

Intro: Are you ready for an open discussion with the best of the best and the best of what's next? Welcome to the Tony DUrso show. Join in on a great conversation today with some of the world's great influencers, as they showcase great advice and techniques that made them the game changers they are today, now here's Tony DUrso.

Tony: Welcome I'm your host Tony DUrso, we interview world-class influencers, celebrities and elite entrepreneurs and I thank you for joining us. We broadcast every Friday at 1 p.m. Pacific on Voice America's Influencers Channel, and you can listen to all of our shows on your Android or Apple device, go to [TonyDUrso.com/mobile](http://TonyDUrso.com/mobile) and get the app [TonyDUrso.com/mobile](http://TonyDUrso.com/mobile). Today's show is with John Kaites and Ari Evans, Fear Not and Maestro, all right here's some info on John Kaites. John Kaites is the author of "Fear Not: Two Weeks of Living Boldly into God's Authentic Confidence" and an American entrepreneur who has owned some or all of 18 companies, welcome to the show John, it's so great to have you.

John: Thank you Tony, it's good to be here.

Tony: John it is my honor and privilege and this has an extra layer of excitement for me as everyone's going to find out, but before we get into that excitement I'd like to know please first things first, John how did it all start for you, what's your back story?

John: Oh my goodness I could take hours to walk you through that yes go ahead Tony.

Tony: And we have less than a day okay?

John: Well you know what I guess the short story is that the book that we're about to talk about which is Fear Not is really an accumulation of a lot of time and knowledge and a much of what happened when I was in seminary, but I went to seminary late in life. I'm a former Arizona

State Senator who was elected at age 29 to the legislature and served until I was 34 years old and then went back to the practice of law and had a little successful law firm, and felt that nudge to go to seminary and while I didn't want to become a pastor, I've always tried to be as loyal as I can to what God wants me to do rather than what I have on my agenda, I find that his agenda is a whole lot more successful than my own.

And through that process, almost a nine-year period by the time I graduated from seminary I ended up with 18 companies and a law firm with 40 lawyers, and I would attribute a lot of that success to taking the words of Jesus and putting them into secular business principles. And one day I'm praying about the things that God might want me to continue to do, the thought came to me that I should probably integrate a lot of what I learned into a book, and I met with a friend of mine who had edited and published a number of books and he wanted me to do a book on my life story and connect the successes of my life story into the principles in this book and I started writing that. And about two months into it I got the sense that this book was not about me, but really about just delivering the principles that God wants you to hear about how to live a life without any fear or insecurity, and to live it fully in his presence and so that's how the book Fear Not came about.

So I started from the drawing board it took me only five days to write the entire book, it took me about two years before it was published, I edited and re-edited and went through it and my publisher took a look at it, the only thing I was insecure about was writing a book about not being insecure. The book ultimately got released and I use it to change lives of others and to emphasize kind of the principles that I preach as both a pastor and as a businessman and as a counselor at law for my friends and clients, so that's the abbreviated version of how it all came about.

Tony: For someone who has had such a life as yours and has done so much and accomplished great things, I'm impressed that we spent just a couple of minutes to go over the back story and I'm going to ask one more thing because I think it has some relevance to current times, in your life story I'm just very curious if you don't mind me asking, how did you end up becoming a driver for John McCain?

John: Yes that was interesting, I've been given a lot of cool opportunities in my life and one of them was when I was back in college in western Pennsylvania with Allegheny College, up in

Meadville Pennsylvania there was a young lawyer from Erie who ran for Congress and I had the privilege of participating on his campaigns and he was successful. That young man was a guy named Tom Ridge who later became the first Secretary of Homeland Security and the governor of Pennsylvania, and when I graduated from law school I came out to Arizona and Tom called John McCain and said John hey one of my friends is coming out to Arizona you got to meet him, and I met with him and his chief of staff and I said here's the one volunteer job I want and that is to be the driver. And so while I was an assistant attorney general in the organized crime division of the Arizona Attorney General's Office and the weatherman on channel 12 here in Phoenix, I was a volunteer driver for John McCain.

And so I would get calls from his staff and say do you mind driving him these certain days or these certain times and often times there were weekends when I was free and I loved it. And I learned early in politics that the best way to get close to the candidate is to be their driver, because you have hours and hours of uninterrupted time in which you can talk about policy and personal life and you really get to know somebody very well. So even as I progressed in my life and my success politically and financially I still volunteered to be his driver, so when he was running for president I would pick up Joe Lieberman or Tom Ridge or governor's or other senators and drive them to meet up with John McCain or drive the three of them around as they were doing campaign stops, and it's just a great way to meet people. And so he and I had a 28 year friendship before he passed and I was asked on Fox News the other day to reflect on the relationship and the time I got to get to know him by being his driver.

Tony: I love that story John, I absolutely love it and I'm going to put that into use somewhere along the line, thank you so much. That is a great way to really get to know a candidate and especially, I know as you're involved or we are involved in politics and it was something to learn, so you're like on the job learning and getting mentored in a way by that which is really great.

