

Matt Bowles: Hey everybody, it's Matt Bowles, and today I am with Palle Bo; he is the owner and CEO of Radio Guru, an award-winning production company that develops radio commercials, runs radio training programs and produces podcasts for companies around the world; including major brands like LEGO. He runs Radio Guru completely remotely and it has been winning annual awards since 2010; including the prestigious National Creative Circle Award in 2012. Palle is also the co-founder and co-owner of 17 radio stations across his home country of Denmark and he's the author the book, *Guide to Better Radio Advertising*.

He is an internationally sought after public speaker and has given talks on creative radio advertising and podcasting in countries ranging from Iran to Greenland to South Africa to The Bahamas. In 2016, at age 50, Palle decided to become a full-time digital nomad. He sold his house, his car, his furniture, all to begin slow traveling the world with the goal of traveling to every single country and documenting all of his adventures on his podcast; the Radio Vagabond. Palle, welcome to the show.

Palle Bo: Oh my, God, that sounds so impressive when you say it like that. Thank you, Matt.

Matt: Now you, sir, are no stranger to a recording studio.

Palle: I'm totally impressed by the whole set up here on this cruise ship where we are now. You have even have one of these – what are they called? Things --

Matt: A mic flag.

Palle: – mic flags. Oh my, God, I have to get me one of those.

Matt: You don't have a mic flag? Well, I'm impressed with your setup as well and sort of just to set the context for people, as you mentioned; we are on a boat crossing the Atlantic Ocean en route to Brazil. We are recording this with my mobile podcast studio that I have set up in my cabin here, and we just opened a bottle of Chilean Carmenere wine, which we will be drinking through while having this discussion, which I was excited to learn is also one of your favorite wines.

Palle: It is, yeah, this is my go-to Chilean wine.

Matt: I love that. I learned about this wine when I was down in Santiago, living there for about a month and I absolutely got hooked on it.

Palle: It's in the local supermarket back in Denmark.

Matt: Amazing. So, let's give a little more context here. You and I basically ran into each other, met on the Nomad Cruise, which is where we are right now, and I started to understand who you were and I was like, wait a minute, you're doing what? And you did this and I was just totally impressed.

Palle: But in fact, Matt, we met on Nomad Cruise 6. We're on 7 now, and we didn't – we just said hi to each other when we met each other. We didn't really get to chat as much as we did on this one.

Matt: Well, that's the thing with these nomad circles, right? We have 500 digital nomads on this boat, so you can only get to know each other so well. Then you see people who you know you talk more to them, and you're like -- I didn't even know that you did that or you had these incredible stories and life adventures and everything. So when we talked more on this cruise, you just interviewed me for your podcast two days ago, then I'm interviewing you for my podcast now. And one of the things that I love about what you do, is that you have a completely portable recorder that you just carry around with you.

You can literally pull that thing out as you're in any context having a conversation with someone and just record somewhere from a 10 to 30 minute conversation with an individual who might be a pretty difficult individual, perhaps, to schedule a whole long thing with or get to come into a studio, or even set up a call with. But you're out there interacting with somebody, you just pull that thing out and you've got incredible conversations recorded with really amazing people whom you run into.

Palle: That's the way I like it, instead of trying to create a studio environment, I just take pride in that I can hear all the sounds around. In the interview with you, I'm sure we can hear people in the bar and the boat rocking and stuff like that, but hey, we're on a boat.

Matt: I love that. Yeah, exactly. I've been listening through some of your podcast episodes and it's amazing because they're basically all on-site interviews somewhere; wherever you are. You're in the

street somewhere, in a market or in a place or wherever it is, and you're just interviewing people live and really authentically documenting, literally, your travel adventures as you go through the world, which I think is an incredible way to do it.

Palle: In fact, sometimes when I need to do a voice-over to connect the clips I recorded, I have a great microphone as well and I can build a studio facility wherever I am. But instead, I just take this small stereo recorder and go outside and speak into that, so still you get the feeling of something going on.

Matt: That's amazing. So, let's talk a little bit about just your decision to sell everything and begin slow traveling the world, long term, at age 50. I would love to just start off, if you can sort of share, the lead up to that decision and what types of factors contributed to your decision to do that and how that transition was for you.

Palle: Let me go a little bit back first because right out of school, I worked at an agency, I was a graphic designer. Then I co-founded this radio station and got into the whole radio career and I got a family and got two kids. At some point, I think it was in Can at the Can Lines, I was standing on the beach with sand between my toes speaking to this Danish guy who just wrote an amazing book about advertising and he wrote it in Cape Town.

And then I just randomly said, at some point when my kids move out of the house, I want to move somewhere in the world and live somewhere for a couple of years. Then he just said, oh, you got to go to Cape Town because South Africans do great radio. They typically become very, very good in the Can Line award show. When it comes to radio, they do great radio and it's in English so I could dabble with working with radio in English. So I thought maybe I should go to Cape Town.

And then somebody told me, oh you should go and test it out – what it's like and go for a few months, not just a week vacation, go for a few months, see if you can actually live there. So, in 2013, I went there for two months and just took my job with me and that's where it dawned on me; first of all, Cape Town is so wonderful and I love it, but I discovered that my clients, they didn't even realize that I was away.

