



Conversations w/Tino

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Tino Magnatta: Hello, my name is Tino Magnatta and welcome to GT Radio. Today we had a little bit of a thing going on with John James, his flight got delayed. So we have a special guest host who's filled in right away for us. His name is Rojelio Rubio, and he is the marketing director at Cliff Castle Casino. Cliff Castle is voted Number One casino straight for 18 years in Arizona and he's also a tribal member of the Yavapai-Apache Tribe. Well, Rojelio it's great to have you on the show. Are you there?

Rojelio Rubio: Yes Tino, thank you. Thank you for having me come in.

Tino Magnatta: Well thank you for sitting in on a drop of a dime.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: You and I are friends. We met for a short period of time at Chickasaw, at a conference and we spent two or three days, on and off, talking about some very interesting things, especially as it pertains to the tribal heritage and where everything is going in Native Nations and he's had some really interesting things to say. That's why today, when John's flight got delayed, you were the first person I thought about.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: I wanted to ask you, you grew up in tribal environment. What are your recollections growing up as a kid?

Rojelio Rubio: You broke up a little bit. You want me to describe ... say that again?

Tino Magnatta: Your recollections growing up as a kid.

Rojelio Rubio: Sure. I moved around quite a bit between the lower part of Arizona and the upper part of Arizona. If you're familiar with the state, I was born in Sierra Vista, lived in Tucson, Phoenix, and then the upper northern part of Arizona, which is the Rideau Valley Sedona area.

At the time I was growing up, we still didn't have casinos, obviously and our tribe in particular was a povern nation as many were across the nation. It was dirt roads. The tribe was living on a thread and I remember all the buildings and shacks and whatnot that was around that were made out of either mud or small little trailers. I remember it being rough but fun.

Growing up as a kid, you're going down to the river, just being spontaneous and adventurous at the same time, but I know for my parents it was hard for them. So it was constantly moving where jobs were or where opportunity lie and we seemed to always come back here.

When we finally built our casino in '92, I think a lot of people were happy at the time and saw a bright future ahead of them to be able to see an economic path for growth in our tribe. I think I didn't really grasp that until I became a young adult and really understood because my mom was in tribal leadership her whole life practically, and I think I really never thought about it until I really started to mature in my life and understand what the casino brought to us and how important it was for the people of the tribe to move forward.

Now that I think about it now, I see how fortunate we are to have this casino and have an opportunity to make our people and our tribe grow, where we literally came from nothing.

Tino Magnatta: Right, and when you said nothing, you're talking ... explain it to some of our listeners because some people might not know no running water, no job. Can you explain a little bit how it was? Give us an idea of how bad it was.

Rojelio Rubio: Sure, yeah. It's funny that you asked that because I was sitting down at a dinner with one of my executive hosts and a few VIPs and afterwards we went to the office and she's a tribal member and she was talking about she grew up in her area. There's two different tribal lands out here that are under our Tribal Nation.

She was telling me how she grew up, there was no roads, no water and she looked at me, she's like, "Do you remember that?" And I thought back and I was like, "Yeah, you know, I do remember no paved roads." It was absolutely no roads out here, no streetlights, some places, you didn't have running water, most of the houses out here were built out of, basically mud. Most of the administrative buildings were built that way. You chopped your own wood, you didn't have heat during the winter. I know most people think, well, it can't get that cold in Arizona, but in Northern Arizona it certainly can.

It was tough, it was really tough living out here. I guess I appreciate it now more than ever because at the moment, when I was growing up, you didn't realize how tough it was, but now when you see it, especially when you see the [grills 00:06:46]. Those of you that are tribal and you see that on your own land, you see what's growing and building and it's exciting and you're happy for it but it was tough. There's no doubt about it. There was no way to get vehicles in. When you were talking rough terrain and a rough way of living, that's for sure.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, it was kind of like being isolated, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Correct, yeah. It was a tough to get a job. I know my mom talked about schooling. They sent her away for schooling because there was no where ... they wouldn't allow Native Indians, Native Americans to go to the same high school as others, so she had to travel all the out to Carson City just to get some schooling in her. It was a different-

Tino Magnatta: [crosstalk 00:07:45] no infrastructure, isolated and then in '92 you had the opportunity to build the casino. Talk to us a little bit about how that all happened and how things started looking up after that and how you got your break in the gaming business.