John: Yes and it's also a lesson in the importance of humbling yourself. In order to get knowledge, I was a sitting state senator and I was the guy just driving the car and so you humble yourself instead of saying you deserve a better place in life, when you humble yourself and put yourself in a position of service for others, it's unbelievable how many great things you get to experience both in that relationship with that person, but also all the people that I got to meet through John McCain and just being the driver. And most of them thought I was just a 20-

something young man that was starting out in politics, they had no idea that I had a whole professional career or even a career on television.

Tony: I'm very impressed John and now I'm going to surprise you as well as my audience, so here we go. I've not only read the Bible but I typed it before the internet as a project for a lady, she wanted to reorganize the stories and right out of 19 years old I went into corporate America and I self-taught and became a speed typist and a proofreader and years down the line I would do odd jobs for people in colleges or whatever and so she hired me.

And while she never paid me for my final work perhaps the project itself was my payment John, and I don't have the Bible committed to memory I'm not one of those that can quote everything. But what amazes me here and the point of this story, is that you took the Bible, you transformed it in a way well I presume into methodology that can be used for businesses and to survive better, am I right in seeing it so far that way?

John: Yes fantastic, I took the words of Jesus especially and started applying them to secular business principles and it's amazing how they work. We shouldn't be shocked that the creator of the universe when he speaks and you use his words and you put them into action that great things will happen, but they do and most people don't recognize that if you take those words and so how we treated our customers, how we treated our competitors, how we did dispute resolution internally, how we do employee evaluations all of those things can translate back to a Bible verse that is Jesus's words. I tell people if you want to hear God speak to you read Jesus's words out loud and he will hear him speak to you, and so I was taking when I was learning in seminary and implementing it in my businesses and I transformed from a leader who was a boss and a manager, to a leader that was a teacher and a coach.

And by virtue of that many of the companies, the eighteen companies I've had I've sold to my protégées, who are people that I've been able to teach and coach into how to rent, run and manage those companies. So as of today I'm down to five companies and a vibrant law practice here in Phoenix, and so all of that is just translates from taking Jesus's words and implementing them into not your only your business life, but your personal life.

And in my business life I try to take everything that we do and turn it into a ministry disguised as a business, and by virtue of that when you are mission oriented like that transformation of the lives of people around you become a priority and when you're being

transformative in the lives of others, the other things just take care of themselves, it's one of Jesus's great miracles and it's fun to talk about and fun to see it in action. I'm proud of you for typing the whole Bible that must have been a long project.

Tony: Yes, on the weekends over a couple months because I did it in sections and to make it very clear, I was paid for sections but the biggest bulk at the very end I did like the biggest part to finish it, I did a marathon and the lady was always haggling on the price and I thought the price was just too ridiculous and she wouldn't pay and whatever and I just said, if she wants to pay she will if not fine I'm delivering the final product and I have other things to do and she never contacted me and never wanted to pay the rest that I thought, well that's on her, that was just the way it is.

And like I said earlier, I believe just doing the work because at that point I of course had heard of the Bible, I grew up Catholic by the way very devout and have what's the wording, have received many of the sacraments of the Catholic faith, but I had never read the Bible, the Bible was never pushed to read in that church or area or whatever was. The priests, the pastors would tell you the stories, tell you so this was my chance actually read and learn and we're not going to go there because it's a whole different story, but I was very impressed by a great number of stories we'll just leave it at that.

John: It is so rich there's no doubt about it.

Tony: Yes, and circling back to you John I'd love to know and I almost feel like it's sacrilegious so you have to address that, but how did that help in business in terms of could you give us some examples, tell us some points of what?

John: Yes, I tell my employees that God gives you three tools that if you use them faithfully the universe will bend to your will, and those three tools are love, forgiveness and gratitude. And so let me take forgiveness for an example, if we are out there executing on a project whether it's trying a case or lobbying at the legislature or trying to get a real estate deal done or whatever the case doing a global security investigation, whatever it might be, whatever the company might be

and somebody stabs you in the back, I tell my people think visually about taking that knife out of your back, throwing it to the side and forgiving them completely and focusing in on your objective, because if you focus on your objective you'll get your objective done, if you focus on the stabbing in the back then you will be diverted into a process that is not productive.

Then I tell them when the person who stabs you in the back, when you see that person fall go pick them up, go help them and if you see a cause that they are trying to advance that is good for all and they're not getting there, help them advance it on their own and give them the full credit for it. Those are things that you don't typically think of in business right, you think of defeating your competitor rather than helping your competitor, caring about your competitor, forgiving your competitor. And all of those processes are like superpowers, when you do them it's unbelievable how you attract people into your world that they want to be part of, even if they were trying to take advantage of you.

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Tony: All right we're back on the Tony DUrso show; today's show is with John Kaites and Ari Evans, Fear Not and Maestro. John Kaites attended Fuller Theological Seminary during which time he began to take the words of Christ and transform gospel teachings into secular business principles. In addition to business teaching and the practice of law, he helps pastors and churches rethink their growth strategies in an entrepreneurial and transformational way. All right, and now back to the chat with John.

