

Speaker 0 00:00:05 Welcome to the Clear Impact Podcast brought to you by PGTI University. Thanks for joining us today. My name is Sherri Connor, and I am your host.

Speaker 1 00:00:20 We're constantly looking how growth acquisitions, market expansion market share expansion, lines up with our dealer base and how they can be successful because without them, we can't be successful.

Speaker 0 00:00:31 As we wrap up our introduction series, we saved the best for last. We sat down with our CEO, Jeff Jackson for a few minutes today. Jeff shared with us about his humble beginnings in a blue collar family from a small town in Georgia. We chatted about his role here at PGT Innovations, his vision for the future, and how he stays grounded as he leads our enterprise. You'll love this episode with Jeff Jackson.

Well, good morning. We are here this morning on the Clear Impact Podcast with our CEO, Jeff Jackson. Hi Jeff. Good morning. How are you? I'm doing great. How are you doing great. Good. I'm so grateful that you had some time to spend with us today. Um, we're doing some introductions and it felt appropriate to introduce the fearless leader of our entire enterprise.

Speaker 1 00:01:16 Yeah. Well thank you, Sherri. I've heard you've had an amazing cast of characters come through here so far. So I just wanted to make sure I got in that line. Uh, impressive group so far.

Speaker 0 00:01:26 Thank you. Well, I didn't want to leave you out. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Speaker 1 00:01:30 Well you know, I'm probably not your storybook kind of CEO. I came from a blue collar working class family. My dad was a fireman and my mom worked in a sewing machine shop. So we grew up in a small town in Bowden, Georgia, about 2300 folks. And actually my parents only had a 10th grade education. So we came up a little humble in the beginnings. Uh, I worked my way through college, where I met my wife while I was in college. And, uh, you know, we grew up old south, uh, Southern church Christian values and just working hard. Sweet tea? Sweet tea and pecan pie.

Speaker 0 00:02:03 Nice, those are some of my favorite things. That's fabulous. Um, so how did you end up at PGT Innovations or in the fenestration industry?

Speaker 1 00:02:11 Yeah, I was actually recruited to come here in 2005. Uh, the company was then owned by a private equity company out of New York called JLL partners. And they were looking to take the company public. Rod and team had built the company up. And 2004 was a devastating year for hurricanes for the state of Florida. We had four named storms, category three and above. And, uh, the company was on fire. We had the product, we had the brand, we had the distribution and JLL saw a potential to take the company public, uh, based off all the momentum we had at that time. And then 2005, we had more hurricanes. So it was really a good time in the company's history, in terms of its brand awareness and its distribution dealer network. And so JLL brought me down to take the company public.

Speaker 0 00:02:52 And it's done very well since then.

Speaker 1 00:02:54 Yeah, we went public June of 2006 and, you know, stocks been up and down. Obviously we went through great housing recession and I think our stock actually got down to 92 cents, you know, and hindsight's always, I like to say 50/50, which is an internal joke, but had I known

obviously I would have mortgaged everything I ever owned and bought it, uh, you know, 92 cents a share because you know, we hit on all time high this last week of, uh, over \$28 a share.

Speaker 0 00:03:18 I saw that. That's exciting. What do you love the most about your role here?

Speaker 1 00:03:23 You know, the most would have to be the people, you know, this has been a family-oriented company really, since I've gotten here. Uh, I think we've added to that with all the acquisitions we've made. We've introduced new cultures, new ideas, new ways of thinking into the company over time. But, uh, we still hadn't lost what got us here and that's kind of the belief in people and team and family. And so that's really, if you look at my job, I love most of the people, developing those individuals, giving them opportunities to succeed, uh, leadership, chances of just expanding their horizon and increasing their ability to succeed in life.

Speaker 0 00:03:55 That's so fabulous. I know I'm kind of a new kid on the block. I've been here since January and I'm continually impressed with how everyone works together and how everyone's cheering each other on. And it's, it really does feel like one big family, which is wonderful. I didn't expect that in a company this size.

Speaker 1 00:04:11 It's been hard to maintain, but you have to work at it. You have to work to maintain that culture. As long as I'm here, this is going to be a family oriented company where, you know, open door policy, you can come in and see me or whoever in the, in the company. Uh, we'd like to get out on the floor. I've been on truck routes before in the day. Uh, I like to go to the plants. I like to walk up the floor, say hi to folks and just make everybody feel at home. Uh, you spent an incredible amount of time working and so it should be almost like a second home. And if you think of it in terms of a three-legged stool is, as I've said before, you got your family, your work and your spiritual life, all those have to balance, or that stool is out of line and it just doesn't work. And so here at work, we like to make sure we do our part in balancing that stool.

