

# REI NETWORK

## *Grow Your Business Without Sacrificing Your Life – Alex Pardo*

Hosted by: Gavin Timms

Guest: Alex Pardo

**Gavin:** Hey, guys, how are you doing, Gavin Timms with REI Network. We are back with another episode. Just before I introduce my next guest, I just want to say, if you haven't already made sure you check out [REINetwork.com/Maui](https://REINetwork.com/Maui). I have the case study that I'm working on showing you how to do a deal from. I guess it is still in the US, but virtually flipping the deal and how it all went down, the less the process, everything's in there. So make sure you check that out. So I am going to introduce this awesome guy, and he is, believe it or not, my first ever guest on the podcast. That's not either been just me on my own. Right, doing content or one of my clients sharing their story and successes. So he is the first guy that I'm going to be interviewing. So I'm super excited. It's a massive win for me to be able to do that. So I want to introduce Alex Pardo. How are you doing?

**Alex:** I am amazing. I'm blessed, brother. I genuinely mean this. I'm honored, dude, not just to be on your podcast. I'm super fortunate and grateful that we've connected, but that I'm your first guest that you're interviewing. So that's amazing. Bro, I'm pumped.

**Gavin:** I appreciate it. I feel a little nervous, you know, and that's not like me. Good that you're good to have such a beast on is pretty impressive and it's going to be good. We're going to get back go down to your story, kind of how you got started, how you kind of built kind of an empire. Right. And a monster at the same time. And how you figured out that that wasn't kind of your path and how you've made big changes from something that was successful and you kind of you were willing to, you know, kind of win that down to go and create something else that's successful is pretty amazing to show that whatever you do and put your mind to you can make it happen. So let's jump straight into Alex. Tell us a little bit about you, where you live in, and then let's go from there.

**Alex:** Yeah, absolutely, Gavin. So, yeah, born and raised in Miami, my parents and my entire family is from Cuba. You know, they came over in the sixties. My sister and I were the first ones here born in the States. And I don't have a rags to riches story. I certainly wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth, but my parents were hardworking middle-class people. I had a very pretty good upbringing. But it's interesting because I was always very you know, I was taught to play it safe

and to be comfortable. And, you know, if you've read Rich, that poor that I was taught to go to school and get a job and all that kind of stuff right now. But something inside of me when I was a kid was just felt a little bit different. Like I was always very ambitious. Whenever people asked, like one of the first things that people said about me when I was a kid and even growing up was like, he's very ambitious, he's very hungry. And I remember I grew up playing sports and being at the baseball park with my dad after games. There was always a baseball card vendor and I would go and I would buy baseball packs and cards for a dollar or two dollars, whatever they cost in the eighties.

**Alex:** And I would turn around and flip them and I would make an extra book or an extra two. At the time, I didn't realize I was wholesaling baseball cards, class sizes. And so that's what I was doing, man. So, you know, I'd make my fifteen, twenty bucks in a month period or whatever it was, and I'd buy more cars and do that. And then I got to college and I don't know if it was an ego thing. I don't know if it was what it was. But I had a desire to be the CEO or the CFO of a big company. And so when I graduated, I started interviewing with companies like Johnson and Johnson, General Motors or long story short, I got a job with General Electric in their financial management program. And it was one of those defining moments for me, Gavin, where three months into that job, I was in finance. I was closing the books. I was spending 70 to 80 hours a week basically in front of Excel and PowerPoint. And it wasn't that fun. And I I've always been pretty decent at reverse engineering what I wanted in my life. And so I looked at my boss. I looked at her boss all the way up to up to the ladder to the CFO of the business where I ultimately wanted to be one day. And I would rather do anything else with my life than their position. Like, I just I felt like a corporate slave. Right.

