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**Chad Chancellor:** Welcome to this week's episode of the Next Move Group We Are Jobs podcast. This is Chad Chancellor, co-founder of Next Move Group.

**Alex Metzger:** And Alex Metzger, the other co-founder of Next Move Group.

**Chad Chancellor:** So, we're coming to you today exciting times for our company. We launched a website this week and if you go to it, you can learn all about really what we do and how we do

it, but we really want to do a podcast today to talk about why we do what we do. Why we founded the company and what really drives our mission that's driving our growth and so Alex is in New Orleans today. We're recording this on Mardi Gras or Mardi Gras on Fat Tuesday. So, Zulu is rolling right now which is one of my favorite parades. People not from New Orleans are not going to know what that means, but that's one of my favorite parades. Maybe we'll catch a coconut. Have you ever caught a coconut?

**Alex Metzger:** I have never caught a coconut. I have caught a shoe, but that's really the only--

**Chad Chancellor:** Oh, you caught a Muses shoe, yes. If you come to New Orleans for Mardi Gras, the Muses shoe is a craved possession and Alex caught one his first time.

**Alex Metzger:** But the day is still young. Happy Mardi Gras everybody and I'm going to be out there chasing coconuts pretty soon.

**Chad Chancellor:** It is young. It's 11 o'clock on Mardi Gras day and we're working. So, see, that proves that we're really interested in our mission which is creating economic growth for small to mid-sized companies, communities, and non-profit organizations. Most of you have seen recently our business has really grown. I think we grew 70% last year and so we've just launched a new website really tying together all of what we do and it's [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com). We will probably say that two or three times encouraging traffic to go there and when you go there, you can really see how and what we do, but today, we want to talk about the why.

Our most listened to podcast so far in this series was when you and I did the interviewing tips. So, since you're in Mardi Gras we thought we'd sit down. We launched this website this week and really go over why we do what we do. So, if you go to our website, you're going to see a big American flag waving and it talks about how we want to create economic growth for small to mid-sized companies, communities, and nonprofit organizations. That really drives our decisions and that's our mission.

We both got kind of stories we bring to that table. For me, I was raised in a small southern town; not an interstate in sight, a 5,000-person town and my dad worked at a Sunbeam plant and overnight the plant was closed. Not only did he work there, his twin brother worked there-- who just passed away-- my aunt and uncle worked there and overnight, the plant was basically reduced

to nothing but a warehouse. It's still there today, but there's only like 10 employees and all the jobs-- It had 700 employees and all the jobs were shifted to China.

So, when I get up every day, I really think about how do we help small to mid-sized communities grow with small to mid-sized companies? What I'm interested is our communities attracting those companies who are going to invest a whole lot of money and locate somewhere and they won't move to China to save a penny. Maybe they are still family-owned \$500 million in revenue. That really is what drives me. So, I get up every day thinking about really how can we create economic growth for those type of folks.

**Alex Metzger:** Well, my family in '80s and '90s, they were a large family of entrepreneurs. They owned restaurants and the main family business was meat packing plants in southern Illinois and western Kentucky. They were very successful with this meat packing plants until Walmart and other big-bucks retailers kind of got into that industry and really changed the market to where they couldn't compete.

So, they had to shut all those plants down and it really affected my family and taught me a lesson at the young age that to be a small business owner, you really have to be nimble and understand that there are outside factors that are always going to change your business model and can change your livelihood in a matter of a year or two.

So, when I got into economic development, I was really drawn to helping small manufacturing companies in that side of it grow and adapt and find workers and be profitable. And so now that I'm on the consulting side with Chad, the site selection component of it and being able to figure out that puzzle is something that's very, very important to me and I trace that back to when I was younger.

**Chad Chancellor:** And I'm telling you right now as we were really honing our mission and figuring out how do we get this on paper, so this has always been our mission. This has always been in my mind probably more so in my gut feeling, but we're trying to figure out how do we get this on paper, which is now the website that you can see if you go to [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com).

We totally believe that the small to mid-sized companies, communities, and non-profit organizations are vital to America's growth even in the big cities. We're here in New Orleans,

urban city. I can tell you a lot of what's driving the growth in New Orleans right now are these small to mid-sized non-profit organizations, not just chambers of commerce and economic development education organizations and so forth. So, we really want to help all of those type organizations to be successful because that is going to grow the American economy.