Rojelio Rubio: Sure. Well, once everything with negotiations were going through and we got approved to build, I know we had the opportunity to partner up with ... those of you remember, [inaudible 00:08:22] Fitzgerald out of Las Vegas backed us up, helped us build our first casino and again, in the middle of nowhere. We share a borderline with the town of Camp Verde and we built it right on that borderline. The street there was even bad. Now, if you remember, or if you've been to Arizona, the I-17 Interstate goes up from Phoenix and through Flagstaff and through Sedona, and at that time, that road wasn't a major interstate at that time. That was all dirt road. I guess we didn't see the opportunity that we had ahead of us when they built it.

We built a small, then I believed was somewhere around 400 or 500 slot machines, maybe less, one restaurant and if you remember the old school style Las Vegas casinos with the gold ceiling, real flat, that was our casino. It was built on flatland so when it rained it got flooded, which was a challenge to the [crosstalk 00:09:32] and everyone else in the building.

Tino Magnatta: Wow.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah. I remember a couple of times when it rained pretty bad, that casino floor would get flooded.

Tino Magnatta: Wow.

Rojelio Rubio: So even with the casino it was a tough time.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah.

Rojelio Rubio: But we stuck with it, had a good group at the time, Fitzgerald Management Group helped us through that process and then we trucked along for eight years in that casino until we got our feet under us and we started building from there. Built our new casino on top of this beautiful hilltop in 2000, was able to buyout Fitzgerald, so we were able to branch out on our own and really started to see the casino produce revenue, really started bringing home money for daycare efforts, senior efforts, medical assistant for the tribes, education fund. So that's when the tide turned, I think, for us. That's when we really started to see, okay, here comes the good out of what we did.

Tino Magnatta: That was around 2000?

Rojelio Rubio: That was around 2000, yeah.

Tino Magnatta: How old were you then?

Rojelio Rubio: Oh God, let's see, that's a good question. Now you're putting me on the spot. I don't remember ... young, I was in my teens. I started-

Tino Magnatta: [crosstalk 00:11:03] so you remember all this happening, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Yes.

Tino Magnatta: What changes [inaudible 00:11:11] with that?

Rojelio Rubio: I think what really changed with that is ... well, again, my mother at the time, was part of the Gaming Board and Tribal Leadership, so I really saw her take a strong leadership role within our tribe. She's been in and around gaming as a tribal counsel member, as a gaming board person, or as an employee for the past 20, 22 years. So I think what changed for me is that sense of leadership of tackling issues head on, looking at issues, trying to develop them. Really, I saw the care for the tribe come out.

Tino Magnatta: Right, people working as a team.

Rojelio Rubio: Correct, yeah, unity. A sense of unity for a goal and no matter how much there was bickering within each tribe and we all know how that goes, but there was an ultimate goal and it was to get out of ditch. You got that sense of unity when the casino really started to do good and started helping out tribal members. To answer your question, that would be it. That's really what changed me to follow in gaming and follow, in particular, at our casino.

Tino Magnatta: Tell me a little bit about how you started and how you worked your way up in gaming at the casino.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, I started when gambling was still 18 here in Arizona, as most places. So I started on the slot floor as a change rep when I was 17, 18 years old, somewhere around there. Then about a year or two later, as most tribes do and as most casinos know, there's some sort of leadership program, mentoring program, management program for tribal members to learn the way of the casino business and develop themselves. So I had the opportunity to jump in, in that sort of a role for two years, until I found ... I'm sorry, a year, year-and-a-half, until I found my home, which is in the Marketing Department.

I jumped around from slots, blackjack ... Geez, public safety, HR, food and beverage front of the house, back of the house, I worked with some great chefs, and then I jumped into special events, concerts and promotions. I think that's where I found my love in marketing as far as producing, advance, working hard and then having that great satisfaction at the end, promotions, being creative, creating excitement.

So I did that total for five years and then I decided it was time for ... I was young, 21 years old, something like that, for my first run and then I decided, you know, I have this great opportunity to stay here at the casino with my tribe and learn or get my education. The tribe offers a great opportunity for all of our tribal members to go get their education, they pay most of the tuition out there where they wanted to go. So I jumped at that opportunity and decided to head down to Tucson, go to school, start my education path. I knew I could always come home and help my tribe once I got my education, so pursued that.

Once I completed that, I still didn't feel ready to come home yet. I really started to get a hunger for learning, getting new skills. So I took a few sales jobs in Phoenix, starting to learn ... I've never really jumped in [inaudible 00:15:38] until I ... talk about telemarketing, right? Took a few jobs, hard selling jobs in Phoenix, worked my way up over there for about three years and then it wasn't till about five years ago, I decided, "You know, I think it's time to come home and see what I can do to repay the Nation for my education and my efforts earlier, and my experience to see what I can do here at home."

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, we were talking. It's interesting that you bring this up because we were talking a little bit about your feelings when you actually went out into the real world and went to Tucson and started going to school for the first time. I thought that was really interesting. Describe that feeling a little bit.