**Alex:** And I use that word obviously loosely. I just that wasn't what I wanted for my life. And so during that year and a half period, I just started getting educated. I made a commitment to GE. I had moved away from Miami for the first time and I said, I'm going to start learning about real estate. I've always been interested in it. Well, I finished that two-year program. I moved back to Miami from New York City to Miami, and I decided that I was jobless. I didn't really have any money. I was still getting educated on real estate. I didn't really know what I wanted to do with my life. So I decided to go backpacking around Europe for three and a half months with a couple of buddies. I was in an Internet cafe in Ibiza and a friend of mine sends me an email inviting me to what's called the Marketing for Deals Boot Camp in Atlanta. It was nine hundred ninety-seven dollars. I had funded this three-month trip on my credit card and I didn't have any money, but the trip was about to be over. In a couple of weeks, I was going to move back to Miami and I was going to move into my parents' house at twenty-five years old. Not a good look. That was a big motivating factor for me.

**Alex:** So I paid the \$997. I got back to Miami. I went to the boot camp a couple of weeks later. I literally plucked out a pre-foreclosure letter that I had received and I didn't have any money. So, like, I'm looking right behind. You have a printer? Well, I had a much more ghetto started making photocopies. It was so ghetto, you could still see the black three ring binder. And I started mailing pre-foreclosures. Dude, 60 days later, closed my first deal. Made forty-four grand. And that was beginning of 2006. So that was my story into real estate.

**Gavin:** And let's just back up a little bit here, because there's something that you said I think is absolutely key. You were in the corporate world and what you did maybe at the time without realizing it, when you actually look where you were heading. Right. You were looking at the vision. And what happened was when you actually created the vision that didn't align with the job that you were in. Right. And from that moment, you knew that my vision is this or you maybe you didn't know the vision, but you knew it wasn't that you were eliminated. So I don't know what it is, but it's definitely not that. Right. And that's though that the big thing is, is that you'd make changes immediately. You know how many people that we probably both speak to that have that vision 10 years ago and still doing exactly the same job? Right. There comes a time when you have to bite the bullet and do it because you will regret it.

**Alex:** Man, that so well said, Gavin. And one thing that I'll just kind of piggyback to that is that for me, one of my biggest fears. And I and I do my best not to live my life operating with fear because we don't make the best decisions when we're operating out of fear. But regret to me is something that I, I always want to avoid at all costs that I never wanted to, like, look forward in the future and then look back and say, man, what could have been. And then sometimes people have families and they have responsibilities and then they have such a hard time getting out of you know, I think a salary is it's a ticket to forego your dreams, you know, for many people, not for everyone. Everybody is not meant to be an entrepreneur. I knew I wasn't meant to be an employee for another company. Yeah, no, that's amazing.

**Gavin:** I think you're exactly right. I look at it as well. You know, with the W2 job, it's constantly just capped. Like, that's it. There's no, you do 70 hours. You don't get any more money. If you do for you and you got busy that week, there's no more rewards. Right. And it's and it's just the same thing as like this. I say and I talk about a lot with a guy. There's a picture of a guy leaning against his Lamborghini, telling his staff that if they keep working this holiday, he can buy another one of these next year. And that's what you're doing. You're funding the people above you.

**Alex:** Exactly right. And you work hard as an employee. You're going to get more work and more hard work. So.

**Gavin:** Absolutely, absolutely. So you get in, you go into real estate and you start making it happen. Right. You're very much like me in terms of not overthinking it. That's what it says in the training. That's what it says in the book. That's what my mentor says. Whatever it is, that's what they said on stage. You start mailing these things out, you get one, you close forty-four thousand. Then what happens? What do you do? What do you do with this money? Forty-four thousand payment. What do you do?

**Alex:** Well, so check this out, man. Just to be totally transparent, the deal was forty-four grand. I made half of that. And here's the reason I made half of that. I was afraid to do it on my own. So there was a buddy of mine that had started real estate maybe six to twelve months prior to me, and I knew what to do and I knew I could figure it out on my own. But I let fear overtake me on that first deal. And so to gain some comfort and safety, I brought him in as a partner to help me close the deal. And so I'm super grateful for it because I learned a lot in the process. But it also taught me that, like, I didn't necessarily need to do that. I needed to trust in myself, in my abilities, even though the truth is I had no idea what I was doing. I knew enough that I could get the deal done and I could help these people out of their situation. So, man, I've always been getting ready. Fire aim. Yeah. And most times in my life, in my business, that's served me well. There's been a few times where I wish I had a mulligan right. And sometimes I wish I had a do over, man. But like when I took that and I invested heavily into marketing, so once I made those twenty-two grands, I probably took half of that and I put it into marketing and then I started doing mailers and it just kind of spiraled from there.

