

Podcast “Filming in Portugal. See the big picture” | Season 2

Transcription of the episode 3 with Tony Gonçalves

[00:00:14 Martin Dale]: So I'd like to welcome everyone to the podcast “Filming in Portugal. See the big picture”, an initiative of the Portugal Film Commission. I'm the host, Martin Dale, I'm a journalist with *Variety*. And today we're delighted to have as our guest, Tony Gonçalves, who is of Portuguese origin, moved to the United States at a tender age of four years old and has had a diverse career with AT&T, with WarnerMedia and is now the founder and CEO of his own company, The Evrose Group, which is launching and involved in multiple initiatives and in particular is interested in exploring initiatives linking or linked to Portugal.

And during the discussion, we're going to be talking about what he's done in the past and what he's doing in the present, and future plans. So perhaps, Tony, I gave a very quick summary, but explain a bit your own dynamic of your career and how you came to the current position with the Evrose Group.

[00:01:14 Tony Gonçalves]: Martin, really nice to be here. It's a great honour. And an exciting time in our industry to be talking a little bit about the past, present and the future. So I certainly appreciate that opportunity.

I have a career in media spanning about 30 years at various parts of the value chain, if you will. I started in the distribution side of the business and at that point, it the largest distributor in the world, Direc TV, where I quickly sort of moved from running a sales organisation, to being the expert in digital, and mobile. And the disruptions that were happening in our industry, which positioned me really well when AT&T came knocking on the door to acquire us.

And then I went over to AT&T and was the head of strategy for the merged company. And one of the big strategies was AT&T's desire to vertically integrate into media beyond distribution, which led ultimately to the acquisition of Warner. At which point I was CEO of a company called Otter Media, which AT&T and Peter Chernin had formed, which then got acquired into, or integrated, if you will, into Warner Media. And right around that time, we were really readying to pivot into streaming.

And I then got the opportunity to launch HBO Max, to lead the team that launched HBO Max into the market. And then I thought I was out of a job. It was in the midst of the pandemic. Jason Coller came in as CEO. He was much more of a streaming expert than I was. But Jason then came and said “Hey, we'd really like you to be the chief revenue officer for the company. And, you know, essentially run all commercial aspects of our business.”

And so I took the role of chief revenue officer until the company got acquired. And that was about almost three years ago now, which is when I pivoted and sort of turned to trying to find a way to sort of marry my profession and some purpose and passion, which is what ultimately led to the Evrose group.

[00:03:42 Martin]: I'm curious of the names of these entities you've been involved with, like Otter and Evrose. Just curious to know the origin of the names because you came up with them, right?

[00:03:52 Tony]: So, Otter, I inherited, and I believe Otter was the codename for the deal, for the transaction between the Chernin Group and AT&T at the time. And I think it really was OTT, over the top video. And we decided to keep the name because it was a parent company, it wasn't really a brand. And then Evrose, a bit of a funny story, but the net of it is my wife's name is Rosemary, my daughter is Olivia Rose, and it's a play on that.

[00:04:28 Martin]: Very good. Well, a good, good reason. And the link with Portugal. So this is a sort of returning to your native roots, as it were. And you're very interested in what's the possibilities. And you've been involved as consulting advisor, in particular the Impresa group and initiatives like the first edition of the Tribeca Festival [in Lisbon]. And we can talk a bit about Tribeca in Lisbon and talk about what's happening also next year. So why is Portugal an interesting place in terms of your core business at the moment?

[00:05:04 Tony]: You know, I read a book as I was leaving, as I was prepping to leave the industry, and the journey that I had been on, called the *Second Mountain*. It's a great book, and it led me to a lot of introspection. Right? Like, you spend all of this time in your life just trying to get to the top, right? To get to the summit. But the reality is, once you get there, you've sort of accomplished what you've wanted to accomplish, and you're back in the valley. And defining that next climb is much more important, than defining that first one, because the first one wasn't really defined.

[00:05:45 Martin]: You knew where you had to go.

