plate, and I give it to the guy. That was now for the cook.

On stage, that's an eternity. That would have ruined the scene, taking 20 seconds to do that. I think the timing is one of those things where people in business can really look at theater and at show business and find things like that. What other things? I talked about lighting, I talked about costume. There's a lot to do, also, about, this is very experiential stuff I know, but talk about where is the eye going when I walk through the building, for example, which is one reason why architects make powerful Service Designers is they're used to working with time.

When I walk through a building what do I see first, what do I see next, what do I see after that and how does the way my eye flows through the building affect my experience of that? Those are all things that you can think about in your shop layout, for example, as well or, again, in your business process. That's not just Service Design things, but a larger field there that's affected, I think.

Joe: I think those are great analogies; you use the word timing. I typically use the word cadence.

Adam: Yes, absolutely.

Joe: You've got to have a certain rhythm. If you're in the process of delivering a quote to someone and you take too long that sends signs off to that individual.

Adam: It does.

Joe: Maybe you're not prepared. Maybe this isn't your billy-wig to do.

Adam: Exactly. Quite right.

Joe: As you travel through the customer journey, you are looking at all these external factors that affect that journey. Can this all be that orchestrated or should it be?

Adam: No, I don't think it can or should be unless you're in a totally controlled environment like something like Disney. Of course, they basically have everything as far as possible within their purview. Even then, you have different people walking through it every day, a different bunch of kids that are happy or sad, or parents who are stressed or unstressed. It's never possible to control everything nor do I think you should, but I think it's very important to be aware of what the factors might be and how could they affect you, to have an eye for the detail and also for the big picture. That's another show biz thing. When you

watch a movie, when are they using the close-ups and when are they using the big shots? What does that tell you about the story?

Joe: How does someone start thinking like this? I think these are valuable lessons, but how do you say, outside of hiring you, which is good, how does someone start thinking this way or does it come naturally?

Adam: There are also things you can do, actually, if you want to get into this stuff. A very useful thing is to just watch any kind of show business output whether it's listening to a song or watching a movie or watching a play or a dance, whatever it is, and try and watch it with an eye for the process. What is actually being done here at this time? Let's talk about songs, if you listen to rap music, for example. It often starts very steady and quite calm and it builds up and builds up and builds up until more and more stuff is happening. That's a dramatic arc there. It's the same dramatic arc you see in something like "The Lord of the Rings", the book, not the movie, where you have a very slow start, and it builds up and it builds up.

That can be very engrossing for someone, finding the rhythm, the cadence that you call it, of an experience and building, building, building up to a dramatic conclusion. The problem might be is if you start things very, very slowly why do I keep my attention? Why don't I wonder off in my thoughts?

Which is why, for example, the movie version of "Lord of the Rings" has an extra action scene at the start that's not in the book and then shortens the first 14 years of the book to 10 minutes of the film because people today like to have a boom at the start that happens to get their attention. If you look at other kinds of music, let's look at a pop song or a rock song, you get some kind of what's called a hook at the beginning which catches your attention.

It might just be something like dun dun dun, dun dun dunna. I'm in, this is me. Then you go through a more changeable structure of a verse and chorus, verse and chorus type of thing which is periods of familiar and unfamiliar melody, if you like, or periods where it's up tempo and down tempo.

Just by looking at a song, for example, you can think what structure has this thing got that makes it work and how could I, for example, apply that to what I'm doing to my customer relationship, to my Service Design, whatever it is? That's one way. It's just being more aware of these things that are being crafted by somebody. People who write songs really know why they do it like that. They don't just do it because they don't have any other ideas. That's one way.

Another great way to get into some of the insights that you can generate from the skillset of theater is to go on down to your local improv group and join in or join an amateur dramatic group or something like that or whatever it might be and actually see how much you can learn from people by a little bit of body language, a little bit of analysis of the situation they're in, and looking at them as a full body.

I want to be careful with body language. Some people say it's some kind of miracle tool, and it's not. It's often wrong, but it can be quite useful. With a little bit of experience yourself, maybe a little bit of acting and improve stuff, then you can get a very quick eye for that. Then you start seeing it in your own customers, in your own colleagues, and you think that's interesting. Now I said that and they drifted off. Why is that?

What could I have done here? Do I need a boom here? What do I need? There is a couple of things you could do. You could also read my blog, which is amazingly good, and it's all about this stuff. I think it's more important to experience it for yourself and

just have a slightly more open eye for what's happening around you.

Joe: What's the unique approach that Work, Play, Experience offers?