The way I run my company is typically on the phone or email and they're spread all over Denmark, and typically in Copenhagen,

which is not where I used to live. It didn't make any difference if I was in my hometown of Randers, Denmark or I would be anywhere else in the world. So, when I got back I thought, I love Cape Town and I could easily see myself living there for a couple of years, but there are so many places around the world where I could see myself visiting.

So, I put a world map on my wall and every-time I poured myself a cup of coffee, I was working out of my house at the time, I took a pen and put a dot on the map and after a while, I started connecting these dots and started planning it and that was three years, leading up to when my youngest daughter would graduate.

So, I had two and a half to three years of planning this and I planned the crap out of it. It was really – it was so detailed, Matt, it was insane. It was like where am I going to be – in which country in which week and which year? So, it was so detail planned and I knew that I would probably deviate from the plan, but after a week into my travel it was out the window, I never came back to it. But that's the way it happened so in July '16, I took off.

Matt: That is amazing. I think it's really interesting in terms of the planning and the way different people approach travel because as I speak with different nomads and different people who are slow traveling the world full-time, as I am doing as well, I think people have different approaches to travel planning and some people like to have it really planned out, very meticulously, very far in advance and other people are so spontaneous, there are literally people we're traveling with on this boat who don't know where they're going to be two weeks from now.

Palle: I have no idea. I have no idea, I'm that guy now.

Matt: Oh, that's how you're doing it now?

Palle: Oh yeah, that's how I'm doing it now. No, I don't have any plans now, well I – I booked a place four days when we get to Brazil, but what's going to happen after, I have no idea.

Matt: So, how long did your meticulous advance travel planning go for until you became more spontaneous like you are now?

Palle: A week?

Matt: Really?

Palle: May – maybe two weeks. It – it was actually when I was in – I was in Vilnius, Lithuania and it was my plan to go to Poland from there – no, no that's not true, I was in Ukraine, so maybe it was two weeks and it was my plan to go to Poland and then a friend of mine said, no, no, you're going to Moldova and I was like come on, come on Enrique, it's not even on my list. And he said, it is now. So I said, oh, okay, okay, then I'm going to Moldova. And I went to Moldova and I loved it. And – and from there, I just took it day by day and I never really plan much.

Matt: It really depends for me too. Sometimes I'll plan things far in advance if there's a big pillar event, then I know I need to book and then sometimes I'll plan around those or leave it very vague what's going to happen up until there; how I'm actually going to get to this place; what my travel path is going be there or after, but I think leaving a level of flexibility – because as you said, you meet people who will inspire you to go to places that are absolutely not on your list.

And I always ask people when we're interacting with other nomads and travelers, what are your favorite places you've ever been to? And sometimes, people will tell me a place that is not even on my list. So, I lived in Rio in Brazil in 2015 and I loved it. And I loved it so much that I literally was there for two months, and I didn't leave Rio to see any other part of Brazil because I was like, who would leave Rio? I don't miss a day of this, I was there for Carnival and then I was there for the month and a half after Carnival and it was so epic, I literally didn't see any other place.

And then as I was traveling around the world the following year, I was speaking to a woman who I had met and – super well-traveled, and I said, what's your favorite city in the world? And she said Sao Paulo, Brazil is my favorite city in the world and I said, really? I said, you've been to Rio? She goes, yeah. And you've been to Tokyo and Istanbul and all these – Iceland – you've been to all these places? She goes, yeah, and I said that's your favorite place in the world? She goes, absolutely, hands down.

And I was like, tell me more and then she's telling me – I said, what did you like about it? And she's telling me more about well, it's one of the top street art cities in South America; the graffiti scene is amazing, it's one of the top culinary cities in the food

scene and she's describing it to me in a way and I'm like, those are all things that I love and cherish about cities.

I said, I'm going and I just made a plan to go there quite quickly and check all that stuff out and indeed it was epic and I now speak about Sao Paulo in addition to Rio and other places to people as I'm talking, but those kinds of conversations, when you're having with people, just put all kind of stuff on your radar that you might not have read about when you're doing your travel research or whatever, and you continue to hear about more amazing places and go to really have epic experiences, I think.

Palle: Now I need to go to Sao Paulo as well.

Matt: Exactly, while we're there.

Palle: Obviously, I'm going to Rio, but I need to get to Sao Paulo as well.

Matt: It's a special place, I was really, really impressed. So, let's talk a little bit about your travel trajectory since you began your travels years ago now, at age 50 and you embarked on this epic adventure. You have chosen a number of really unique places; many of which are probably not particularly prominent on travel vacationers lists and you've have some incredibly interesting adventures along your way so maybe – I mean just start – for example, I was listening to a bit of your podcast episode when you actually went to North Korea. Can you talk a little bit about what that experience was like?

Palle: For me, that's still one of the countries that, in my opinion, was very, very, very interesting to go to. It's – it's not a place I'd love to live obviously, but it was super interesting to go there and see that – something that I knew already, but then just look into the people's eyes and see the people when we were walking the street or driving in the subway; that you get to put a face on people. That's what made the biggest impression on me because they're the "enemy of the Western World," and especially when I was editing the whole thing, was when they did all the nuclear tests and Trump was going out with fire and fury and all that.