**Alex:** Man. I was fortunate that, like, I had a decent amount of success in that first year in business and then 2007 came and I decided to get involved in my first rehab, which was a half million-dollar project. I had never done a rehab before that I was grateful. I brought in a partner. And so we took down a house for five hundred twenty five thousand. That was worth about seven fifty an hour. Kind of fast forward to the end. We each lost fifty-one thousand dollars on that deal. The market took a took a dive and brother, when I got in this business, I didn't I should have taken time to like understand the market and understand inventory. And I just thought it was going to continue to go up and up and up. And that was one of those times where I wish I had a mulligan.

**Gavin:** Yeah, no, absolutely. But I think, you know, that's the ifs and buts, isn't it? But your personality works in one way because you like me, you just make an opinion. You go, go, go. But there is that risk of like that happening. So so you do that. So you've gone from not having the. Vision of going up the ladder in corporate. Well, then at the same time, you start building something very quickly. You realize this is not what I want either. Right. So let's talk about that. How do you start scaling? Right. Because that's what you thought you want. And

then when did you realize this isn't right again and you've got to go in a different direction?

**Alex:** Yeah, well, yeah. Great question, man. So two thousand nine ten is when I first started to hire people. So the first four years I was a one man show. I didn't have a business, I had a high paying job. And then I remember I was single at the time and I would be on a date and my phone was going crazy. It was blowing up from a direct mail campaign and that's when the pain outweighed the pleasure of doing the deals. I'm like, I got to get people to help me. So I started hiring people and things were going well. And fast forward to about two thousand seventeen. I had a small team of like three. It was myself and three other people and we were doing, you know, three, four or five deals a month. And then I started to notice something on Facebook. And in these big mastermind's people were talking about scaling. And I would see people's big operations and I would see people talking about doing 10, 15, 20, 30 deals. And dude, I looked at those people and I said, those people aren't any smarter than I am. If they could do this, I could do this.

**Alex:** And I completely got away from my vision and I said, I'm going to scale my wholesaling business. I want to make more money in this thing. And I didn't realize that as you scale, you need more people and as you need more people, your overhead rises. And now you've got to you've got to make sure that they're fed. You've got to feed the operation. And so I went in twenty seventeen going from maybe spending three to five grand a month total market like the whole nine to about fifty thousand a month, like quickly like that. And then I realized that in Miami our average profits about twenty, twenty-two grand a deal. I basically would have to do two to three deals just to break even. And I saw my margin go from this to this and I was having a lot less fun in the process. Now I wasn't the one talking to the sellers, talking to buyers, going on appointments. I wasn't doing the marketing, but I found myself spending a lot of time managing people and putting out fires and leading them and holding sales calls and all these things that I didn't know at the beginning. People talk about scamming, but they don't talk about what goes into scaling. And the first mistake I made was I think I scaled way too quickly. I wasn't strategic about how I did it, and I didn't take into account that as I scaled my overhead was going to rise and that just didn't fit my vision anymore.

**Alex:** So yeah, man in two thousand beginning at twenty nineteen, I was in Guatemala for a mission's trip and I'll never forget this because this was another defining moment. It was my turn on the hot seat. So was master mission. So it's a half day mission trip, half the mastermind and my master mind. You know, I'm fortunate that I have somewhat of a following and I have a podcast and people look to me for answers and guidance. And so, like, my identity was caught up in being a successful real estate investor. Right. But something inside, Gavin, felt like it was

missing. Like, brother, I don't know what it was, but like, you know, when something just feels off in your gut and that's how I felt, man. I wasn't experiencing a lot of happiness and fulfillment and joy within the business. And I'm a big lifestyle guy. I spent a lot of time with my two girls and my wife. We love to travel. And I was still able to do that. But like, I wasn't excited to, like, on Monday morning to get up and jump on my level ten meeting. Yeah, I just was. It wasn't.