Adam: We are Service Innovators, Service Designers, Customer Experience Designers. It depends what you're asking us about at the time. We've also done some communication design for people, as well. Our approach is a very theatrical one. We use a theatrical toolset, which is great, by the way, because when you come into a room as a Service Designer, and you start talking about personas and customer journeys and stakeholder values or stakeholder maps or other things like this then you've got a translation thing to do before you get started, but everyone knows what an act or a scene or a prop and a storyboard are. You're already on a neutral language that everyone gets from the very beginning, and that's very useful. It's a design tool, a design method that really deals very well with emotion I think. If we're talking about being customer centered, if we're talking about working towards that, OK, customer centered, what's the center of the customer? The center of the customer is what they feel. There are many words out there to approach that, whether you have your little graphs with one smiley, two smileys, three smileys for what the customer's experiencing.

That's great; you should do that, but to be honest, it's a bit of a blunt instrument. Emotion is more complex than one, two, or three smileys. Sometimes a customer is torn between this and that. Some of them like this thing and not that thing quite so much or they feel something other than happiness like satisfaction or meaning in what you're doing and you can't really show that in smileys, but theater can deal with that quite well.

We have this very theatrical toolset which we use initially to talk about the front end of the experience, what are the people, the

customers, and the staff really experiencing? That's my job in the organization. Then Marcus's job is to more think about how this fits in with the business processes that already exist and how does this affect the things that are actually running. Is this going to make money, for example, in the end for the people?

It's important to remember theater is not just lipstick on a pig. It's not about being at the front end of everything. These things must have roots that go back into the organization and which really create value in the end. The other thing that we're known for, I think, is high energy. I have a lot of fun doing this.

We also do a thing called the Global Service Jam, which is an event which Marcus thought of, and I told the world about, which is when people come together for 48 hours during the weekend, and they spend 48 hours of mad super-fast working having a good time designing new services. The last one took place in about 90 cities worldwide of one weekend, and we got 300 designs out of it.

The people who come out of that say, "This is great. It was really cool to work with high energy, to work with short time frames, to have impossible deadlines and know they're impossible but try and get them anyway, and to be playful, to be seriously playful while you're doing this." If you say how we work I'd say we work in a theatrical, high energy kind of way which often involves rubber chickens, but we can't talk about that.

Joe: Do you have something coming up in the short term? I know the Global Service Jam just got over with but are there places that you're speaking at or Marcus is speaking at?

Adam: Yeah, we've got some conferences coming up. I'm not sure what we're doing there. We're certainly involved in the tourism and Service Design conference which Mark Stickdorn is organizing in Innsbruck in August, I think. Lovely time to be in Austria. We'll do something there. We are setting up some things

just now in Scandinavia in the winter which is nice and dark which I can't talk about yet, but it sounds like it will be a very, very exciting format for a conference, actually. A real conference with lots of doing. Also talking but more doing than you're used to at a conference. You'll normally find us at the usual Service Design conferences. We like to go to SDNC, which is a great conference, Serv Desk is a great conference, things like that.

What we also try to do a couple of times a year is take something off the wall that is not directly linked to our skillset. Two years ago we went to the Applied Improvisation Network conference, which was absolutely eye opening and a brilliant conference to go to. AIN is the group behind that. This year we went to an Agile conference, Agile management, and found lots and lots of parallels there and lots of great new ideas.

There are actually some projects springing out of that now to do with overlapping Service Design, Agile, theater, and all of these things. You pretty much find us popping up wherever you like. In terms of jamming, the next jam will be the Global Sustainability Jam, which is our sister event to the Global Service Jam, and that's coming up around October this year.

Then we have a fixed date already on the first, second, and third of March for next year's 2013 Global Service Jam. You can check those out in the web. Just Google those names, and you'll find them.

Joe: How does somebody contact you?

Adam: We're pretty easy to reach. You can email us at; we're a rather long company name, but at Adam or Marcus @workplayexperience.com. There's no punctuation in that, it's just all written together. You'll also find us, for example, under experiencedesign.de.

Joe: I'd like to thank you very much, Adam. It's been delightful conversation.

Adam: Thank you very much. Thanks for talking to us, Joe, and have a great weekend.

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What others say: *In the past 20 years, Joe and I have collaborated on many difficult issues. Joe's ability to combine his expertise with "out of the box" thinking is unsurpassed. He has always delivered quickly, cost effectively and with ingenuity. A brilliant mind that is always a pleasure to work with." James R.*

Joe Dager is President of Business901, a progressive company providing direction in areas **such as Lean Marketing, Product Marketing, Product Launches and Re-Launches. As a Lean** Six Sigma Black Belt, Business901 provides and implements marketing, project and performance planning methodologies in small businesses. The simplicity of a single flexible model will create clarity for your staff and as a result better execution. My goal is to allow you spend your time on the **need versus the plan**.

An example of how we may work: Business901 could start with a consulting style utilizing an individual from your organization or a virtual assistance that is well versed in our principles. We have **capabilities to plug virtually any marketing function** into your process immediately. As proficiencies develop, Business901 moves into a coach's role supporting the process as needed. The goal of implementing a system is that the processes will become a habit and not an event.

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