And then I was there and realized that, oh my, God, these are real people who love their children too and that's what made a big impression on me; meeting the locals. But of course, whenever you go on one of those organized trips, that's the way you can do it,

you only get to see what they want you to see. They didn't take us to any of their camps or – we didn't get to see all that, but we knew about that. When visiting a country, you just have to take that into perspective that they only want to show what they want us to see.

And we can't leave the hotel without a guide and there was always the North Korean guide with us so they only show you what they want you to see, but still interesting.

Matt: Yeah, I was actually in Seoul, in South Korea, a few months back. I was based there this year in August for about five weeks.

Palle: They have the best street food.

Matt: Amazing, isn't it?

Palle: Yeah.

Matt: The food in Seoul, yes I still dream about that. And what an underrated city. I mean Seoul, Korea was just truly spectacular because I don't think it gets the international billing of a Tokyo or one of those major epic cities, where you expect it to be epic, and of course, Tokyo is epic, but when you go to Seoul, I was just so impressed with the city. I think it's just so underrated and it so, for me, it just so over-performed in terms of how incredible it was. But while I was there, I went up to the DMZ, the Demilitarized Zone, you can go up to the border with North Korea, and you can see that whole situation, which is really a fascinating experience.

But, of course, just as you were saying, you get one very particular narrative about the situation and then if you were to see the – the DMZ from the other side – it was interesting, I was talking to a – actually a Brazilian friend of mine, earlier this year and he too had been through North Korea and went down to the DMZ from the North Korean side and he was telling me about the – the narrative that you get in explaining the whole political situation from the northern side as you're going to the border.

And I was telling him about the narrative that you get when you're coming from the southern side; about the border about the whole history of the border and all the things that have gone and stuff like that so very important to understand the perspective that you're getting.

Palle: But one thing that really surprised me was, both the North Koreans and the South Koreans; they don't say, if we get reunited, they say, when we get reunited. They still feel like one people and I don't see how that can happen; not any time soon, that – it's so difficult to see because they're so different, but they really feel like they're still one blood.

Matt: That's really interesting, I've never been to the north so that definitely would be, I think, a very, very interesting —

Palle: You're from the U.S., so you have to wait a while.

Matt: – it's a little bit more difficult —

Palle: Yeah.

Matt: – just a little bit more difficult.

Palle: Now it is.

Matt: Certain people – certain people have been able to do it, but it's – it's pretty – it's pretty tricky at the moment for sure.

Palle: Yeah, in fact, I – I traveled with the same company, Young Pioneer Tours that had Otto Warmbier on their tour; the young American who was imprisoned and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor and later came back in a coma and then died. And I was traveling with the same company and one of the Australian guys was with him on the trip. At the time we were there, Otto Warmbier was still there.

And this Australian guy, he said, well he's coming home soon, they typically don't keep them very long and he's a young, energetic, good-looking guy and he's going to be okay. But then what happened when – in fact, when I was editing the episode, I had CNN in the background and all of a sudden, I saw Otto Warmbier comes home and I said, oh my, God, that's – what's going on? And then he came back in a coma and then died. It was so tragic and I still don't know exactly what happened.

Matt: It's interesting when you're traveling around to a lot of these places, there are – there's this interesting mix, I think between the fun and exciting and stimulating and inspiring sort of adventures and then there's these – all these political realities that you're also

exposed to in terms of injustices and abuse and power and equality in things that people really experience

And it's this incredibly important, I think, and rich mix of reality that as you go to these places, you're able to see both oppression and inequality and injustice and struggle; and then you're also able to see this extraordinary humanity and – and fun and incredibly enjoyable and delightful things and – and be touched in really positive ways by those experiences as well and that's one of the things that I take away from a lot of my travel. And I try to – when I go to places, I try to really make sure that I'm – I'm – I'm connecting and learning about and immersed in sort of the full range of that thing so it's not just – you're not just doing one or overlooking the other.

Palle: Even though I'm so old, I still have a lot to learn and I'm sure that a lot of stuff that's in my podcast about my views on things, people listening to it would say, no, you're wrong about that and this is not right, but I still have a lot to learn, but that's one of the reasons I'm traveling. When I was in the Bahamas, I went to this dolphin show and went swimming with the dolphins, it was so great and the dolphins were – they were smiling and they were jumping up and down and having fun.

And then later, I found out that you should never go see dolphins in captivity because of the way they are captured; the way they're trained and the – and it just dawned on me and that was a big lesson for me, but when I was there, I didn't know. But now I know and so I try to get both sides into what I do when I tell my stories about it.

Matt: Well, and I appreciate the way that you tell stories too because I was listening to some of your episodes when you were going through the American south, for example, and you went – my parents are now retired and living in Asheville, North Carolina, and you did an amazing episode on Asheville, which I checked out, which is a totally epic city. I mean it's totally fantastic —

Palle: Oh, it's great. Yeah, I was just there one day. I want to go back.