Speaker 0 00:04:54 Be sure to tune in for upcoming episodes to help you understand the fenestration industry, what you need to know when buying windows and doors and other related topics, you can find out more about us at [pgtiuniversity.com](http://pgtiuniversity.com). You can also find us on Facebook and LinkedIn.

So what would you say your vision is going forward for PGT Innovations?

Speaker 1 00:05:17 That's a great question that I get asked often. We cast a vision almost five years ago to be a billion dollar company. And we will hit that this year. By all indications, our guidance out there to our public markets is over a billion, almost a billion and one. So, uh, you know, the next big grand vision? We're going to meet this year, at strap planning in September and I'll let the team kind of work on that next round of vision, but obviously it involve growth. Growth doesn't happen overnight. It's not guaranteed. You have to put in various initiatives to cause that growth. The only thing that's guaranteed is change and things will change, but you have to pursue growth. And that's a vision that we all share as a team, as a company and has helped us to succeed so far. If you look back as early as 2013, we were only about 280 million in sales. And again, seven years later, we're going to be 1.1 billion. So that's growth in that that just didn't happen. And so we'll continue that trend, expand our brands, expand our presence outside of the state of Florida. Uh, we will expand the Western business unit, uh, as well. They need additional brands. They need an additional vinyl, a platform. For instance, they need

to get into the RNR market, which I'm looking heavily into out west. And we will expand our presence in leadership and breadth of influence in the window and door industry.

Speaker 0 00:06:32 That's a wonderful thing. I love to hear that coming from the top. So how does this vision help our customers, our dealer base, the homeowners that have our products? How does that vision help them?

Speaker 1 00:06:42 Right. Well, first I'll answer is how has it already helped them. Well, it's already helped them because we now here in the state of Florida own the major impact brands. And that's given us a variety of different products for our dealers and distributors to choose from. You can choose PGT, you can choose WinDoor, you can choose CGI, now Eco our new ownership interest in echo, which we acquired this past January. You can choose final. You can choose aluminum, big doors, small doors, windows, we have at all. And I think the more brands we bring on, the bigger opportunity that has for our dealers. And if you look at the channels, we participate in both the new construction and RNR channels were well-balanced. So our dealers cannot be married to one channel or the other. They can participate in both because our products serve both those channels. They serve both those channels through our acquisition efforts, through our innovative pipeline, we're sitting here in the Innovation Lab, that's a prime example of what we've done and recently the last few years to be cutting edge for our dealers. Uh, so we're constantly looking how growth, acquisitions, uh, market expansion, market share expansion lines up with our dealer base and how they can be successful, because without them, we can't be successful.

Speaker 0 00:07:51 Right? No, it's definitely a partnership. Yes, that's awesome. Uh, so our final question, and we're asking this of everyone on the introduction series, because it's the Clear Impact Podcast. So we want to talk about impact. What is an event or who is a person who has made a major impact in your life?

Speaker 1 00:08:08 Yeah, you know, I would have to say, uh, it would be family, my family, most importantly, my wife, we got married young. I was still in college actually. Uh, and I was a police officer, believe it or not, when I met my wife, and I was working my way through school at night. You know, I met my wife, Lisa, and, uh, she had an immediate impact on my life because she introduced change. It was something new, something I'd not experienced. Uh, she was from California. I was from Georgia. There was a variety of different changes that was introduced to this old boy. And I was able to catapult that into, uh, you know, where we're at today. We work together to create an incredible family. We have three girls that, uh, are the center of our lives. And I think together we've, you know, we've lived life and we've had our ups and downs. No doubt. We've had our challenges. We've lived in California, Seattle, Washington, Atlanta, Georgia, Dallas, Texas, Hershey, Pennsylvania, uh, Sarasota, Florida. So, you know, with life comes change and stresses and enjoyments of life. And the most impactful person in my life would have to be my wife.

Speaker 0 00:09:10 Aw, that's so sweet. That demonstrates that you have a good partnership. How long have you been married?

Speaker 1 00:09:15 It'll be 33 years this year. Wow.

Speaker 0 00:09:18 Congratulations. That's amazing. Well, I really appreciate your time, Jeff. Thank you so much for joining us today and I'm sure we'll have you back.

Speaker 2 00:09:25 You bet. Thank you. Alright, thanks.

Speaker 0 00:09:27 PGTI University is the customer education team for an entire family of brands. We began with the original Eze-breeze porch enclosure line, then became PGT, America's leading brand of impact resistant windows and doors. We then added CGI, CGIC, WinDoor, Western Windows, New South Windows, and Eco Windows and Doors. We create products built to withstand major storms, keeping people safe, secure, and prepared. Our exceptional brands give you the protection you need without compromising design or functionality. PGTI University is here to educate you, our listener, so that you can be a more informed consumer of window and door products.