John: I have a number of my businesses where my business partners are people who spent the first half of their career trying to destroy the first half of my career, and yet by forgiving them and showing up when the chips are down for them we became great friends and developed great trust and then from that the creativity of developing a business or business opportunities were unbelievable. So in politics the guys that used to stab me in the back or try to defeat me in campaigns a lot of them are my personal friends today and we do many business transactions together, and I've been there at times when they've suffered greatly either politically, professionally or personally. And I'm the last guy that they expect showing up and by virtue of that it has the greatest impact and reflects Christ in the greatest way, so that's one example.

Another example would be dispute resolution and I used to spend a third of my time as an owner of businesses, with employees that would come into my office and complain about other employees or complain about a process or complain about something that was going on or something that they felt like they deserved. And so I took to Bible verses basically and that Jesus spoke of and I put them into action, and now the rule is if you get a problem with another person, the first thing you do is go home and write down all the negative things you bring to that relationship and just change it unilaterally, and when you do that see how that relationship changes. And if that doesn't work which by the way 97% of the time that works, when they just change their own negative behavior to that other person it's unbelievable how the relationship completely changes.

But if that doesn't work I tell them to talk directly to that person, that they're not allowed to go around that person unless it's sexual harassment or some crime happening or

something like that. But just in the normal course of conflict, they got to go directly to that person and address the issue directly and resolve it. If they can't resolve it then they go to their immediate supervisor and have the discussion in front of each other. The way normally it's done is when somebody is offended by somebody else in a company, they create a cancer around them by going to everybody else and telling them what this person did and it creates cancers within your organization that makes it almost impossible to operate like a team. But if you do these two things it's unbelievable how your employees start developing relationships, working with each other, becoming incredibly creative because they're resolving their own issues.

So I rarely get, in a whole year maybe one time when I have somebody come in my office complaining about somebody else, after they have done all those steps. Now what are those Bible verses, one of them is when Jesus says before you take the log out of your brothers eye take the speck out of yours and that's the go home, write down all the negative things you bring to the relationship and then change them unilaterally. The second step is Matthew 18, where if you have a problem with your brother deal with it directly with your brother, if that doesn't work then you bring in a witness to resolve the problem.

Tony: I love those points John and I have to say just hearing this and hearing of your application, you've probably never been called this before and I sometimes don't say it right but you are very magnanimous, amazed I'm impressed at how you deal with people and how you've taken this to solve and take care of issues, hats off to you I'm really impressed for lack of a better word, very good John I love it.

John: Thank you Tony.

Tony: And while I use different principles, I'm a strong believer and proponent of I let people live their lives and they have a reason for what they do and I'm surrounded by 99.9% of the people that I deal with are the most wonderful great people, great friends, they'll do anything for you and it's taken time to get that it's just an amazing place. I say this humbly and truly to the audience, if you apply and do these points that John Kaites has just espoused here it will change your life and it will change your business. I see now what you're talking about in terms of how to apply these tenants to business and to relationships, very impressed John.

John: Thank you Tony, it is a joy to be able to talk about it too and the interesting thing about the book "Fear Not" is that when I would meet with somebody individually, I would be able to go through some of these principles but not go through all of them, and the book gave me an opportunity to do it in a devotional format, where each day you read a chapter for 14 days and you get all of these principles wrapped up in one small book. It's only a hundred and ten or hundred and twenty pages long so it's easy to read and easy to consume. The downside of the book is it's not wholly entertaining, there are not a lot of great stories, and there are not a lot of times to laugh. If you use it as a tool in your life you'll find it to be an incredibly helpful tool.

Tony: And John thanks on that, I want to comment on that and by the way for the audience the full title of the book is, Fear Not and the subtitle is Two Weeks of Living Boldly into God's Authentic Confidence and that John begs the question please if you could illustrate or clarify that, what is the two weeks?

John: Yes so the two weeks, there's fourteen chapters so the way I set it up is to read a chapter each day for 14 days and by virtue of that it tries to emphasize a certain point or way of being that is the best way that you could live your life, consistent with the authentic confidence that God wants you to have. There's this great battle that happens in our head, every head has trillions of synaptic nerves that are the little nerves where all thoughts come from, and the two based thoughts that happen in everybody's brain is either fear or love. And I secularized that for the business where I call it either insecurity or authentic confidence, just so that it's not too squishy when I talk to my employees.

But it is truly fear and love and so every good decision you've ever made has come out of a place of love or God's authentic confidence, every bad decision you've ever made comes out of a place of insecurity or fear. And so every fear-based thought anger, revenge, being afraid of thinking you're not good enough, thinking you're not lovable all of those negative thoughts are optional, and Jesus makes it very clear that those thoughts are optional. That he wants you to operate out of a place of God's authentic confidence, and so it really is the great battle that we have in our own heads of how do we view the world, do we have view the world from a place of love and forgiveness and of gratitude or do we view the world out of a place of fear and insecurity and constant danger.

Somebody said once that 99% of the things you fear will never happen, but you spent 80 percent of your time thinking about them and this is just a way to help through repetition and through process it allows you to each day take the sense of what to do, and then apply it through process of prayer. And so I have prayers that at the end of each day you can go through and repeat to yourself and processes that you can use, to really exercise your mind of the things that are good. Paulie says those things that are pure, those things that are good think of them, concentrate on them. And what he's saying is let's operate from a place of love, rather than a place of fear and insecurity.