Matt: – yeah, and I – I go for the holidays every year there and stuff and it's a great city, but one of the things that I appreciated, as you were traveling through the American south, is that you were highlighting both really cool, fun, interesting stuff, but then also

looking at the history of the sit-ins and the Civil Rights Movement and where Martin Luther King was assassinated.

And all of these different things and so you bring – you, I think, really embody exactly what I'm describing, which is that you want to connect with the residents and really find the cool, fun, interesting stuff, but then also have that ever-present history and ongoing daily struggles today with the groups that are there and that are experiencing injustice and things like that so I really like the whole perspective that you bring to that, which is for me, being from the U.S., in an American context, but the same is true in your international travels when you go to places like Cambodia, for example.

Which I live in Phnom Penh for a month and I found that to be – I mean there was just a whole bunch of just mixed emotions I had living in Phnom Penh because you have the whole haunting legacy of the Khmer Rouge Genocide there, which prosecutions for that have been going on right up until 10 years ago. That's very recent stuff and yet there's just also so much just delightful and warm and charming and amazing stuff. What was your experience like in Cambodia when you went?

:

I spent a very short time in Phnom Penh and then I – I spent a long time in Siem Reap, which is lovely with the whole Angkor Wat and all that. And when I took a tour of Angkor Wat, the guide was this older guy that we sat down, at some point on the tour and – and he told me about how he and his parents were captured by the Khmer Rouges at – at the time and he was – he was beaten with a stick and the whole thing and I could tell even so much – so many years have gone by and it was still painful for him to talk about, even though his English wasn't that good, I really could feel that this was very, very hard.

And the hotel I stayed at had a very, very young manager, a 24-year-old who told a story about how he grew up and had to wake up at 4:00 in the morning and climb up the palm trees and – before he went to school and then come back and work hard all day and then again at nighttime; it was very, very tough life for him. And then he was working as a – as a young guy at this – at a hotel and there was – and his English was pretty good, and there was this American couple who came up to him and – and said that they wanted to support and him – and help him get through school.

So, now he's been to university and now managed to – to become the manager of this hotel because somebody wanted to sponsor him. And that whole story was just very touching to my heart and now he, even though he doesn't make that much money from managing the hotel, he is – he's supporting a young girl himself to go to school. And he told me the story that he might not have enough money for it, and he's a skinny guy and he told me that he would take up boxing because if he could just get in the ring once and win, he would make enough money to support her for – for six months and – and I just looked at this skinny guy and said, you – you really want to do that?

And he – he told me that his mother wasn't happy about it, but he wanted to do it and if he – if he didn't succeed, he would get nothing, but he said the – the opportunity of winning and the game and making money to give to her, just wow, wow!

Matt: That's amazing, yeah; Siem Reap is really an incredibly remarkable place. I found it's – actually in all of Southeast Asia, I would say probably – the overall country that I probably recommend the most is Thailand, but the one specific city or place that I recommend in the region is Siem Reap.

Palle: Absolutely, agree.

Matt: For me, —

Palle: Absolutely.

Matt: – that – I was so floored by the temple complexes in Siem Reap, so Angkor Wat obviously being the largest temple complex, but all of the other ones when you take that three-day temple tour, when you're going through these temples, this is where they filmed Tomb Raider, for people who have seen that movie.

Palle: Especially the one, Angkor Thom, with the trees going down and the – oh, man.

Matt: It's unbelievable, I mean it's just – it was like a sensory experience that – and I've seen a lot of temples, I'm sure – I know you have as well, and all over the world and this was just – aesthetically, it was just unlike anything I have ever seen. I mean, truly breathtaking and each of them was just so different so there is that – when you mention with the trees growing out of the rocks in these amazing

ways and then the one with the faces in the rocks. And this – each one you go to, you’re just – it’s jaw-dropping how extraordinary those temple complexes are.

Palle: And I had the pleasure of seeing it from above as the sun was going down when I went hot air balloon flying, it was unbelievable.

Matt: You did the hot air balloon?

Palle: Oh, yeah.

Matt: I did not do that, but that sounds —

Palle: Go back and do that.

Matt: – yeah? That sounds amazing, I would love to. I’ve been in one hot air balloon my entire life, but I keep seeing these epic, global locations, like my friends just went on the hot air balloon in Cappadocia in Turkey. Or they go on these really insane places so I’m like, man I need to – I need to do more hot air ballooning. Now, you also did the world’s highest bungee jump in Macau, which I’ve been to Macau, I went to Hong Kong and then I took the ferry over to Macau, but I certainly did not do that. Can you talk a little bit about what that was like?

Palle: Yeah, I – I don’t know exactly what happened. All of a sudden, I was standing on the platform, leaning forward and it’s insane; it’s 233 meters – how much is that in feet? A lot, 800’, 900’; something like that. It’s higher than the one in Los Vegas and Macau is Los Vegas on steroids; it’s even bigger than – than Vegas when it comes to gambling. Yeah, and then I went up there – and I said, let me do this and as I was about to jump, I just – I was just hoping for somebody to tell me no, this is just a joke, you don’t have to do this.