[00:05:46 Tony]: Yeah, yeah. And so, um, I reflected on that whole concept a whole lot. And, you know, I'd always been at my best when I felt the purpose at work, when I had a passion for what I was doing. And my culture and where I'm from and the country that gave me life had always been a real passion for me. And so, it was at that moment when I sort of stepped back and I said, you know, the European media space tends to be a couple of years behind the US. And if I can take what I've learned over the course of 25 years and apply it to a small market like Portugal, one small decision or impact or relationship could make a material difference in either a company, an executive, or an entrepreneur.

And that's really ultimately what it was. I just sort of stepped back and I said, my second climb here is going to be a bit more purposeful. And it's going to be really aiding folks from my native Portugal in playing on a more global stage.

[00:07:05 Martin]: And obviously, you can't get into details of exactly what you're doing. But on a general level, Portugal obviously had a 50 year dictatorship and then took the years, joined the European Union, but lived a certain level of isolation, we could say. Within the Portuguese speaking world there was a certain dynamic. But I think it's very much come onto the radar or internationally and certainly for America, people talking about moving and people are moving to Portugal. There's a language barrier on the one side, but there's a great interest in the culture. As I say, I'm sure you can't get into specifics, but what opportunities are available?

[00:07:51 Tony]: I look at Portugal and I see a country that has an incredibly innovative spirit. I look at a culture that has always looked for ways to expand beyond its borders, going back to the discoverers. I look at a highly educated population and I look at a highly proficient English language population. And, you know, it's not that much farther from New York than New York is to LA. Right. And so very well geographically situated. And so I look at that not only in media, but I look at that for business in general.

And if you can tap into that innovative spirit that's sort of highly proficient English language population and the location. I mean, look, I'm here in New York and you're in Portugal and it's not that late for you. And it's midday for me. The time zones are actually quite... And so if you can sort of pull all of that together, and in sort of a more digital world and a world without borders, I actually think we could tap into those resources in Portugal. And help Portuguese people and businesses scale in a way that historically we couldn't. And so, that's sort of the opportunity. But that's why you're seeing not just in the media business while you're seeing a country like Portugal, bring 10, 11 unicorns to life. The health tech company Sword, for example, it's a Portuguese founder, an innovator. It's a Portuguese company. I use it.

And there's so many more examples. And so I think we live in a borderless world, and Portugal has the ingredients to be a much bigger player in it.

[00:10:07 Martin]: I'm curious, within your own... Obviously born in Portugal and so effectively Portuguese. We were chatting in Portuguese before we began the podcast, now in English. You moved to the United States with your family when you were four, but you carried on going back, I presume. And presumably at home, there must be talking in Portuguese as well. You very much had dual culture, as it were. How much of the Portuguese side has shaped your life? I'm curious because you must be channeling that to what you're doing now.

[00:10:42 Tony]: Thank you for that question, Martin. You know, I left Portugal when I was just about to turn four years old. And for a long time, my family and I put a lot of effort into assimilating and adapting. And there was a point by my mid-teens where I felt a lot more American than I felt Portuguese. But the Portuguese culture was always in me, you know. I call myself a zero-generation immigrant, right?

The food was all there. The big family gatherings were all there. The dances at the Portuguese Civic Association were there. And so the culture was always very much part of who I was and my upbringing. And it's now a big part of my kids' lives as well. I mean, we go back to Portugal as a family once a year. We spend two weeks, one week in our little village where I was born, and another week exploring our country and learning more about the wonderful culture that we're part of. And so Portugal and the Portuguese culture is core to who we are and core to who I am.

[00:12:06 Martin]: And at home you also speak in Portuguese or just in English?

[00:12:09 Tony]: So I'm fortunate enough that my wife is Portuguese as well, the first generation Portuguese-American. We tend to speak 80% English and 20% Portuguese here at home. But we're still fortunate, I'm still fortunate to have my parents and we're fortunate to have Rosemary's dad. And so there's a lot of conversation in Portuguese, indeed.