Tony: I love it. And John a little joke here, without turning off the television set every day, is it really possible to live without fear or insecurity?

John: Yes, I think it is. I think most people have come to the conclusion that they have to work around it, but I have come to the conclusion that you can eliminate it, that you literally can. The whole science of neuroplasticity which I mentioned in the book as well is proof that you can change your brain that you truly can disconnect those subconscious lies that are in your head that are fear-based and reconnect those synaptic nerves around positive thoughts and good thoughts. Our brains work that way, the science of neuroplasticity over the last 15 years has proved it. There's a couple of neurologists that weren't believers in God when they did this experiment, but they wrote a book called How God Changes your Brain, and they did a study of your brain and they found that the two of the most positive things you can do for your brain from a healthy perspective, is to pray and to have faith in God.

And it's because they were able to show in one of the experiments that they did, is to a group of folks who meditate and they examined their brain waves and those synaptic nerves while they were meditating and well good healthy things happen like their heart rate was down, and their blood pressure was down and good things for your brain happened through meditation. It wasn't until they took a group of nuns and they had them do centered prayer and they focused on praising God, listening for God and praying for that same amount of time about 30 minutes, that they realized something completely different is happening in that brain, that the brain function is operating at highest possible level. And so I believe that there's a spiritual component of that, but I also think that there's a psychological and physical component of loving God and loving others, it's the healthy thing for you to do.

Tony: This is the Tony DUrso show, just ahead to chat continues with John Kaites and Ari Evans, Fear Not and Maestro, but first it's time for us to take a short break, see you back here in just a moment.

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Tony: All right, we're back on the Tony DUrso show, today's show is with John Kaites and Ari Evans, Fear Not and Maestro, and now back to the chat with our guests.

John: And so I do believe that you can exercise fear out of your life and I work hard at it, I use prayer as the mechanism to do it and I find that it is unbelievably fun to live a life without fear and insecurity. And so when I turn on the news and something bad has happened, I recognize the bad thing that has happened, but I also put it in perspective. So I put it in perspective and I understand that just because it's on the news doesn't mean I need to be fearful of it right now, that I don't need to take that garbage on myself and let it have creative space in my brain. And then in addition to that I also have the logical knowledge that right you're living at a time that is the safest time in the history of the world, I mean from your chance of being involved in a crime

or being assaulted is less now than it has ever been anywhere in the world and also in the United States.

It's safer now than it was in the 1950s, it's safer now than it was in the 1980s, so all of that put into perspective together are ways that I look around and say you can't do anything about it. Now if there's a train coming down the tracks and you're standing in the middle of the track, you don't have to be fearful of the train but get out of the way. So we still want to react, we still want to do the things we need to do to defend ourselves, to protect ourselves. But fear and insecurity especially is an option, insecurity about yourself is an option, it's an unbelievably liberating experience and guess what Fear Not is one of the most repeated things in the Bible.

We use it as a throwaway theme, so the angel Lord appears to the Shepherd's and says fear not, I bring you good news of great joy. Forget about the fear not, but this is a message that God repeats to us over and over and over again because he knows how he built us and he knows that fear is the great enemy in our physical life here on this earth.

Tony: Wise words, sage advice John I love it and for our audience the book "Fear Not" you can get at the website [FearNotbyJohnKaites](http://FearNotbyJohnKaites.com) and I'll spell his last name K-A-I-T-E-S you'll see it in the show notes, the website is [FearNotbyJohnKaites.com](http://FearNotbyJohnKaites.com). John we definitely have to have you back because there's so much more to talk about, I don't even think we've scratched the surface or gotten to the first page on this, there's so much more.

John: By the way Tony I'd be happy to come back, but you can also easily get "Fear Not" on Amazon too, so just type in "Fear Not" by John Kaites you will find it on Amazon, it's only 11 bucks and it's worth your time and energy to read because God has a lot of cool things for you and your life.

Tony: Buy copies for your friends and send them all copies that would make a great present, John thank you so much for regaling us with these insights and I have to get into the next time, how you could write such a book without putting your personal experience into it because there's so much, but you know we're just going to have to continue on this with part 2 another time.

John: You bet Tony, thank you for having me.

Tony: My pleasure, thanks once again. And now we have Ari Evans join us, the days where a stream experience is simply a video with the chat on the side are coming to an end, Maestro enables a new category of live experiences that facilitates two-way interactions between streamers and their audiences, welcome to the show Ari, it's so great to have you.

Ari: Thank you for having me.

Tony: Ari it's quite an honor to have you and I'm really looking forward to this, because I know nothing about the business that you're in and you're so successful at it, and perhaps there's some of our audience members that don't know anything about gaming and online gaming and what Maestro does. And I really want to find out more about it and drill down, but the first things first Ari I'd love to know how did it all start for you, what's your backstory?

Ari: How did it all start, well in my whole life I've really been into gaming since I was a little kid, when I was four years old my dad bought me an NES, the original Nintendo and I like to think that that moment changed my life forever. Growing up I was always playing games with my brother and my sister and my dad and so it's always kind of a bonding thing for us. I first started to mix that with entrepreneurship when I was 12, I was selling Pokémon cards that I was pretty obsessed with on eBay, and these were like the early days of the internet, the early days of eBay. In fact, the way that I got on the internet was those old AOL CDs they used to send in the mail, my dad got one and he gave it to me and he said hey you should check this out let me know what it is, it happened to be the Internet.