But then I thought I’d better – lean forward. I’ve seen videos of people doing it and they – just before they jump, they sort of bend their knees so it’s not so far down, which to me, makes no sense. So, I decided, I’m not going to do that, in fact I also – I thought I might do a little jump as well, like jumping, but no, it was just lean forward. And then I did not anticipate what happened, but I screamed. I didn’t know – I didn’t think I was going to scream, it was just – but I screamed like you wouldn’t believe until I had no

more air in my lungs.

And then I took a deep breath and screamed some more because I was still falling; it's just so far down, it was insane, but I felt secure. My brain knew that I was not going to die from this. I – I knew I was not going to die from that, but my – but my body did not know that so I was pumped up with adrenaline the rest of the week so it felt good, it felt good, but I would never do it again.

Matt: Well, you don't need to, you've already done it and you've documented —

Palle: I got the t-shirt.

Matt: – it on your podcast, you got the t-shirt and you can tell stories about it so —

Palle: They put a GoPro camera on my arms so I have the most amazing picture of me falling down and looking the most terrified I've been in my entire life. It's all on my blog.

Matt: All right, so I want to go back a little bit now and talk a bit about your professional trajectory and your career coming up through radio. Can you talk a little bit about – because you were quite innovative in terms of founding radio stations that were producing the type of content that you wanted to see that you didn't think other radio stations were doing, you really trail blazed a trajectory there and that led to you being one of the earliest podcasters in 2006 and really being on the forefront of some of the audio content movement there.

So, can you talk a little bit about that and just kind of tell us what that was like coming up through radio and – and what you did and how you built some of that?

Palle: You have to take into consideration that the whole radio scene in Denmark was very, very different back in – up until early '80s, it was only the national broadcaster; they had three programs and that was all we could hear. Obviously, no Internet radio, if you lived close to Sweden, you might be able to pick some – pick up some Swedish radio; if you lived close to Germany, some German radio.

But other than that, where I lived, we had three channels and that

was all from our BBC, Denmark's radio, and in fact, through my childhood, every day from 9 a.m. to – to noon, the same program was on all three channels and it was Classical music. It was now we want to educate the Danish people of what is good taste so when they said, okay, now let's try with some local radios, just as a trial to see what that's – what's going to happen to let the local – the kind of community radios that obviously they're not going to be as professional as we are in Denmark's radio, but yeah, let's do that.

And we were a bunch of guys, they started a community radio in – in my hometown and it was like everybody came in; there was the housewives doing morning or mid-day radio and the very political on – the very far right and the very far left and there was a – a fiddler doing a fiddler's program. There were all kinds of programs on the same radio station and then there was me and a group of like-minded, young 20-year-olds, we just wanted to do Pop radio; we just wanted to play Pop music and all the Rick Ashley, Cali, Manok and all that back in the mid-80s. We couldn't really make the kind of radio that we wanted to listen to.

So, at some point, my friend who was there, he looked at me and said, can you raise a little bit of cash without saying what for? And instantly I said, you mean to start our own radio station? And he was stunned; he said how the – how the hell do you read my mind? So, we had the same thought at the same time, which we wanted to see if we could get our own license. And we got two more guys on board and then we got the licensee and we started this small radio station, where we didn't have 24-hour licenses.

It was just a few hours in the morning and a few hours at night and – but we started it, not because we wanted to build a company, but because we wanted to be able to make the kind of radio that we wanted to listen to. And maybe our friends wanted to listen to so that was the reason we started it, it was not build a company. Now, 27 years later, we have a bunch of stations and a couple of other things as well so now it is a company, but it – it was all started with the passion of making great radio.

Matt:

That's amazing and you're now an owner of 17 radio stations – co-owner, but you're not actively managing them, it's mostly just a passive income now for you, you founded it and you set it up and now it's running by itself.

Palle: Yeah, in fact, the guy who I got the idea with, he's now the manager and he's got 51% of the company now. So, – but he's doing a very good job and so we'd like him to stay, so that's why we let him get a bit more.

Matt: Awesome. And you can travel the world and collect passive income so it's a win-win. So, tell me a little bit about Radio Guru, the company that you now own, and you're the CEO and you've won a number of awards for the productions, radio commercials and things that Radio Guru has produced, and you've landed enormous clients like LEGO, in terms of producing podcasts; and that one you even hosted in – in addition to produce.

Can you talk a little bit about the trajectory of that company and then how you started landing companies like LEGO, and then what that podcast experience was like?

Palle: Yeah, I can. Absolutely. In fact, before I founded my company, and by the way, calling it Radio Guru, just indicates that I'm so full of myself doesn't it? I thought, can I really do that? And yeah, I can do it.

Matt: You've earned it, you've earned it.

Palle: No, before that, I was the radio manager at a big media company in a part of Denmark and was buried in business cases and budgeting and managing staff and got so far away from where my passion was; producing radio. I had to – I had to leave and – and – and – and do something else because I didn't enjoy being the manager, I didn't enjoy being behind a computer screen with spreadsheets and all that. I enjoyed more, the hands-on stuff with the radio.

So, I quit that job and I started by cutting my own salary in half when I started my own company, but soon it grew into what it is now, where I can still have my hands on what I do and I really enjoy being – editing and – and coming up with ideas and writing scripts and directing the actors and – and all that when it comes to radio commercials. And now I've gotten more and more into – into podcasting and I truly enjoy that and I see that as a great medium for the future and something that more and more companies will do, like LEGO did, do their own branded podcasts.