**Alex Metzger:** And all this came about during the Goldman Sachs' program that we went through. We always knew that we had three different sectors of our business and we could understand how they all tied in to each other, but the thing that took us a long time to wrap our head around is how can we create messaging that ties all these in together? How can we put this on a website and show everybody our movement is to create jobs all over the United States through multiple factors and we can do that in many ways and we're very, very proud of this website and urge you all to go again [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com). Go check it out and I really think it's going to hit home why we do what we do.

**Chad Chancellor:** And listen at what you just said. So, Goldman Sachs they chose us in 2017 to do a small business accelerator. So, they try to take stage 2 growth companies and accelerate them to bigger levels and I would say it's worked. We've added more employees since they helped us which is their goal. So, Brandon and Gabby if you're listening to this, you can thank Goldman Sachs.

They really took their expertise and trained us and helped us figure out messaging for the small to mid-sized companies and non-profit organizations and communities and so on. That was kind of a turning point for our business. We did that in 2017 and in '18, we were pretty flat because we were really reorganizing to do everything they told us to do. We didn't lose money, but we really didn't have that big leap and then last year, we went straight up before we had this website. So, we finally had enough money we could invest in a good website which is what we have done.

**Alex Metzger:** I know, but now you're letting people know that it's 2020 and it took us two years to get a website built.

**Chad Chancellor:** So, that's two years. I remember sitting in St. Louis-- in our office in St. Louis on a cold night. I was there by myself. Emron worked for us at the time. You weren't there and I was sitting in that office until 2 in the morning trying to work on these messages. So, a special thank you to Goldman Sachs and the 10,000 Small Businesses Program.

**Alex Metzger:** And everybody that builds a website knows that the content can get stale very quickly and you always have to be updating it and it's quite a daunting process. However, our issue was really not with the content and updating it. It really took us two years to figure out exactly how to tell people what we've had in our hearts and guts the entire time.

**Chad Chancellor:** Yes, it used to be hard. People would ask me what do we do when we first started our business and I would try to explain-- Zulu is going by if you hear something blaring loud. It distracts Alex, but we will just power on through. You should come to New Orleans sometime for Mardi Gras if you've never been.

I used to have a hard time giving our 30-second pitch because we do a little site selection, executive search-- you say economic development the average Joe doesn't know what you're talking about. The average Joe will look at you like what is that? So, really what Goldman Sachs helped us do is hone that down into what we do is create economic growth for small to mid-sized companies, communities, and non-profit organizations. We do that in multiple ways that you can find out when you go on our website, but that's what we do.

Most people when I tell them that now, they get it. They may wonder well, how do you do it, but they understand okay, that's what you guys do. So, they helped us immensely with that and if you go to our website, you'll see that really all over it. So, now you sort of understand our mission.

We're going to talk a little bit about how we do what we do and really what we do. We're not going to spend a whole lot of time on it though because you can go to our website and see that and I will say our team has worked really hard to make this website highly interactive. There are videos and webinars you can watch on there and all kinds of different ways that you can interact with us. So, if you really want to know how and what we do, you go on [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com) and you can see all of those services.

Real quick, I want to touch on each one and hit them quickly. So, 1) site selection work. We've probably helped between 10 and 20 companies do site selection services and those have really scaled. We're doing some of the biggest searches right now. How I tie that back to our mission is I really believe if you recruit a small to mid-sized manufacturer as opposed to a big company how has money that they can-- I have seen companies literally build plants, spend \$1 billion and never operate them. I've seen that happen from the Fortune 100 companies.

If you recruit the small to mid-sized ones, it's our belief that once they put down roots there, you're going to have them. Certainly, markets change, people lose contracts, these things happen, but we think it ought to be a big part of an economic developer's recruiting mission, a state's recruiting mission to recruit small to mid-sized manufactures because when those companies spend \$20 million or \$30 million. They're not going to move to China to save a penny when the election doesn't go the way they want.