Tony: That's amazing.

Ari: So I started to teach myself how to code and start to try on eBay to sell Pokémon cards and it really exploded, so I was able to learn the very basics of business, my dad kind of gave me a

very small amount of seed capital and I would go out and buy a bunch of boxes and open up the packs and then I would sell them on eBay. And sometimes each card was worth \$0.10 at cost and the rare ones would go for a hundred dollars, so it was pretty good in the margin there. And after a while a lot of people caught on to this and so the margins got driven further down and it was harder to make money there, but I thought I had established kind of a good thing so I started doing a different kind of business, I was buying video game collectibles from Japan and then I was selling them on U.S. markets and kind of just making the spread on the difference there.

So kind of similar skill, still gone with something with video games and that was fun. And the other thing I did which was a mixture of these things was I played a game called Ever Quest for a really long time, really intensely a lot of people listening might have heard of a game called World of Warcraft which is immensely popular, maybe one of the most popular games ever in history. But before it came a few other games that were sort of like the first ones to try this massively multiplayer online experience, and man I was super obsessed with that. Spent a lot of my time playing and at some point I tried to figure out if there was going to be any business opportunity there, and I found that there was.

I could kind of buy an account like a character and all my friends would come over with their PCs, they would log over to my house in the basement, it would kind of like level up a character together over the weekend and then we would sell it at the end of the weekend and kind of split the money that we've made together, so that was kind of fun. And ultimately when I applied to college I realized that I had a lot of business experience and I guess kind of a slightly punk attitude, I decided that I didn't need to go to school for business, I should go for something different like a technical degree. So I went for engineering to Cornell and when I was there I was day trading the money that I made when I was younger in tech stocks, so I really kind of fell in love with that idea and then decided I wanted to be a trader and so I applied to Goldman Sachs which is an investment bank, and I worked there for two summers as an intern and two years out of school, that was a lot of fun.

Then the market crashed and I decided I didn't really want to be in the finance industry anymore, and so I decided that I eventually wanted to build my own company, I kind of knew it at that time I was around 21, 22. And I thought the best way to do that was to become a product manager somewhere, and then for a product manager I thought that'd give me a good skill set to be a leader. So I decided that I needed to get a master's to kind of switch up my career path, ended up going to Stanford for their entrepreneurship program in the engineering school, made a great Network, learned a ton and ended up going from there to successfully be a product manager at a company called Zynga.

Now Zynga was a really interesting experience for me because it was kind of the polar opposite of what I had been used to, Ever Quest and the other games I played were hardcore, it's kind of for the nerdiest of nerds at the time anyway and you had to commit a lot of time to it and you tried to get really good, whereas the games that Zynga were making were for casual players, for the kind of the social side of things on Facebook totally different and it was a real eye-opener for me in a lot of ways. For one the company itself was a start-up, when I joined there were maybe a couple hundred people and they were growing an incredible rate, maybe like in the beginning it was like twenty or thirty people a week but by the time I left we were recruiting many more than that.

And my job there was to work on a game called City Ville, which at the time was the biggest game ever on Facebook with twenty million people playing every day and it was unbelievable to see the scale that was possible from Facebook really. And my job there was a product manager I designed features, I forecasted results, I managed the pipeline of the product and it was real incredible experience kind of drinking from a firehose, learning so much about how to build games, how to build a business around a game and just watching what a start-up does and how it grows. Unfortunately, while I was there I kind of realized after a while that the company didn't really have a plan for growth beyond the IPO, and so pretty much the day after the IPO or the company went public I quit and I had a good place to jump from there.

I had a startup accelerator out of Stanford called Start X which we were accepted into, and we decided to try to turn a bit small side project I was working on which was an electronic music blog, we tried to turn that into a business. We found out pretty quick that that wasn't really going to become a big business because blogs don't really end up becoming that big, so we decided that we wanted to build tech products and try to find a way to build something that could be really big. One thing led to another and we started working with music festivals and this was a ton of fun, because music festivals themselves are a great place to be and I loved going to them, it was cool to give back and create a product that was going to be used by the festival industry. So that was kind of where maestro was originally first born but it didn't have that name yet, it had a different name, we didn't really know what to call it.

And so at a certain point after working with Ultra Music Festival in Miami and The Electric Daisy Carnival in Las Vegas which is like a quarter million people, I think it's even more now maybe 350,000 people attended every year. After scaling up to a bunch of music festivals we realized that business was good but it had some challenges, because festivals only happen one time a year and the music industry isn't really the most innovative place right now because of a

bunch of different things going on there, different dynamics. So essentially we decided to spin off maestro as it's own brand.

Tony: This is the Tony DUrso show, just ahead the chat continues with Ari Evans, but first it's time for us to take a short break, see you back here in just a moment.

AD: We don't follow, we lead join us The Voice America Influencers Channel.