So, that's something that I still hope to do more radio commercials. I still enjoy doing that, especially when I have clients who can see

the benefit of doing something creative and something interesting. But I really also want to do more podcasting, I think that's super, super exciting.

Matt: And talk about, maybe a little bit, about how the LEGO thing came about. How did you land a client of that caliber? And then maybe talk a little bit about what that experience was like. You were mentioning to me that you got to go to the Bugatti factory, what was – how did that all come about?

Palle: Well, I was so lucky that a guy who used to be the creative director of one of the biggest agencies in Denmark, and in fact, he wrote one of the commercials that I produced that won best commercial of the year, he was now one of the creative directors of LEGO, at the time, and he said that we're planning to do a podcast when we're doing the LEGO technique version of the Bugatti. It's sort of an ultimate project for us, it's something special and we want to give the people who buy this and spent more than a week assembling this massive thing, an extra thing when they're assembling it and a podcast would be a cool thing.

And we've spoken to a lot of different production houses and we'd like to hear your take on how to do it. And they said, we need a host who can host it and somebody who really can do that and I was starting to think, oh maybe this guy would be good, or this guy would be. And then after a few days, I was like, hey, why not me? Why I can do it, I can do it, yeah. And that's one of the times when my own radio vagabond podcast became useful for me and I said, listen to my style; how I edit and how I interview people and see if you think that my English is good enough because I'm not a native English speaker.

But they being from Denmark, especially, you think, no, it's fine, it's fine. And they – they chose me over these companies and we had a great time. I spent a couple of weeks in Denmark interviewing the LEGO people who built the model, and then I went to Molsheim in France where they have the Bugatti factory and also to Wolfsburg in Germany where they do parts of the car, like the engine -- and interviewed the people who did the real car.

Matt: Can you talk a little bit about, just for people who aren't familiar with Bugatti the brand, and they're not familiar with that car? I mean that – because that is – that is such a high echelon, a lot of people, they've heard of brands like Ferrari and they've heard of

brands like Lamborghini, but you can explain exactly what Bugatti is and what you saw there?

Palle: Take the most expensive Ferrari and the most expensive Lamborghini, and then just add a little bit. Take the speed that they do, and then just add a little bit. It's the most insane thing; first of all, I think it's the most beautiful creation, it's so beautiful, but it's super, super fast; it goes from 0 to 400K and back to 0 in 42 seconds. So, not only is it – the acceleration is insane with 1,500 horsepower, but the way it can break as well, it's phenomenal. And then it's just stunning, it's just so beautiful.

Matt: And it looks very different from any other car you've ever seen. I lived in L.A. for a number of years and there is a store on Rodeo Drive in L.A., if you've ever been there, if I believe that it's called Bijon, which is one of these stores where you need to have an appointment to get in the door, it's not a walk-in store. You have to – you have to have an appointment to get in the door and I think they financially qualify you before you go in.

And it's a custom clothing store, which sells I assume outrageously expensive customized clothing and the – what I assume is, the owner of the store owns a Bugatti – I assume he owns it and parks it in front of the store, each day with a hat that's – with the name of the company, Bijon, in the dashboard. And so it's like when you're going down Rodeo Drive in L.A., which is of course, this huge tourist thing, everybody wants to go and see the legendary Rodeo Drive; the number one thing that I see people taking pictures of, is they're in front of the store, they're taking pictures in front of this Bugatti because in L.A. if you go to those types of area, you'll see plenty of Lamborghinis. You'll see plenty of Rolls Royces, you'll see plenty of Ferraris, that's not unusual to see in L.A. A Bugatti, which is probably – and I'm guessing, I mean I'm not a super car aficionado, but if – if these Ferraris or Lamborghinis, the really top notch ones costs maybe a quarter million U.S. Dollars, \$250,000 or something for some of these cars. A Bugatti, I assume, starts at least \$1 million in terms of the type of price points.

You're talking about buying – being able to buy four or five Lamborghinis for the price of one Bugatti. I mean this is an extraordinarily rare, echelon of an auto – car.

Palle: Yeah, and in one of the episodes, I speak to the head of sales at Bugatti and the whole selling process of a thing like that is so

much different. I don't get the same treatment when I go in to buy a car, I can tell you that. The people who buy them are – they custom make – no two are alike. And they only make 500 and no more. They only make 500 of it so it's a very, very special thing and I feel privileged to be – to have been a part of that project.

Matt: Can you share any sort of take-aways or behind the scenes experiences? What was that like to be in that environment and to interview those types of people? And to experience, as you said, something that's a very different level of customer experience than anything that anyone else would spend when you're buying \$1 million product. So, what was that like or what take-aways did you have from that experience?

Palle: Everything was with a lot of secrecy, I had to sign so many papers and NDAs and leave my phone outside; they put a sticker over my camera and after I produced it, it was six months until it came out so, and I could not tell anybody and my head was exploding.