Rojelio Rubio: You're right, we did talk about that much and for those of you out there that are tribal members and are working in your tribal casinos or around your Tribal Nation, I think this is the biggest unseen opportunity out there, is the opportunity to use your education funds. Like I said before, our tribe gives you the opportunity to go to any university and they completely back you up as much as they can to pay for your tuition. I don't think as a Nation, as a tribe and I know there's a few tribes out there that are dealing with the same issue, tribal members don't take that opportunity, they don't take advantage of it, which is sad.

When I did, I saw the difference. I grew up in a small little community, we probably have 14,000 in population here in this small town but we're surrounded by major cities. Going to college and jumping into a big city, you were no longer in this box. You got to see different ideas, you get to meet different people, you saw the world as, wow, I'm not in that little valley anymore and it doesn't have to do with what's going on there right now. People can grow. You seem to be in a tunnel vision when you stay in a small little community such as this one and seems like, okay, this is my one path and that's it.

So when I went down there, I worked for a talent agency and I got to fly around to different cities, we brought lots of talent for major companies, we did some for the NFL, the NBA. So I went to fly around in different cities while in school and just got this whole outlook of life, really, which was great. I wish more

people can see that 'cause I think that turns on a light for most people, wow, it's really unlimited out there, what your life could be.

Tino Magnatta: So it's kinda like get out of your comfort zone, is what you're saying, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Right, yeah.

Tino Magnatta: Well, my comfort zone, whatever it may be.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah. Absolutely.

Tino Magnatta: You know? If you can, right? But most cases now because of the gaming, people have these opportunities and what you're saying, they should not be so comfortable in staying, they should go out and see the world why they can and meet and hear new ideas and see different things, but some people might be afraid that they'll be discriminated against or they won't fit in. What was your experience about that?

Rojelio Rubio: I was scared at first. I'm always a little on the adventurous side, so I like to kinda ... maybe too adventurous, sometimes I may have gotten in trouble [inaudible 00:19:42] but it was-

Tino Magnatta: Yeah.

Rojelio Rubio: It was certainly fun. I was always in high school here, in a small town, you had your groups, right, especially in a small town. The native kids hung out with the native kids, cowboys hung out with the cowboys and I'm sure it was like that for most people in high school in a small town. So moving from a small high school town of maybe there's 20 kids in a graduating class to a major university as to U of A, it was a shock. You seem kinda lost, you kinda seem like, okay, I have no friends here and I just got dropped into 300,000-student school. Who am I, what do I do and who do I hang out with, who do I ask for help, who do I go to?

So it was a little bit of a shock, I would say for the first few months, trying to socialize with others. I think I fit in pretty well and I got used to it pretty fast because I had the opportunity to work on the gaming floor first. Don't get me wrong, whether you do experience first and education second and some people like to reverse that, get your education first and then come out here and get the experience.

To me, I don't know if it matters because I've never done the other route, but since when I went to college, it's a university, I felt better because I had some experience in the gaming world and especially going to school for marketing, 'cause I worked in marketing, I felt going to the university. Some of the classes-

Tino Magnatta: Right, you had to develop your social skills a little bit, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Mm-hmm (affirmative), right, yeah, and some of the things they taught ... you know, you take your general classes, then you take your special classes in marketing and your undergrad classes and it was easier to connect the dots, like take my major courses and think back to my experience in the gaming world and say, "Ah, okay, I see now. I see how this can work. I see how this works. I see how what they're teaching me in school right now is practically what I did and what my team did in the casino environment," and it really got me intrigued. It was like, "Wow, I want more of this. I want to just eat this up" because it was good.

Where, if you do it the other way, I'm not quite sure if I would be so interested in the education process because you drop someone there right after high school and they seem kinda, "Oh, I just went through all of this, now I'm here."

Tino Magnatta: It's too intense. It too intense, is what you're saying?

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: You need some sort of a buffer, especially because, like you said, you're used to your environment, you're used to the same people and then being dropped into such a big environment is kind of a shock, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, it was.

Tino Magnatta: But you did well? From talking to you when I was up in Chickasaw, I was very impressed with how you were articulating your feelings and also how you realized how fortunate you were that you made the right decisions, to get your education, to learn more, and to motivate yourself.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, and I think it just comes naturally sometimes to me that I get ... I see ... I don't know if I should say this on air, but I get envious in my personal way sometimes. Let me give you an example. I hate to how that sounds, but if I see something that I like or I see something that I want, it only encourages me to do well, so I can get there or do that.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, well that's called motivation.