[00:12:33 Martin]: And what you see of, coming to Portuguese media... Partly from the language and partly from the traditions. I would say probably in cinema, in a very niche auteur films... Obviously the late Manoel de Oliveira, Miguel Gomes. Now, there are certain niche levels where there's circulation of films. But for a lot of production that's in Portuguese, that's coming from Portugal, there's a challenge to get into that international market. And I'm sure that's the focus of what you're advising. What potential do you think? What challenges are there for Portugal getting a bigger imprint, a bigger audience beyond its own borders?

[00:12:24 Tony]: Yeah, that's a really, really great question. I think at the core of it all is the story, right? And then it's who, the audience for whom you're making the story. And then it's the investment to make that story. It's very commonly known that Portuguese cinema tends to be

made for Portugal. And it's fairly limited in a small country, fairly limited in budget, which then limits its ability to travel. And so I think we're in a world now where, whether the story is Portuguese, Spanish or Italian, it does travel. And packaging it and producing it in a way where it can indeed travel. Culturally there are nuances, right? And there are things that appeal to the 10 million Portuguese residents, with a little twist, can appeal to 100 million people, right? And so I think that's the opportunity. How do we take the raw material of the stories that might originate in Portugal and put them on a more global stage.

Look, you have a great series in *Turn of the Tide - Rabo de Peixe*, with an incredible actor, José Condessa, who is now on a global stage. That's a great example, right? We've two seasons and I think they've announced their third. I think they've announced their third. Which just indicates how that story could have taken place anywhere and could have been made anywhere. But it's a Portuguese story, and it was produced in a way that had a bit more global appeal.

[00:15:23 Martin]: And also obviously Portugal, since more or less 2017, 2018, has been attracting more international productions through the Cash Rebate scheme and now has a Cash Refund scheme for bigger budgeted productions. And obviously the Portugal Film Commission and Pic Portugal, key players in setting those initiatives that involve the Film Institute and the Tourism Board – Turismo de Portugal. Since you got this expertise from your career in the States, and looking at this internationally, I'm curious to know of how much thinking on this is also linked to these bringing productions to Portugal that have a cultural test and so on to get the full benefits of the scheme. But I'm curious to know your view on these schemes.

[00:16:14 Tony]: I'll answer that with a really specific account of a conversation. I just did a podcast with a great producer, American producer, Jon Kilik. He did *The Hunger Games*, *Babel*, *Bronx Tale*, and I asked him a very direct question. We had him at Tribeca Lisbon. And I said

“So you love Lisbon? Would you ever produce anything in Lisbon?”

And he looked at me, he says

“Well, of course I would. But the location has to match the story.”

And ultimately, a producer puts together a budget and packages a project. Right. And so it goes back to we've got some incredible stories. We now have to expose them to people that can make them for a more global audience.

And then the financing becomes a really critical part of this. But Portugal has a benefit, right? It's a lot less expensive. It's much more efficient to do business in Portugal than it is to do business in London, New York or LA. And so we have a cost basis that's lower. We have an incredibly talented, I'm going to call it the value chain of productions. We have an incentive scheme. That is critically important. I believe it needs to be larger because it's a great investment. And so, yes, I'm going to call myself sort of an unofficial ambassador for this purpose. And my goal is to bring more and larger and more significant productions to our beautiful country.

[00:17:55 Martin]: I'm sure people listening are interested to know whether they could even tap into your expertise. You're working with bigger media groups, but also working at an individual level. Is that right? For instance, the bigger groups, just checking your website - talk about Impresa and the next generation media company in Porto called Mediaprobe. So these are some of the clients you list on your website. But if there's a small independent producer in Portugal who's trying to get to a bigger market, could they also get in touch with you? Or explain a bit your *modus operandi*?

[00:18:38 Tony]: The short answer is, they're coming, but my infrastructure wasn't made to aid productions, if you will. It's to aid larger companies, and or early-stage companies on growth and transformation efforts. Right.