I couldn't – I'm doing some work for LEGO, I think that's okay to say, but I couldn't tell what it was so it was driving me nuts. But also – both the Bugatti, but also going inside the places at LEGO in Billund, Denmark where the people are creating these things will come out in a couple of years and they do so much that so many companies around the world, especially in – in Asia are trying to copy, and often succeed so – so it's – it's really – even – even when the guy who is the head designer of the Bugatti model, when he was carrying the thing around in the building, inside LEGO, he had it in a plastic bag so nobody could see it.

Just in case somebody would snap a photo so they could maybe do something and recreate it so it could be ready – yeah, it's – it's – it's crazy.

Matt: Wow! But now, all of this is released; it's all come out as a podcast and people can go and listen to it, is that right?

Palle: Yeah, and in fact, they brought me back to do a second season because they made something that was even crazier. They decided to do a one-to-one scale model of the Bugatti Chiron; all made out of LEGO technique, the – the tiny elements and without using glue. And then they wanted it to drive as well, using only the small, tiny LEGO motors. So, they built that – they gave that task to a group of hardcore Czech people.

They have a place in – outside of Prague in Kladno in the Czech Republic and they said, can you do that? They called them from Denmark and said, can you do that – actually make it drive? And that's when the line got kind of quiet because – oh, okay, we can do that – we can do that and they spent so many hours and more than a million LEGO elements on doing it. So, they brought me to the Czech Republic to speak to the guys and again I was brought into this place where they do all the big scale models for the LEGOLAND Parks and the big flagship stores around the world.

At the time, they were doing some stuff for a shop in Shanghai and I'm not sure it's open yet, so I'm not allowed to say what it was, but it was insane. And then they made this LEGO technique version of the real size Bugatti Chiron that was stunning and later they brought it to Wolfsburg in Germany, where the Volkswagen Group that own Bugatti, they have the test track. So, where they did real speed test of the real Bugatti, they also wanted to do the driving test of this model. And so that's what the second season is about, that whole project.

Matt: Wow! So, I definitely need to listen to all of that. We're gonna link in the show notes to those podcasts where people can listen to them because they've both – seasons have now been published and they're available.

Palle: Yeah, yeah, yeah, and it's, in fact, if people have an app, it's just searching for the LEGO technique podcast.

Matt: Okay, fantastic so we'll link that up in the show notes and you hosted and produced both seasons?

Palle: Yeah.

Matt: Amazing. So, all right are you ready for some lightning round questions?

Palle: Do you have a jingle for that?

Matt: We do actually; we're going to drop it in, right about now.

Announcer: The lightning round.

Matt: Palle, what is one book that you would recommend to folks that

has really been influential to you over the years?

Palle: Oh, there are so many, but the one book I would have to say when it comes to the whole traveling lifestyle that I'm living now, it would absolutely have to be, "*Vagabonding*" by Rolf Potts. That book, not only made me call myself the Radio Vagabond, but I'm actually more of an audio book kind of guy so I have it – had it on audio book first and then I liked it so much that I ordered the paper version as well so I could put in notes and scribble and put in Post-its here and there. And so I have both the audio version and the paper version.

So, for me, that was the most useful book and – and that was just in my planning phase and actually, a few months ago, I was lucky enough to meet Rolf Potts when I was in Austin and got to tell him that story and interview him for the podcast.

Matt: I listened to that episode as I was screening through your episode titles on your podcast, saw that you had interviewed him and I immediately listened to that episode. He is truly extraordinary, for anybody who has read the *4-Hour Work Week*, by Tim Ferriss, you'll know that Tim Ferriss cites Rolf Potts really extensively as one of his primary inspirations for writing the *4-Hour Work Week*, that he had that book with him as he traveled the world and as he prepared the *4-Hour Work Week* —

Palle: And actually, Tim Ferriss produced the audio book for it and – so yeah, they became good friends.

Matt: – yeah, and so that's amazing. I have not personally met Rolf Potts yet, but that's definitely somebody who I would really —

Palle: And such a nice guy.

Matt: – I would really like to be able to speak with at some point. But totally agreed on that book, that's one that really influenced me as well. What would be one app or productivity tool or gadget that you're currently using that you would recommend?

Palle: I'm using Evernote a lot. I think it's just so handy because it synchronizing with both my computer and my – my iPad and my phone so – but that's kind of an obvious thing. If I should pick something that's a little bit different, it would be an – an app that I have on my iPhone called, *TrackMyTour*. It's a cute little app and

every time I'm in a new place, I can just say, at weigh point and it knows where I am, it knows the date.

So, it puts in a pin and then connects the – the pin so I – I can see my route of where I've been since I started traveling two years and five months ago so that's kind of funny. It's called, *TrackMyTour*.

Matt: Knowing what you know now, and all of your experiences in life up to this point, what is the one piece of advice that you would give to your 20-year-old self?

Palle: Dude, that haircut. Those glasses, they're not – they're not doing you any favors.

Matt: That's amazing. That might be the best answer I have received to that question so far.

Palle: No, I actually would tell myself to follow my passion. It's something I tried to tell my daughters as well because – but that's kind of what I did, I did what I enjoyed doing and that's probably why I became fairly qualified at what I do is because I really, really enjoy doing it. And now that I'm doing my Vagabond podcast, it's not because it might be able to make me some money at some point, it's barely covering the expenses by now, but it's something because I enjoy doing it, doing radio and producing. It's still my hobby; it's – it's not work.

