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YOU might not know Brett Birkill's clothing brand, but you've probably seen his wares — they're impossible to miss. Hundreds of thousands of Australians go to work every day wearing Prime Mover Workwear – his high-vis designs. Recently, Brett sold the company he founded on the smell of an oily rag which made him very rich. Now Brett has turned his attention to the property. Brett catches up with Bushy today to reveal details about that fascinating journey.

BUSHY: Hi, welcome. Now, what I've always loved about property is it attracts all types of people from diverse backgrounds and there definitely isn't a one size fits all when it comes to property success and to demonstrate this in a two part Realtytalk special. Today's guest Brett Birkill from Birkill developments is certainly no exception. Transitioning from a successful entrepreneur and his hi-vis workwear to an entrepreneur in hi-vis property fair. So welcome to RealtyTalk Brett.

BRETT: Giddyay Bushy, Thank you. Lovely intro.

BUSHY: Great to have you on board mate, now, Brett, as I've already alluded, you've haven't always been in property. So let's start by getting in tell us about what you've been doing over the last decade or so.

BRETT: Yeah, so my background was in clothing, my family for many generations, three generations have seen clothing before so we had a very long history in that and I grew up in clothing, that's pretty much all I knew. And the business that we started and developed was from scratch, similar to what we've done with a property. And, yeah, long story short, over, it was a 13 year period. We built up a significant business running across multiple countries and we ended up, packaging that together and selling it to a large workwear brand over in Ireland by KPMG, so that process took a long time and we started with zero customers and pretty much zero money and built up a significant business that had around 70 employees and a significant presence at the time that we that we sold. so one of the things that always ran alongside the clothing line was we had a great passion. When I say we, my wife and I, we had a great passion for property always. So whilst we weren't in property development. We always purchased distribution centers. We had different factories and then and then got involved in a lot of passive property so we had a great understanding and feeling and passion for property, alongside the clothing business that was our day to day bread and butter.

BUSHY: Yeah, great. Okay, so I on the outside and at first glance that doesn't seem to be a big synergy between being clothing and in property. So what made you decide to move into property development once you sold the business.

BRETT: Yeah, there was definitely a connection so my wife's from Hong Kong, and she had a great interest in property in very different markets in Australia, and often over heating and booming property market she bought and sold properties at different times so there was a passion from her side. Again Her

background was clothing and property as well. And so, same with me. I purchased my first property at 22. And as soon as I moved in, which was just a small Gillean in Hawthorne, the first thing I did was pull up the carpets, redo the floorboards, paint the kitchen, so there was always a desire to be in and around property and if the overriding factor was when we've always loved business and being in business. And one of the key areas that they continue to rear its head in people's business success was property and properties obviously was at the forefront of, you know, financial review lists and all these sorts of things so I often looked at that and thought wow. It's something I'm very passionate about. And clearly, it's been proven over decades and centuries as being a great avenue for wealth growth so putting all those things together, property was always in about.

BUSHY: Yeah, and it makes complete sense. So tell us a bit about Birkill developments, what are you creating and who are you targeting.

BRETT: Yeah so, we again we started from scratch. When we finished off the clothing business we had 12 months to hand over, and basically to the day we walked out and handed the business over 12 months after the transaction. We purchased our first development site, which was six townhouses.

I had done a lot of research as much as I could, I probably overanalysed everything down to the to the last cent. And to be honest, I spoke to everyone. I spoke to anyone, professionally, personally, my dad's always been a great mentor I spoke to him, and I couldn't come to the decision that it was going to be successful or not. So, we decided at that time, to then just say look we've done all this research, everything looks good on paper but the only way to get into it, is to purchase a block and develop it.

So that was, that was where we started and what we wanted to do early on was, even though the first, the first development site just had to get going and see how it rolled out, we wanted something close to a train line, and we wanted something close to infrastructure, and we wanted a developing area but something that was already established. And there's a lot of areas around Melbourne that do have key infrastructure that have been around for a long time, and not just Melbourne all across the country. And so once we ticked off those key criteria, and we purchased the block and haven't looked back from that point.

BUSHY: Yea brilliant mate, you wet our appetite. Looking forward to diving into a bit more detail in part two of our discussion, coming up shortly.

Thanks for sharing your experience and your insights for this day Brett, and we look forward to getting you on again soon to complete the story.

BRETT: Okay great, thanks Bushy

BUSHY: Thanks mate, now there's a really good example where we've just listened to someone who's leveraged their success from their business life into property success. So if you're still sitting on the sidelines because you're too scared to start, it's time to get invested in your knowledge as Brett has just shared with us, and then get invested in property. Stay with us for more here on Realtytalk.