Rojelio Rubio: Right, exactly, it's the drive in me, it's the passion in me, it's the motivation, it's whatever you want to call it.

Tino Magnatta: You have the self-motivation, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, so when I left the casino and I got dropped there, when I went to school, it was like, "Okay, I'm scared, I don't know what to do," and then when I saw my first graduation as a freshman at the university I was like, "Okay, well, you know what? I can do that. I just went through my first year, I can do this. I can be that person up there and I can get there."

Tino Magnatta: Yeah.

Rojelio Rubio: So it only drove me more and it was little things like that throughout my life that really pushed me to be where I am and then again that leadership-

Tino Magnatta: Let me ask you ... no, go ahead, sorry, no, leadership?

Rojelio Rubio: No, it's all right, it's all right.

Tino Magnatta: Let me ask you a little bit about Cliff Castle Casino. Tell us a little bit about it. Tell us how you're run and some of the good stuff and what's going on there and then we'll open it up to some questions.

Rojelio Rubio: Sure. Cliff Castle Casino is a small casino in the Verde Valley, we're about an hour north of metro-Phoenix, about 45-minutes drive south of Flagstaff and about 20 to 15 minutes east of Sedona. We have about 666 machines, 10 blackjack tables, small poker room, four venues to eat at. We're a family friendly casino, we like to use our marketing leverage that way. We like to tout that because we have a 20-lane bowling alley. We have a Kids Quest childcare center that takes anywhere from, I believe, two months to 13 years of age.

It's a huge facility, state of the art video games and just the works for children to go in there. We're currently building a new luxury hotel, 122-room tower that supposed to open this summer. We're about, maybe 100 yards off the major Interstate, so prime location. If you look up [inaudible 00:26:37] of Arizona, we're right smack in the middle of all of it.

It's been growing and it's been fun. It's fun to be a part of that team we have. We're a small marketing team. We do everything in house, no agencies, huge ... I pride myself to be data driven so we use, have great partners in the industry that supply us the softwares, but I require my team and me to sit down and look at the data, follow the market segments, look at comparisons, week to week, month to month, last year to this year, what did we do, we plan everything out. Great team. I think we're very aggressive for a small team but we have fun. I think that's the most important part of it. If you can't-

Tino Magnatta: And you're located in a nice beautiful spot on the mountain, right? You're right there.

Rojelio Rubio: Right, yeah. Yeah, if you've never been to Sedona, it's gorgeous. Once you come over this hill, we are right smack in this small little hill and you see all the red rocks, the purple rocks, Sendona, you see Jerome, which is an old copper mining town sitting on the side of a hill. We have wineries, we're growing in wineries here. I know those of you that are like, "Wine in Arizona?" but it's pretty good, I'll tell you that.

We are probably about 12 degrees difference than Phoenix, below. We may get some snow or it may just freeze us, but it's a good spot, really green, lots of rivers, lots of waterfalls. It's a beautiful place and I do recommend it. If anyone has time to travel to Sedona, do, 'cause it's a gorgeous location.

Tino Magnatta: And it's where you grew up?

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: So you know that land like the back of your hand.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, and it's funny, when you live here your whole life you don't really understand the beauty around here until you grow up or until you bring friends over that are not known around the valley. We have this huge ... I-17 drops down into this nice little canyon and when you look, you get to see the mountain range and people get shocked about that, the colors of Sedona and everything. Once you get one or two people telling you, "Wow, this is where you grew up?" You say, "Yeah, it's home," but you don't appreciate it until you hear that a few times.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, it brings a different perspective to it.

Rojelio Rubio: Yep, it does.

Tino Magnatta: Definitely is effective. Fascinating stuff. I see we've got a few callers here. Some people want to ask some questions and we'll start with one person here I can see. Let me see here.

Hello, welcome to GT radio. Who am I speaking with? Hello?

Arlene: Hey, no, it's Arlene, I'm here. Can you hear me?

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, Rojelio, you on?

Rojelio Rubio: Yep, sure am.

Tino Magnatta: Oh, Arlene, how are you? Arlene [Almond 00:29:53].

Arlene: Yes. I love you [Liam 00:29:56]

Rojelio Rubio: Hello Arlene.

Arlene: So I called to ask you, I know that you are new to the marketing world. What are plans to do different things to attract Phoenix customers to come out to your casino? I know you've got a new facility and a new hotel, correct?

Rojelio Rubio: Correct.

Arlene: So do you have big plans to do some new things 'cause I know that you have to constantly innovate? Do you have some big plans to attract Phoenix customers, besides getting out of the heat, to come to visit your new casino?