**Alex:** And so I shared with this group of people, I said, guys, business is OK, we're making money, but something feels off like I don't know what my I feel like God's tapping me on the shoulder to do something bigger with my life and with my business. Well, I got a lot of insight and inspiration during that mastermind. And six months later, I got together with a good friend of mine and we ended up launching the business that now takes care of my household needs. I'm happier than I could ever be fulfilled. I get to pour into people's life, which I discovered is my real purpose. And so that Ascend was born and so. Yeah, and so.

**Gavin:** Absolutely. So we're going to hold there because I'm going to come on to that. But I want to jump back. OK, from what you were saying, I think it's another key point in case anyone missed it. I just wanted to talk about is that you've gone from spending three to five thousand a month, OK? And you were probably happier at that point where you thought the next step was because everyone talks about it is all going to scale, are going to be big, are going to be like these other influences out there and what they're doing in the market. And I need to be that way because that's the dumb thing. Right. So you went onto that. And I think what everyone needs to understand is that you go from three to five a month to fifty thousand a month because you have more people, more overhead, more marketing to feed the leads into the middle and things. But the profit went down. And that is the key, right, is all about profit. OK, yes. We're helping people with solving situations. We're doing all that when you look at the profit, OK, what are you putting in your pocket? And that is the key.

**Gavin:** And there is a fine line between doing a half a million dollars a year to then make. We need to do one point five million dollars a year or whatever your ratio is, to say, OK, well, I've got to spend X to get half a million, but now that ratio will not continue at that rate. So don't think that, oh, we're doing three dollars a month or five grand. Well, if I do ten thousand dollars, I'm going to say it doesn't work that way. Doesn't work.

**Alex:** And to buffer your point and I look back at my PNL in twenty thirteen, it was myself and one other person and a VA, so it was three of us in total. I made double the money I made in 2013 that I did in twenty eighteen. The first year that I decided to scale, I had four times as many team members. I barely had any

overhead in 2013 and I made almost double the amount of money like that. That puts things in perspective.

**Gavin:** And everyone needs to listen to that. It's huge. You made more money with a smaller team doing less deals and I'm happier. That's the key thing. Yeah, and you are happier. So you build this kind of than let's call it a little monster in terms of, you know, your you've got this thing. You're doing what you're supposed to be doing, you know, deep down that this isn't right. OK, so you go to a mastermind. I want to come on to masterminds. We're in mastermind. I'm in a couple. You're in you're in some as well. And the importance of them. Right. And what you've seen from the mastermind that you attended, you kind of now went and created your own to give back to stop people making the mistakes. I think that's what we all do when we go on these shows and we talk on your own podcast and you have your own, OK, it's trying to get value out there to be real. Right. I'm not on here or sorry you're not on here, so I know I did. You could have said, oh, yeah. Fifty thousand a month marked and doing all these deals, you can hype it. All right.

**Gavin:** You couldn't do it, but you get real. Right. And to go and be vulnerable is OK. Someone that's successful to get successful people to be vulnerable is very hard until you get in the right set it. And that's what a mastermind does. You know, you see a different personality. I'm going in Will next week we go to Mexico for one. And the things you see on the social media is they all go all the hype and the ego gets put aside and we get real. Right. And we get the core. And it's amazing. Oh, no, I don't say this, that people have got different personalities, but it's kind of like your safe place, isn't it? Would you say is. Yeah, but tell that so you get in, you create this kind of mastermind coaching thing. Let's talk about that. How did it all change and how do we get there.

**Alex:** Yeah. So before we ultimately decided to do this, I was just asking, I was looking at my vision. I was asking myself questions like what's my purpose, what does God want out of my life? So I'm a Christian. I'm a believer. So I was going to that and I was asking myself, like, what genuinely gives me happiness? And I launched and started hosting the Flip Empire show in twenty sixteen. And Gavin, you may think this is crazy. You know, like when people send me a message on social or get my email and reach out to me and say, hey, this podcast you released really had an impact on my life, on my business. I was able to do this or that. Dude, I genuinely got more satisfaction from that than the next twenty-thousand-dollar deal that we were about to close. I beg you not, dude. Yeah. And I'm like, there's something there. I want more of that. How do I start serving people, like at a deeper level, not necessarily wider, although that's something to consider. But I wanted to go deep with the right people. So I got together with my friend and we were just very aligned in the direction we were going in our purpose and what we wanted to do.