AD: Hey guys, how would you like to be a best-selling author or sell a product or service in high-volume? These are just some examples of what you can do with Clickfunnels. Get everything you need to market, sell and deliver your products and services online, without having to rely on a tech team and I just got you a free account. Check it out at [TonyDUrso.com/click](https://TonyDUrso.com/click) try it completely free and build your first funnel, you get a simple drag-and-drop web page editor, you can quickly build sales funnels that convert, there's a smart shopping cart with one-click upsells, there's email and Facebook marketing automation, in fact you get everything organized in one simple dashboard. Try it completely for free at [TonyDUrso.com/click](https://TonyDUrso.com/click) and here's to your amazing success.

AD: This is the Voice America Influencers channels, be inspired.

Intro: You're listening to the Tony DUrso show with key influencers, we'd love to hear from you via email, be sure to send questions and comments to [Tony@TonyDUrso.com](mailto:Tony@TonyDUrso.com), now back to Tony and his guests.

Tony: All right we're back on the Tony DUrso show, this segment of today's shows with Ari Evans. Ari says "my friends always refer to me as a big dreamer; I'm motivated by passion and the satisfaction of pulling off difficult feats by leading incredibly talented individuals to victory. Nothing makes me happier than watching teams build the discipline and focus to surpass expectations with relentless, high quality execution. I'm lucky to continually be inspired by my

network of close friends, family, mentors, advisors, investors and colleagues" and now back to the chat with Ari.

Ari:           And the way we came up with the name was kind of based on the core of the experience, which was this notion that you can create real time interaction in the stream. There was a technology that we had discovered which was called Firebase and it was in its early beta, but we adopted it and it gave us this cool ability to push stuff to the page and remove it from the page in real time. And so first we were thinking well how do we make a live stream interactive, like what should be interactive about it, in that case you're watching a music festival, what else do you want to do. And so one of the original ideas was well we can add a chat system, which now has become very commonplace and then we decided well what else can we do maybe we can like tell you the tour dates of the artists while they're on stage, so you can buy a ticket when you're falling in love.

                  Or maybe you can buy one of that piece artist merchandise or know where to find their new album or download a single or interact with other people through polls and trivia questions, find a schedule of what's coming up. We started to think about all these different things we could add, and the name maestro came from the idea that there's a person that's responsible for curating this experience. That role later kind of became this idea that there's like an interactive director and now the way we think about that person is it's kind of the modern equivalent of a social media manager, if someone had asked you five or six years ago or told you that you would need to hire somebody who is going to tweet small messages to your audience all day long, you may have laughed at that, like why would I ever need something like that.

                  But of course now every business needs a role like that and we feel that we're building the modern equivalent of that kind of a role for live-streaming, and as businesses start to adopt this marketing tool more and more this medium, we feel that having a person that is the maestro is the key to unlocking the real potential there.

Tony:           Live streaming is this for maestro which as I understand that originally your roots very strong in music and providing music to people, live stream, now as I understand it in terms of the curating of music, that's providing people the type of music that they like to listen to each individual person, so like everyone has their own playlist of live music. I just want to start building

up my understanding on this and perhaps catch up some of the audience members that may or may not understand to this degree as well.

Ari: Sure, so it's actually not really anything related to playlists or anything that you would get on Spotify or something like that, we were really about live video experiences. In other words, there's a music festival which might be a one to three days long and there's all kinds of different musicians and artists performing there, and we want to stream that kind of produced video experience of that to an online audience. In a lot of cases you have maybe 50,000 people attending an event and you have millions of people watching it online, now the whole evolution of this space and really a lot of live streams today are really just a TV broadcast that's put on the internet, in other words it's a TV first product, what does that mean? A TV first product means that it's a one-way broadcast; you don't know who's on the other end so you create an experience that sort of is for everyone.

But the beauty of live streaming is that since it's delivered to the Internet, is that you can know who's on the other end and because of that you can tailor the experience to that person. So our goal with the world and this is true in music and in eSports and gaming which we'll talk about in a minute and in really any other interactive media format is to try to make an internet first version of this broadcast product. In general, fans and viewers are starting to prefer and prioritize interactivity with other viewers and other fans, more so than even like highly produced content. The Millennials in general value authenticity more than this high value production quality, they just want like access to their favorite stars, they want to be recognized by them if they can, they want their chat message to appear on the screen that status is very important and that's true with any community.

So the reason why we, so maybe I'll give a primer on you know what is eSports, what is competitive gaming, what is this phenomenon that's happening, well let's talk about some of the facts. First of all the gaming industry is the biggest entertainment industry in the world, it passed the movie industry many years ago I think in 2013, 2014 we might have to fact-check that a little bit but it was around then. And I think now I've heard that it might be bigger than the music and the movie industry combined, it is estimated that there are 2.2 billion gamers in the world which is pretty much one of the biggest segments of people that could exist on the planet, so it's a massive population. And the big thing that's changed is that gaming has become mainstream and become pretty acceptable, and part of what has made this grow is the notion that people watch each other play games.

Now why on earth would people watch each other play games that seems maybe foreign for some of them maybe older viewers who are listening in or audience members, essentially there's two main reasons why people do it, for one usually the way that the content is broadcast you're actually watching the game that they are playing, but you're also watching them kind of like in a silhouette in the front and the foreground of the video, so you're seeing sort of their reactions. They might be talking while the game is being played so they're kind of becoming like talk show hosts or entertainers.