**Alex Metzger:** Exactly. They put down roots in the community. It's very unlikely that a small family-owned company is going to move to Mexico to save a couple of dollars on labor or whatever the reason. We always use the old baseball analogy, but it really is applicable here that the singles and doubles are kind of what you want to score a run. The home runs are always nice and they are flashy, but a couple of 50 jobs and 150 job plants are really going to put down roots in the community, get involved in the local Little League and in the school system and really grow your community and that's something that we want to see happen.

**Chad Chancellor:** And I think back to my dad's story with Sunbeam. Sunbeam; big company flashed with cash, they had every reason in the world to move the plant to China, but what they were making was blankets that were very cheap and so they could make them wherever they wanted to. So, we like to see folks recruit companies that put their manufacturing in a big-- we do a lot of work in towns that maybe don't have an interstate and I tell them you got to recruit something that makes big heavy stuff that didn't run a lot of trucks. You can still recruit manufacturing. You just can't have a whole lot of trucks going back and forth. So, I think about my community where I'm from. That would actually work there.

Also, I will say what I enjoy about site selection is we're able to really bring the process to Fortune 100 companies use. John Sisson joined our team and he runs our site selection projects. He joined us in 2016 and he's a member of the site selectors' guild. They win some big organizations. So, he's got a really heck of a process and one that all the big-- he's done huge petrochemical deals that he's able to use that process to really help our small to mid-sized companies use the same process the big companies use to drive results for them.

And so, if we find them locations where they're going to be profitable, they're going to employ more people. It's going to be better for the economy of the United States and so, I'm really excited

about what he's done and how we're able to use the process the big companies use to help our targeted industries or the small to mid-sized companies.

**Alex Metzger:** Exactly and most site location firms use a very similar model. However, it's all based around lowering operational cost and finding the smartest place to do business.

**Chad Chancellor:** That's how good site selectors we are. We chose New Orleans and St. Louis for our offices and look how that's turned out. New Orleans couldn't have worked out any better. Number one, I love it here. It has everything in the world you would want to do, but it's worked out for us and it ties really with our mission. Did you know there are really no Fortune 100 companies here but there is electric fiber. New Orleans is built of family-owned businesses, lots of them and so it's worked out great. Nearly all of our clients come here for something and you are based in St. Louis which is close to a lot of our manufacturers. We've helped a lot of companies in Illinois and we've done work there in St. Louis, Kansas City and so forth.

**Alex Metzger:** St. Louis definitely has some larger companies, but they also have the second largest Mardi Gras celebration which I saw a lot of pictures on social media from this Saturday. They had good weather up there and had a good time in Soulard.

**Chad Chancellor:** Mobile would argue you over that.

**Alex Metzger:** Let them argue.

**Chad Chancellor:** Mobile would argue over that. Mobile has probably got the second. St. Louis probably has the third, but make no mistake, the first is right here rolling by my window right now. I think Rex is about to roll. Rex is the king of Mardi Gras. So, let's transition now to our executive searches which really have scaled. Folks that are on our email list are probably getting tired of seeing it. We're sending out an email about once a week with a new executive search.

What I'm excited about that is we have grown out from just the economic development businesses to other businesses that support executive search. So, now we're doing ports and firework companies and schools and we did the World Trade Center which is a trade organization. It is sort of a can to executive search. City manager, county manager, and so forth because we really believe that an economic developer cannot be successful unless they have a team of people surrounding them that are pro-business.

You can put the best economic developer in the world in a community and if they don't have the city manager behind them, the electric company behind them, how in the world are they going to be successful? And so what we're really doing is yes, we do the executive searches for economic developers, but we're growing that business and it's a focus of ours. We want to surround economic developers with business development-minded people.

**Alex Metzger:** Exactly. So, pro-development officials I think is key here. It's definitely part of our movement to grow the U.S. economy is to find people that are very pro-development minded. Whether it's a port director, whether it's your local non-profit, your Chamber of Commerce people, we want to build an entire team in your community of people that want to see pro development happening in your community.

**Chad Chancellor:** We also offer various economic development products and they are designed to make an economic developer's job easier. We will make their lives easier. It's not an easy job. Everybody who listens to this knows that I was an economic developer. So, we have designed products. If you go to our website [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com) and click on the economic development products page, you're going to see 10 or 15 products. Every one of them are designed to make your life easier whether it's to help you create prospects, deal with your board. They are not 200-page strategic plans. They are designed to make your life easier.