Rojelio Rubio: Yes, we came up with a whole plan this year for the hotel. Our challenge was before, our hotel was detached from the casino, so we had 80 rooms that wasn't attached to the casino. We're probably the only casino in the state that doesn't have their hotels attached to the casino. It wasn't even a hotel, let me put it that way, it was a motel.

So we saw this opportunity to really tackle the Phoenix market now, to finally give them what they want, especially the travelers. Right now our 80-room hotel is filled up, all the time, and most of them are one-time travelers, they're driving up from Phoenix going to see the Grand Canyon, seeing Sedona, going up to Flagstaff, whatnot, stuff like that.

So when we saw the hotel, we had the opportunity to open up this hotel, we saw a door being opened for another market. I know by looking at our database, a lot of travelers, a lot of one-timers coming out, so we want to be that destination spot. We want to show that we're giving you a new experience rather than old hotel, that we're basically the center of it all. You can come here, we know we're a casino, we'd love for you stay, but we have Sedona, you have [peak 00:31:57] jeeps, you have Out of Africa, you can go see wildlife, you can hike, you can canoe, you can go wineries. So I think us positioning ourselves as a destination and entertainment beside the casino was really what we're gonna tackle and use to our leverage to go after the Phoenix market.

Tino Magnatta: New experience.

Rojelio Rubio: New experience.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, new experience.

Rojelio Rubio: And we've been using in a lot of advertising taglines, "Come experience the new Cliff Castle Casino Hotel because we are different now." Having the family amenities is a great add-on. Sedona shuts down practically at eight, nine o'clock, so there's no nightlife around here. We're happy to be the nightlife if you want to go out and travel during the day.

We're working with some new packages that I can't say right now for sure, but they're gonna be exciting, with things with the wildlife here and the jeep tours and we currently have a helicopter tour to see the mountains. So we're gonna position ourselves as a destination and really come out and relax and come see the beauty of Verde Valley.

Arlene: Great, well, I've been there when it was the-

Tino Magnatta: [crosstalk 00:33:14]

Arlene: Yeah, I've been there when it was the original facility and I haven't been since you have remodeled so I need to get up there.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, c'mon up. Contact me and come on up.

Tino Magnatta: I'll give you Rojelio's info and you can go up and visit. Arlene, let me take another question here, but stay on, we may come back to you, okay?

Rojelio Rubio: Okay.

Arlene: Okay.

Tino Magnatta: Thank you and stay on Rojelio.

Rojelio Rubio: Yep.

Tino Magnatta: Hello, this is GT radio. Who am I speaking with? Hello, GT radio, who am I speaking with? Rojelio are you there?

Rojelio Rubio: Yep, still here.

Tino Magnatta: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Hello. GT radio. I guess they can't hear us, okay, we'll go to the next person. Hold on one sec.

Hello, this is GT radio, who am I speaking with? Hello, hello.

Keith: Hi this is Keith from Carnival. Can you hear me?

Tino Magnatta: Oh, it's [Ian 00:34:16] how are you?

Keith: I'm great, how are you?

Tino Magnatta: Good, good. [inaudible 00:34:23] lines.

Keith: Yeah, really appreciate letting me call in. Great story and congrats on your success, Rojelio.

Rojelio Rubio: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Keith: The question I had was related to being family focused with the bowling alley and the arcade. Carnival is similar in that way, that we kinda cater to families. How do you walk that line to market to the family with gaming being the central focus and reserved for adults?

Rojelio Rubio:

I don't think we shy away from it at all. I guess it depends on the venue and the market. Let me give you an example. We partner up a lot with the local high schools, clubs and stuff like that. When we do sponsor them, we sponsor them as the non-gaming venues. We try to push our efforts in that, as far as bowling alley and our kids' venue or other venues like that, to kind of really focus on giving back to the community.

We do a great 4th of July picnic for the family, where we have it out on our pavilion and we really don't cram the gaming aspect down their throat. We give them chips, we give them some soda, we do inflatables, we do wet stuff out there, then have a nice fireworks show, and again, it's not like we're handing out any kind of pre-play out there or anything. We just let the families enjoy themselves.

In the Phoenix market, of course, yeah, in some of our commercials we'll throw little hints and teasers there that we do have family stuff as well as gaming. For us, again, it's sticking with that destination. Our tag line is, "Perfect place to play," and we like to use that in a bold way and say it's a perfect place to play for everyone, even your two-year-old.

It is a thin line though, don't get me wrong. There is times where you're kinda like, "Ugh, we shouldn't touch that," or "We can't touch that," so it's really sitting down with your team. I gotta a great PR guy and me and him sit down and we discuss these items and topics and events. So I guess it's just really identifying where you want to go, who do you want to be and sticking to it, right?