**Alex:** And so we created a mastermind called Ascend. That, in my opinion, is very different from what's out there. We weren't trying to be the next big mastermind that you and I both know. We don't filter when we work with people. It's not on how many deals are you doing? It's not on how much revenue. It's about working with successful entrepreneurs, real estate investors that want to tweak or modify their existing business to really enhance and support their lifestyle. And we start by helping them document their vision, not my vision for them, but their vision for what they want their life to look like. And I know you and I think very alike when it comes to that. I see too many people in a business that they've created that they don't want to be in, and it doesn't have to be that way. But you have to start by getting clarity on what you want.

**Alex:** And so we actually something I learned through the life in our organization is we have them go through an exercise where they take their calendar and they literally map out their week personal, like, what do you want your life to look like without regards to money, business possessions? Like what do you want to do on a weekly basis? And then we have them see where the blank spots. That's where your business has to fit into. When you have space, they're like, start with your life first, then create a business that. So let's say you have twenty hours for business. Beautiful. Let's figure out how to create a business that produces X, whatever that may be for you within twenty hours. That's more impressive to me than a multi-million-dollar grossing revenue business that makes this much profit. And so yeah.

**Gavin:** I think that's even a good little exercise for everyone. I don't know if you're going to. Listen on the podcast or watch it on YouTube. OK, but you need to write that down. You need to kind of get your calendar right now and do that. I think that's a great way because I think the same right. You design your vision and your lifestyle and the business fits around it. But I think that's a great way of never put it in that way to say, well, get a calendar, go deeper than that and go day to day, write down what you want to do and then fit around it. Genius, absolute genius.

**Alex:** It's really there's a sense of relief when you look at a blank calendar and you say, man, if I could do anything today, what would I do? Is it a workout? Is it going to the beach? Is it playing golf? What is it? Put those elements in your calendar and then figure out, OK, well, how much time do I have for business? And then, all right, now, how do I go about the process of creating a business or modifying my business to fit in that so that I'm living life first and the business enhances it? Incredible. Incredible.

**Gavin:** That's great. I think people are going to get a lot from that. So you kind of then as we look, we have got very similar thought processes in terms of the whole lifestyle. That's kind of what we built from. I built from the get go with me without realizing it and things happened. And I was blessed that I did that. And



you've kind of gone on a journey to it was almost like always in you that that's what you wanted to do. But you were kind of following the trends to start with. Right? You were in the, oh I need a job because that's what I need to go to college and get a job. And then you want it to go. Well, everyone scaling. So I got to scale because I'm successful and good at this. Deep down, you probably knew what you wanted and when you found that and now you build to what is your day like now? Like what do you do from this moment? We just talked about how does it look and what do you know?

**Alex:** No, great question. And quite honestly, I don't know that I've ever really been asked that. But I start my workday around nine thirty and I end usually by three thirty, four o'clock. Absolute latest. And a lot of that time, believe it or not, is personal development. You know, like I'm big in getting meditation and twice a day I'm big on reading and journaling. And so that's part of that day. And so yeah, I spend my time now creating content through the podcast. I spend my time on coaching calls with people that I'm looking forward to getting on the phone with, people that I genuinely want to connect with. And then I spend my time. So even though I pivoted away from the wholesaling operation, I'm focused on larger deals now. So I'm looking for self-storage facilities. I still have some rentals that I own. I still do some lending. So to me, real estate people might be surprised to hear me say this real estate, not something I'm passionate about, but I've identified it as a vehicle that can help me live my vision. And it's something I enjoy. It's something I'm good at, something I understand and know. But what I do real estate for free, you know, and spend money. I wouldn't. It's just a vehicle.

**Alex:** And I've recognized that my passion is really pouring into people. I enjoy helping people. I enjoy coaching calls like that. Those are the types of things I would do for free. And you and I are fortunate that we get paid to do that. And it's very lucrative. But it scratches the fulfillment box for me. So, yeah, my days now is I don't work weekends. We travel a lot. I spend a lot of time with my girls. I have a three-year-old and a five-year-old. And I don't want to paint this picture, Gavin, that I have everything figured out because I certainly don't. And I have a lot of flaws and things that I'm working on to get better. And I go through my ruts just like everybody else. So I don't want to paint this picture that I had this incredible I think I have a pretty amazing life, but it doesn't mean it doesn't come with challenges because it certainly does.