**Alex Metzger:** Right. We definitely want to create products that have action items, not a large strategic plan that's going to sit on the shelf. We want to deliver something that has definable action items that you can implement quickly whether it's a virtual building program that most of you have seen by now that really helps you save money and still use a spec building as bait to get prospects in town or a targeted industry study.

What we really do is build a sales and marketing piece that you can put right on your website or develop into PDF formats to hand out to prospects. We want to look at everything from the sales side. Now, we'll hand you a document that has your weaknesses and stuff in it too, but we don't want to publicly do that. We want to make your job as easy as possible so you can be selling all the time.

**Chad Chancellor:** Yes. Our whole emphasis is putting development in economic development, business development techniques, online marketing techniques. If you've seen our website, if

you've listened to our podcast, you probably know we're pretty good at online marketing and so what we want to do is really help economic developers. Most of them have small staffs, small budgets; help them use whatever they have to really make their life easier.

We also do executive searches and a lot of times, the board members will tell us well, we just feel like our economic developer waits for the state to bring them something. They need to go get something on their own. And so, we hear that over and over. We know how to go get it on your own. We get our own site selection prospects ourselves.

We know how to do that and so, part of really what gets me excited are helping economic developers with cost effective programs. Most of our things are going to be a whole lot cheaper than a 500-page strategic plan and they're going to deliver results for you. If you want a good strategic plan, we know lots of good firms that do that work. I've got several that popped right up my mind that I would recommend highly. That's just not that we do.

We want to come in, quickly give you something that's going to move the needle in some regard whether it's helping you with the board, helping with elected officials or some kind of marketing.

**Alex Metzger:** So, we urge you to go to [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com), click on the ED products page and just click around and if there's any way that we can help you out with anything, there's plenty of interactive buttons on there that you can reach out to us instantly and message us or just give us a call and we'd love to sit down and talk to you about ways that we could help you.

**Chad Chancellor:** Yes, and as we wrap this up because it is time to go, this is the last day of Mardi Gras. Folks following me on Facebook know that I've been doing this for about a week now. So, it's time to go enjoy our last 12 hours of Mardi Gras. I don't know if folks know this or not. At midnight tonight, the cops come through Bourbon Street and clear out the bars. Have you ever been on Bourbon Street?

**Alex Metzger:** It is fascinating. I tell people from an economic development mindset, it is amazing to see not only how efficient they are at closing the whole city down in a matter of minutes but they can sweep all the trash from every street onto one street and pick it up within an hour or two and that's what I find interesting; how quickly they can get all those drunk people out into their hotels and the trash cleaned up.

**Chad Chancellor:** So, we've only got 11 hours and 53 more minutes to enjoy Mardi Gras. So, we're going to have to wrap it up, but let me end with encouraging you to go to [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com). On every page on there, we've got webinars and they're typically 10-20 minutes really telling you how we can help you in that service whether its-- I think we've got the top six ways we can help an economic developer be successful. We've got the top five ways we help hire city managers. Just browse around. We've got some 10-20 minute webinars on there. We also got some one-minute videos. A lot of people don't have the patience for 10-20 minutes, but you can browse around in there and really see how we do all our services.

**Alex Metzger:** We also list all of our current open executive searches on there and even if one of those searches doesn't register for you, we want to make sure when you reach out to us and let us know if you're needing any. If you're looking for other opportunities send us your resume in an email that we will keep on file and reach out to you if we think we might have the right fit.

**Chad Chancellor:** And we have grown almost entirely to this point by word of mouth and online marketing. So, now I think we've got a new website out there, we encourage you send this around to people that may be interested in us. A lot of our ideas come from people like you saying hey, you ought to consider this. Our mission is to grow the economy for small to mid-sized companies, communities, and non-profit organizations.

So, you could call us up and say hey, I need help with this. We may never have thought about it, but if we really think about it, if you come up with something and you think we're the firm for it and it's not on our website, you call us. If it's going to create economic growth for small to mid-sized companies, communities, and nonprofit organizations, we'll do this. So, we'll wrap it up there and go and enjoy our Mardi Gras. Again, go to [thenextmovegroup.com](http://thenextmovegroup.com) to see what all we do and happy Mardi Gras.

**Alex Metzger:** Happy Mardi Gras, everybody.

[Music]