Tony: I don't know this stuff so I may not even say the right words, so please forgive me. I'm on the internet, I'm playing this game and I can watch other people on that screen, at the bottom of the screen play the game and I can see what they're doing and playing the game?

Ari: That's right, you might not even be playing the game at all yourself, and you might just be watching other people. In fact, people do this on average on a platform called twitch for close to an hour to two hours a day, so it's a pretty significant behavior.

Tony: I am a little confused by it and by the way I produced a couple of pilots for a TV show and I was looking at platforms, I looked a little bit at twitch and it didn't seem the right place, plus I don't understand it like people like you understand it so I didn't go further with that. But I don't quite get what makes it so popular, so I'm really sorry to ask these dumb questions but perhaps there's other members of the audience that'll raise their hand with me, but why is this important, how does this get so big, what's the catch, what do people get out of it Ari?

Ari: Well, I mean simply put it's a new form of entertainment, because it's much in the same way that you would tune in to listen to a sports talk show host. They're talking about the game and kind of discussing all the different done around the game, it's kind of similar to that so that's part of it and the second part of it is that it's aspirational, a lot of the people that stream either they're very good at being entertaining or they're very good from a skill perspective at the game. So you can clearly understand the idea of an entertainer and the talk show host kind of idea, that's similar to what this show is and many other shows that are successful.

The other side of it is that again it's aspirational, you want to try to become better at the game that you're playing, so you'll watch someone who's really good and try to pick up on the skills and the tips and the tricks that make them as good as they are, so that then when you're done watching it you can load up the game and try those things yourself.

Tony: Ari are these people doing a purely for entertainment or is there any kind of a monetization or business side to it?

Ari: That's a great question, so eSports is kind of the phrase that has been used to encapsulate the competitive professional side of gaming and it's been going for many years, in various forms but nowadays it's actually pretty big and there are large sums of money that can be won, either in tournaments or through minimum salaries that these players are getting by being on these teams. So what's happening is eSports is kind of trying to follow with the traditional sports model, teams are forming up, teams have a roster of players, those players are given minimum salaries, they have agents, they have coaches, they have physicians the whole suite of things is coming into place and then those teams compete against each other in a tournament and in a league. The leagues are typically organized by the game developers and then there are cash prizes that are associated with winning the championship.

And the other form of monetization that's coming from this is sponsorship, so a lot of big brands are realizing that this is kind of like the coveted demographic, its young people, teenagers and then a little older like 18 to 30. And those have very discretionary income that they're spending and those are the consumers that they want to adopt their products for life and so advertisers are getting smarter and realizing that this is a place that they need to be, so you're seeing enormous brands come into the space, I mean some of the biggest in the world.

From McDonald's, Pepsi, Coca-Cola, MasterCard, Buffalo Wild Wing, Snickers I mean Arby's all kinds of things across the board, across different categories and that money coming into the space is also feeling it even more. So I'd say now if you're probably in high school or middle school these days, I'm sure a lot of them want to eventually be a streamer, like that's going to be their aspirational goal of their occupation.

Tony: How does that aspiration tie into hey I'm going to do this for a living, because he's so good he's like a sports player on TV or out hearing let's call it the real world or the physical world?

Ari: Yes, so there's really like two models, if you're going to be an entertainer and you're just going to be funny or be creative or whatever your stick is, those guys are typically supported through subscriptions and donations. So people can subscribe to these streamers for let's say five dollars a month, and subscriptions contribute to that person's livelihood and encourage them and keep them running to continue making content all the time. And donations also are similar, when people make donations on a platform like twitch or ours then they are kind of shouted out by the streamer, and that's a really cool thing. It's like it's almost like if you call into a radio show and you hear your voice on the radio, it like makes your weak, so this whole mechanic of donating is one way to kind of achieve that same buzz or that same status, and so that's kind of the entertainer's side of things.

Some of these people are making really good money doing it; I mean some of the top streamers in the world even if they're not competitive are making hundreds of thousands of dollars a month from this. Now granted that's only at the very top echelon the streamers, but again young people might believe that they can aspire to be something like that, so that's that side. The other side is the competitive side, if you set your mind on being a competitive player, much in the same way that when you're young you might decide you want to be an NBA player or a football player or something like that, then you're going to put your all into that sport, you're going to train all the time and at some point you'll find out if you're going to be on that professional level or if you're not quite going to ever be on that level.

Now the interesting difference in the competitive side for eSports today is just the age difference, because a lot of these players are between the ages of 16 and 22, 24 and after that there's actually a little bit of burnout. It's quite different from traditional sports where it definitely skews obviously a little bit higher than that, so it's a pretty interesting set of dynamics, but these players they're considered athletes actually, now officially by the US government and many other national governments. And so their regiment is pretty aggressive, in terms of maybe playing for eight hours a day, watching videos of other teams playing and trying to understand how they can beat them, enhancing their skills, doing various training, keeping their selves mentally and physically also in good shape to compete in a pretty stressful environment like high pressure situation, so that's kind of that side, the competitive side.