**Gavin:** Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And I want to I want to pick up on something that you said that was in your day that a lot of mindset. OK, I believe 80 percent of what we do is mindset. Right. Not just in business life. Right. And you are on the personal development side, like, obviously, I know because of what you've just said, that you really focus on mindset because of the things of the meditation and all the things, the personal developments that you do. Right. Why do you do them?

**Alex:** I truly believe that the greatest investment anybody can ever make is in themselves. In your mental health and your physical health, how you live life, how you approach life and, you know, the craziness going on in the stock market right now. Right. And the civil and like all of that stuff, if you just continue to strengthen your mind, strengthen your body, you continue to invest in yourself, nobody can ever take that away from me. And God forbid I know the stuff hit the fan and I lost everything. I'm confident that within a year, year and a half, I could build it all back and then probably then some, you know, and that's because of my knowledge, just because of like my belief system. That's because I have confidence that I can do it, not only because I've done it because I'm constantly strengthening that muscle. Yeah. And so, yeah, that's the moment.

**Gavin:** And I think the key is, is that your self-belief, right. You believe in yourself, but you're not arrogant. You don't come inside. I can do it. And given it in the big one you don't need to. It's the internal correct. And that's what I had when I got started. I knew nothing about real estate. But the thing was, is that I believed I could do it. And everyone. Else didn't believe around me, people think I lost my mind, but people in England like what is a real estate investor who doesn't know anything about a house, which is the truth. Right. But I believe that if you figure it out and you get the concept down and you work hard and focus, then you can achieve anything. No doubt have the bigger goal beyond the bail money it needs to fit around your lifestyle. Where and again, and that's the good and the bad, the good things, whether you're going to take someone to the hospital, you're going to visit someone, you've got to go to another country to help someone. You're going to go on a mission trip, whatever is because you can now, right? Yeah, that's I think that's the key.

**Alex:** It gives you freedom and you have more choices. It's something when you know you can do something for someone and you're not expecting or wanting anything back, you just genuinely want to help. I mean and really, guys, I think what this boils down to is find out what makes you happy. That might sound very corny and clichéd, but just find out what makes you happy and do more of that. It's that simple.

**Gavin:** Yeah, no, absolutely. That's great. So, Alex, I appreciate you coming on the first guest. You absolutely knocked it out of the park. So how do people find you? Because I am watching this. You need to go and find Alex. Social media. And how will the ways Alex, can they find out a bit more what you do? You mastermind do they qualify if they want to get in? How does that look and the outreach to you?

**Alex:** Yeah, no, I appreciate that, Gavin. Thank you so much, brother. So first place I would recommend is the Flip Empire show. So if you've got to flip Empire dot com forward slash podcast, that'll redirect you right to Apple podcast. We're nearing at this point five hundred episodes or so. So that's where I, I literally just

poured my heart out. The good, the bad, the ugly, the success, the failures. And trust me, I have quite a few of them and I open up about those. So the podcast would be one way I'm on social, whether it's Instagram or the clubhouse is the most recent one that you and I connected on yesterday to Alex Pardo clubhouse. And then as far as Ascend is concerned, that's [AscendYourSuccess.com](https://AscendYourSuccess.com) And yeah, it's an application process and we'll go from there. It's a pretty small, intimate group. And we're looking for the right people, people that already have an existing business but want more out of life. They want to extend their life pun intended to their life in business. So [AscendYourSuccess.com](https://AscendYourSuccess.com).

**Gavin:** Well, I appreciate you. Thank you so much for joining me. And also, guys, if you're watching it, make sure you like and subscribe, whether it's on the YouTube channel or whether on the podcast. Make sure you share this as well. Give us a share. Send it to the friends of the in and out a lot from this this episode. So, Alex, again, I appreciate you, my friend, and we'll talk to you soon. Thank you, my friend. Bye bye.