Matt: I agree. I love doing this podcast and it's amazing the types of people who I get to speak with and have conversations with and I'm just simply – it's exactly the way I would be spending my free time over a bottle of wine as we are here, talking with interesting people, except that I get to just press the record button and allow other people to hear it as well. So my background also, I became a DJ back in the very beginning of high school and that was, for me, out of love – initially out of my love for Hip Hop music in the U.S. coming up and became a Hip Hop DJ, but then parlayed that into a mobile DJ business, where I was Doing weddings and school dances and all that kind of stuff.

And then I got a – did a show on the college radio station and I got a little studio radio experience and all that kind of stuff and then I went totally out of that for years. I was away from the microphone for years and then now coming back and doing the podcasts really feels good, it feels amazing, it's in a totally different capacity, but

it's really fun and incredible where I just get to simply interview the most interesting people I know.

All right, next question, who is the celebrity or author or public figure; anyone who's currently living today that you would most like to have dinner with?

Palle: Matt Bowles.

Matt: That we can arrange, my friend because you and I are about to go to dinner in five minutes. So, that bucket list item is already going to be granted so starting tomorrow, who else is on your bucket list of – somebody you'd love to just meet and have a few-hour conversation with.

Palle: Again, it would be a very obvious answer to say, Richard Branson or Barack Obama, but that's just so —

Matt: You're allowed.

Palle: – yeah.

Matt: You're allowed. If that's the answer, you can select your person, whoever that is.

Palle: Or it could be a candle light dinner with Angelina Jolie, I'd do that, I'll do that. In fact, when we were talking about Siem Reap before, when I was in Siem Reap, she was there as well —

Matt: Really?

Palle: – because she had – she had the world premiere of the movie that she directed and I think she wrote it as well and produced, and the world premiere was in Siem Reap. And for a few seconds I thought, okay if I meet her, do I have a chance? I never met her.

Matt: You didn't make that happen. Well you never know, there's a lot of opportunity left here. So, all right, now – so the last thing that I want to ask you sort of as we go out, before I – we tell people how to contact you and listen to your podcasts and all of that. The last question is, I want to ask if you can summarize all of your expertise in producing great radio commercials; you have done that over the years; you've been paid to do that by very high profile companies. You've won awards internationally all over the world

for your radio commercials, which you know, audio commercials, podcast commercials, that kind of stuff. If you were to synthesize and condense your biggest advice on what makes a great, effective radio commercial that maybe anybody today who's hosting a podcast or trying to produce a great commercial for their business, what are the elements that make a great, effective audio commercial?

Palle: I think I'll put it this way and that's actually not only for radio commercials – but, a hell of a lot of radio commercials, but in fact, for any kind of medium where you want people to listen to your message, you have to remember that there's an unwritten contract between you as the advertiser or the person who wants to communicate something, and the people who want to listen to it or you want to listen to it.

That there's an unwritten contract that they're giving me something – they're giving me a part of their time so I should honor that by giving them something in return and not just try to sell them a product. I hear so many radio commercials where it's just talking about the product from start to finish, as if the listeners, they give a damn. They don't, they are only interested in what you can do for them. So, you should hook them in; you should entertain them, give them something before trying to sell a product.

Then there are – of course there is the obvious thing that – try to – if it's a radio commercial, try to make it sound as if it's not. Try to make something that sounds natural and in a conversational tone and creep under the radar by doing something that doesn't really sound like a commercial.

Matt: I think that's great advice. I totally agree with that. All right, so, Palle, how can people connect with you if they want to follow you; they wanna follow your journey, how do they find your podcasts and also if you want people to follow you on social media or other places, how do they connect with you?

Palle: The podcast is called, the Radio Vagabond, and you've gotta remember the The because otherwise get the Danish version and you don't want that. So, The Radio Vagabond and the website is theradiovagabond.com. I'm also on – on Facebook as [palleradiovagabond](https://www.facebook.com/palleradiovagabond) and on all the different social media as – as [radiovagabond](https://www.facebook.com/radiovagabond), but the Radio Vagabond, you have all the links to everything and that's what you search for.

Matt: Awesome, well I have thoroughly enjoyed the episodes that I have listened to; I'm certainly subscribing and going to be following the rest of your journey. I love your style; I love the way you do it; I love how real it is where you actually bring the listener into your travel adventure to the actual place where you are; speaking with the people who you're speaking, you just record it as you go through the world.

I think it's an amazing concept, an amazing way to do it, and I certainly encourage everybody to follow your journey with that. So, we will link everything in the show notes, so just go to the show notes page, all of the links for every resource that we talked about will be aggregated there in one place so just go to the show notes page and you'll find it there. And, Palle, thank you so much for being here today, this is great.

Palle: Thank you, Matt, and I just wanted to say, I love you too.

Matt: All right, let's go have that dinner so we can knock it off our bucket lists. Good night everybody.

Announcer: Be sure to visit the show notes page at themaverickshow.com for direct links to all the books, people, and resources mentioned in this episode. You'll find all that and much more at themaverickshow.com.

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