Tony: Ari I'm going to guess and you can correct me with any facts on this, as the preponderance of the players are 16 to 22, I'm going to hazard a guess that they're living at home, they don't have to worry about sustenance earning any income, they can just do this purely for learning, entertaining themselves and perhaps seed if they want to make a career out of it and actually do something with it in the future. But they're at the point where there's no risk in them doing it, it doesn't matter if they make any income or not.

Ari: I guess it doesn't matter in the sense that they might be supported by their family at that point in time, but they can match to make an income. So a lot of what's happening these days is that as the whole ecosystem and industry becomes more formalized, a lot of these players are being given minimum salaries which could even be a \$50,000 in some cases. So like the NBA 2k League which is their eSports league for the NBA, the teams are paying minimum salaries around that range.

Tony: What would you say are the biggest sports?

Ari: The biggest eSports are not the games that are emulating traditional sports, the biggest eSports out there in the world are League of Legends, which is very popular title, Counter Strike which is almost a 12 or 13 year old game, it's a first-person shooter game. The biggest game right now in the whole world is called Fortnite, which is just become a make a cultural phenomenon, if you ask any kid on the street if they know what that is, that'll probably tell you it's really an amazing thing , that's kind of like Hunger Games. So the cool thing about eSports is that it's kind of like sports, each sport has its own rules and its own players and its own dynamics and politics and rules and whatnot, and eSports is the same way.

The eSports games are competitive, so in other words it's not everyone against something like the computer, the boss or something it's everyone against everyone. Like for example in counter-strike it's six on six and the team that is left standing wins. In fortnight it's literally like the Hunger Games, you start off in a world map everyone kind of rides in on a crazy school bus in the sky and parachutes down into the island, and then over time in the island there's a storm that's creeping in the island that's pushing inward, so there's less and less space left for the players to kind of be and survive and they're trying to knock each other out until

there's only one person standing and that person wins. If you've seen the Hunger Games it is very reminiscent of that movie, so each game has its own rules.

Tony: It sounds like a lot of fun.

Ari: It is a lot of fun.

Tony: I could totally see why 2.2 billion people are playing this, this is really interesting. It's such a whole new world you don't see it walking down the street, watching TV, watching a movie you don't necessarily see it though you may see snippets, because this is a world kind of hidden in people's homes on their computers, on their cell phones and so forth.

Ari: Well you know what that has been true in the past but it's really changing pretty quickly. ESPN, they've been carrying a bunch of different eSports content, most recently there's a game called Over Watch which they carried the finals which are pretty amazing, and they've done the street fighter tournaments and a bunch of other content that they're streaming, even Disney has put some smash brothers, that's another game, content on the Disney Channel, so you're actually seeing a lot more there. And the place I think you can find it most is if you go to a real event in person, so eSports events are starting to sell out stadiums, I actually went to an event in China in Beijing which was the League of Legends World Finals last year.

This is an Olympic Stadium it's got to be at least 60,000, I think close to a hundred thousand people and the audience was split down the middle male/female, but fully packed like you couldn't even see a single available seat. In China and in Korea eSports is definitely bigger than any traditional sports that's going on there, it's actually more like the national pastime just related to the eSports world and we're wondering if that is ever going to happen over here in the States, jury's still out on that one. But it is picking up tremendous steam and I can tell you some startling facts like for example, more people watch the League of Legends World Finals than the NBA Finals, from a streaming perspective globally.

That's one of the really unique things about eSports is that the audiences are global from day one, which is kind of different from tradition sports where the NFL mostly has a

presence in the states and too much elsewhere of course they are trying to change that. But everyone's playing League of Legends around the world so that built in audience is going to necessarily be bigger than you know what it might be domestically, and when all those people are tuning in from around the world to watch that creates these like fever pitches and just enormous viewing numbers and those are the things that the brands want to get around, associate their brand with because of the reach opportunity.

Tony:           If someone has any questions or wants to find out more about maestro, they go to Maestro.io?

Ari:           That's right, and I mean our particular part to play in this whole ecosystem, I could just probably mention that briefly, is we really want and care, we really care about creating the best viewing experience possible for the fans that also deliver value to the businesses that are creating those experiences for the fans, because we think if we can create something that's valuable to both it's going to just propel the whole ecosystem forward and create either new games and new opportunities or provide more stadiums and more local access for people to go experience these things. And we're really just bullish on the whole thing, we're really happy to be a part of it and we've been very fortunate to work with a lot of the biggest brands in the space so far like the game developers and the leagues and the teams.

                  If anyone has any questions you can find out more about it on our website, but we're really excited about the value that we're driving to the space and how we're playing some role in shaping its evolution.

Tony:           I'm very impressed and I thank you so much for taking the time and sharing this with us and our audience. Maestro.io, this is Ari Evans, thank you so much for sharing this with us.

Ari:           You're very welcome, thank you for your time.

Tony:           And for my amazing audience thanks so much for listening. Remember: Success awaits those who persevere and remain steadfast despite the odds. Be Righteous. Join me on the next episode of The Tony DUrso show.

Outro:           We hope you've enjoyed this week's edition of the Tony DUrso with his key influencers, be sure to tune in again next Friday at 4 p.m. Eastern Time, 1 p.m. Pacific time on the Voice America influencers Channel.