I don't know if that answered your question but I think for us, I don't like to shy away from that because it's our leverage. I think any marketing department, whether you're gaming, whether you're Apple, whether you're a Fortune 500 company, most of them are gonna tell you, what's your leverage and use it against your competitors. I think we do that very well with the family aspect, so we're gonna use it.

Keith:

Well just having Kids Quest is a major thing because I know that Marcy and I use it in Vegas quite a bit at the casinos at Red Rock and Green Valley Ranch. If we want to go out and have a good time, the kids are excited about going to Kids Quest 'cause it's so awesome. So you can have the kid having a great experience and Marcy and I can have a date and not worry that we're off site and our kids are just having a great time.

Rojelio Rubio:

Yep. Absolutely, and if you do have the opportunity now to partner up with a team, just as Kids Quest or I think you have [inaudible 00:38:06] Quest now or something of that fact, meet with them. I encourage your marketing department to meet with them, weekly, monthly, quarterly, whatever you can, tap into their database and exchange data, talk about those customers. That what we do. We look at all of our VIPs that come through, regular guests, we

compare data, gaming data compared to time on machine, compared to kids hours in Kids Quest. We also, right now-

Tino Magnatta: [crosstalk 00:38:37] that's not related to gaming, right?

Keith: Right. Absolutely. So we do that with our non-gaming venues. I think that's the most important thing, absolutely.

Rojelio Rubio: Thank you. Appreciate that.

Keith: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Tino Magnatta: All right, Keith, let me take another question. Stay on please, if we have time, we'll come back and you can ask something else. Thanks for calling in and hang on. Thanks.

Hello, this is GT radio, who am I speaking with?

Wayne: Hey, Tino, it's Wayne over at [Exsparer 00:39:12], how you doing?

Tino Magnatta: Wayne, how are you? Good, how's things going?

Wayne: Good, good.

Tino Magnatta: Did you have a question for Rojelio?

Wayne: I do, I do. First of all, listening to the great location that he's at, I wish I was there rather than New York right now, but Rojelio, one of things that I think of is, you get the player on property and you've got all of these great things up there and you market the experience. After they've experienced coming up to your area and enjoying the property and the area, how do you market to them to encourage them to come back?

Rojelio Rubio: That's a great question. Again, our data is everything to us. I love using, and I think this goes out to most casinos again, most direct mailers, is the most I think, I want to claim it's one of the most powerful things right now to getting people back, retention, getting them through the door, offers, and really be data driven, and then forecast. We have a big snowbird community ... pardon if that offended anybody calling them snowbirds, but we do, we get a lot of snowbirds that come down to Phoenix in our area during the winter and we will track them. We'll anticipate their visit, we'll get their addresses and we'll have a mailer or an offer in their mailbox when they land in their summer home down here. We'll mail them at their winter home to let them know, hey, we're still here, hope to see you again.

Those from the local community, we see their average, player average visits and try to be aggressive in getting them back, a fourth, fifth, sixth visit. Phoenix is

such a large city. You're talking about six, seven million people down there and you're always gonna get new people and you gotta know you're not always gonna get all of them back but certainly be aggressive with trying to get them back in.

I think this past five years I've been kinda testing things, whether it's digital, traditional marketing, to see what works and I think we found a good sweet spot, but then again, it's not always gonna work, so looking at every year, at your data and looking at who can we get back, who's fallen off, how can we change things up? I think that's probably the most important, that's what we do do. Okay, last year we hit them we one offer, do we given them four? Get my prior development on the phone, have them call some of these guys.

I think you want to use all your channels, all your marketing channels, like your [bix 00:42:28] whatnot to just get out there and really target them and by any means you can get them and make that touch, I think that's how you gotta do it and that's how we certainly do it here at this property.

Wayne: Oh great, thanks, Rojelio.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah.

Wayne: It sounds like it's all about keeping really good data and have a 360 degree view of the player and making sure you target it at the right time.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, when you are doing these offers or you're sending out this ... whatever campaign you're doing, most people like to look at it and say, "Hey, did I make money? Have I made money? Okay, good, it worked." Don't stop there. If you made money, look what you made you money I think is also important and what didn't bring the revenue higher than what you maybe expected or maybe what could help.

So I think really focusing on each campaign and understanding the pros and cons of each campaign can help you further dive into that segment that looking to because I know most people like to see whether did the campaign make them money or not? Good, let's try it again or let's do it again or that didn't work, brush it off, we're never doing that one again. Don't just do that. Look at the details. Look at every single piece of it and make a sound decision for the next time.

Tino Magnatta: Right, more analysis on every single one and more depth.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah.

Tino Magnatta: And trying to make it better and saying, "Yeah, it made money but can we more and optimize it?"

Rojelio Rubio: Right, absolutely. Yeah, no, I was gonna talk about something else, but no, yeah, that's perfect.

Tino Magnatta: What were you gonna talk about?

Rojelio Rubio: Oh, just a recent promotion we ran but that has nothing to do with getting some of the customers back.

Tino Magnatta: No, go ahead, tell us. Tell us, go ahead, tell us.

Rojelio Rubio: Oh, no, it was we know that you have your [inaudible 00:44:39] if you looked at because we look at the hourly play on all promotions as well, right? So we jumped at the opportunity ... you see this bell curve obviously going up around noon, after noontime and then dipping back down so we experiment all the time on either late hours or early hours. Will that flatten out, did it increase pulling in or did the revenues just spread longer? So I think it's stuff like that and really experimenting to see if it's gonna work or not and don't be scared to do it. I don't want people to be scared to say, "Nay, that's a little to or risky. That's too much money involved." Well, how are you ever gonna know if you don't try it and you don't experiment?

That goes for people that are driving by. You don't know who they are until you try new things with them.

Tino Magnatta: Right, prospecting like that. Wayne, thanks a lot. I'm gonna jump to the next question.

Wayne: All right, thanks guys.

Tino Magnatta: But hang on and we may come by and get back to you.

Wayne: Absolutely.

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, that was great. Hang on one sec. Let's see here. Hello, this is GT radio, who am I speaking with?

Michael: This is Michael. How are you guys doing?

Tino Magnatta: Michael how are you?

Rojelio Rubio: Good Michael.

Michael: Yeah, good. Hey, the question I want to ask you is about that mentoring and what were the mentors like in your career, who were mentors and how did you see your role as mentoring the next generation of marketers coming up?

Rojelio Rubio: I had some good mentors in my life, whether it was gaming or in life. I have to give it to my mother, great leadership as far as tribal leadership is concerned in the gaming world. I had a couple general managers that really mentored me, one great marketing director that recently left a few years back that was a great mentor, really believed in me, the same as a recent general manager that did the same.

Growing up and going to school, friends, family, teachers that really got mentored and I think they all bring their piece of you, right? You all get a little piece of the puzzle of who you are and what you need to do along the way, whether it was my uncle, back when I was a kid, teaching me how to chop wood and weather the cold and the sense of learn the world in this man-up kind of thing, stay strong to really smart marketing people. I think each one of them brought a piece of my puzzle in life and in a personal and professional way.

As far as your second question is, I think we are ... you're gonna get a mix of mentors in your life, more that are gonna stick out than others. Now, you have athletes out there that are encouraging young ones, which is great, you have entrepreneurs, you have your parents, business professionals. It's a new world, it's a big world. As far as gaming is concerned, I would hope that most of us understand that gaming is a growing business, we always got to stay behind the eightball and don't be afraid to teach people.

I'm young, but I'm always willing teach others, it only makes my team stronger. Okay, I'm not the type of person that keeps information in or if I know how I'm gonna keep it in. I like to teach others and I got to see that with some of the people I'm teaching now who may be even older than I am, that I know how it feels to mentor someone now because when you see that brightness in their eye or you see that light bulb turn on or you see that sort of shell come out, them coming out of the shell or something coming free, that gives me a happiness that's indescribable.

I had the opportunity to mentor a couple people already and really tried to get them out of their comfort zone and shell and I'm tell you, they're gonna go places. So I think mentoring now is important and it's us, right here, right now on this conversation.

Michael: Thank you, that's a great perspective.

Rojelio Rubio: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Tino Magnatta: Yeah, that's really good. Mike, that was a great question. Stay on and I'm gonna go to the next question. Hang on a sec. Here, let's see who we've got. Okay. Hello and welcome to GT radio. Who am I speaking with? Hello, hello? Hello? Who am I speaking with? Okay, I guess don't have anything there. Hang on, let's see who we've got here.

Hello, hello? Welcome to GT radio. Who am I speaking with?

Richard: Thanks for taking my call. How are you? It's Richard from [crosstalk 00:50:47]

Tino Magnatta: Hi, Richard. How are you?

Richard: Good, how are you?

Tino Magnatta: Good, good. Do you have a question for ...

Richard: Yeah, I would say if I'm someone young, starting out, just graduated from college or university and I want to look at career in the casino industry, is there any departments or any facets of the casino industry that are really taking off more than others?

Rojelio Rubio: You know, I guess that's gonna depend on the casino. For us, it's the hotel. That's where we just had a job fair where we ... we need more staff though, we just hired ... God, 60 to 80 people, not only for the hotel but for the whole property but the majority of that being the hotel, but if you're truly looking at getting in the gaming business, going through that management mentor program, I found I like them all ... I like them all. I found it fun to deal blackjack, supervise blackjack, I was having fun working in the kitchen.

The gaming world is so fast-paced and the environment is so exciting, I don't think you can go wrong anywhere, whether you're a bowling attendant or just the ... oh, sorry ... player's club clerk and I think it depends on the property of which department or what industry is growing the fastest. Gaming is always gonna be there. My suggestion is follow your passion. Follow what you like. Don't just jump in to get in there and just work at a casino. Find your niche, find what you like to do and pick the right department. If you like dealing with customers and guest service, do that. If you like numbers and you like to be alone or you like to just kinda go ... I'm not saying go to [inaudible 00:53:02][inaudible 00:53:02] not too many ... those are there already, but just trying to find the right fit for you. If you like making cocktails, go to a beverage, just figure out what you like to do and follow it. I'm a big believer of following your passion and following what you love to do, so that's my recommendation.

Richard: All right, sounds good.

Rojelio Rubio: Thank you Richard, thank you.

Tino Magnatta: Okay, I think we have time for one more question and let's see here. Let's pick randomly. Hello, welcome to GT radio. Who am I speaking with?

Doug: Hi, it's Doug. I wanted to know just what do you think of the new generation of young native people. How do the millennials in the Native Nations work in the now?

Rojelio Rubio: Sure, that's a great question and I know Tino and I spoke about this a lot at Choctaw for the marketing conference. I'll speak to my tribe, I think that's easier and those that can relate, can relate.

Here in my tribe, I think there's a passion to go out there, do something and be someone, but we do have our struggles with drugs and alcohol. We have our problems with that. Violence, just like a small tribe here would. I think and it goes back to the opportunities and the benefits to young ones, millennials, some are gonna take advantage of it and go get their education, you have a beautiful casino here, come work, we'll train you. I fear, and I'm sure this goes out to generations before me, that my generation, and I'm the tip of the millennials, is that I don't know if that have that commitment right now to do that. I think there's too many distractions out in the world right now for them, but I only hope that somehow they can focus and take advantage of the opportunities that are out there for them.

It doesn't even have to be casino business. If you get your education, go work for the tribe, do government work, something, but get a drive in you, view the opportunities that are open for you and take advantage of that because in our tribe there are struggles. I see more of them going out there and those of you that are tribal and your tribe is dealing with these kind of issues, hit the streets. Get out there and be present. Get with your tribal counsel, get with your legislative people and your government and try to get creative ways of helping the young ones out for the tribe. If I can do it for a casino, I can do it for a tribe and I think that's how we need to think about it moving forward.

Tino Magnatta: Banding together and making sure that the next generation and the one after that and the one after that, have good leadership, good mentors and great experiences 'cause there's so much more opportunity now, right?

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah, absolutely. When I was young, we didn't have a casino and we were secluded on this one reservation. You looked up to your parents, which there's nothing wrong with ... I mean you look up to your parents obviously, but some times a lot of us just grew up on the dirt road, but now that so many years has passed, there's great mentors out there that are tribal members and that can come back home and help tribes do that, tackle that specific problem and I would say those of you that are in power and can something about it or if you're an executive and you're doing well for your casino, reach out to your own tribe and see how you can help them and the little ones come up and be a great mentor to them, be a beam of light for them, that's for sure.

Tino Magnatta: Great. Thank you Doug, great question. Well, Rojelio, it's been ... first of all, I'd like to thank you for being on the show and second of all, I want to thank you for making it so interesting after such short notice.

Rojelio Rubio: Yeah absolutely.

Tino Magnatta: I always love talking to you at length just because it gives us a real feel of some of the struggles that are still going on in Native Nations and how people can overcome them and you're a great leader, you're doing great things, you have a grasp of marketing, you've got your education, so you're a role model and you're helping things change and I really respect you for that.

Rojelio Rubio: Thank you, yes. Thank you for invite, it's fun.

Tino Magnatta: Thanks, buddy and thanks for being on the show, really appreciate it have a great night.

Rojelio Rubio: All right, yeah I really appreciate it too. Right, bye-bye.

Tino Magnatta: All right, well, that's our show for tonight. In two weeks, I think it's June 22nd, we have Chris Jenner, who's the Director of Digital Marketing for Caesar Entertainment. I hope you'll join us then and remember, everybody has got a story to tell. Talk to everybody, get they're story 'cause it'll enlighten your life.

My name is Tino Magnatta, thanks for joining us for another great show and we'll see you on June 22nd. Ciao for now.

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