You know, the way that I've structured my company is: we have three services. It's mentorship for free, advisory for a fee and then investment in people and things that I enjoy. And so, I think it's the investment vehicle that I probably put the production stuff under. And so there's a very tight filter, if you will. But look, the examples are, I'm working with Grupo Impresa, directly with my friend Francisco Pedro Balsemão, on a variety of growth initiatives. One of which was the Tribeca Festival in Lisbon. Mediaprobe in Porto is a more early-stage, tech oriented company. And I'm also a mentor at the Unicorn Factory in Lisbon.

[00:20:01 Martin]: Great. In a separate podcast, we've talked about their video gaming hub in the Unicorn Factory Lisboa. And you mentioned Tribeca Lisbon. Now did the first edition. They're inevitable teething problems and so on. Getting a new festival, getting set up. Planning ahead for next edition. What do you think are the main priorities looking ahead for 2025, for Tribeca Lisbon? Which is a really interesting initiative. What do you think the potential and the key objectives are for the next edition?

[00:20:36 Tony]: I think there were two sort of things as I look back at Tribeca Lisbon. One, my mission when I brought that to Francisco and the team at Grupo Impresa, that's very aligned with my mission in life at this point, which is, you know, just putting our talent - and in this case, actors, writers and storytellers - on a more global stage. And when I see Ricardo Araújo Pereira on stage and interviewing Whoopi Goldberg, it's hard to say mission wasn't accomplished. And there are 50 examples like that that happened through there. So absolutely amazing.

The second thing as I look back is, Tribeca started as a film festival, but it's evolved into a bit more of a pop culture and sort of storytelling festival. And I think the expectation was that this was going to be a very large sort of film festival. So I think that's probably an area where we need to tweak. Like if that's the expectation of the market, we probably need to fit into it a little bit more.

But I also believe that the essence of the Tribeca Festival is to be much more about storytelling, human to human storytelling, music, audio, like what we're doing now. Even how tech sort of enables all of this. I think you'll see us make some adjustments, basically to meet the needs of the market. But all in all, I mean, it's an incredible bridge that we built for the industry.

[00:22:44 Martin]: And since you've been involved in your career and continue to be very much technology and content and the two going together. I'm curious, with your experience, with the launch of the streaming platform HBO and so on, and all of these things are evolving so quickly... The way we're accessing content and even the definition of content is changing. We're looking for stories, but we're getting them in different ways. Obviously this is a huge subject area, but I'm curious, on the basis of your experience, what you've learned working with these streaming platforms and how you see the state of play. And then I have some follow up questions on that.

[00:23:29 Tony]: Look, here's probably the biggest learning over this three decades journey that I've been on. Industries and consumers, regardless of what industry you're in, aren't always aligned. And when things are shifting, they're almost always not aligned. But the consumer, in the end, wins. Right. And I think we're seeing that with streaming. You know, streaming was a big disruption to traditional media distribution. And some saw it as an opportunity, and I mean incumbents, and some saw it as an opportunity and some saw it as a threat.

And depending on how you addressed it and how aggressively and how quickly you addressed it, sort of defines what role you're playing in it now. I think that's the biggest learning. You know, taxis, Uber, ridesharing, which is a good example as well in another industry. And so I think we're on the precipice of the same thing in tech and storytelling, in tech and filmmaking.

You know there's a lot of concern around how AI will impact the movie industry, the TV industry, the storytelling world. And my view on this is that it's as consequential and disruptive as streaming was to distribution. And it's not whether or not to embrace, it's how to embrace and how to shape and how quickly. And I think the storytellers that embrace the tools that AI enables sooner will be very successful.

[00:25:18 Martin]: You entered a couple of questions I'd like to follow up on, but just on that last one, the incumbents, as it were, more wary... In the question of AI, but we weren't not going to make the whole podcast on this. But since you mentioned it, they're more wary, partly for intellectual property issues, that if they're using particularly generative AI, they could be sued, cease and desist letters. And perhaps the way, when you talked about the kind of early adopters may get more success, perhaps like YouTube creators, we'll be able to do it more quickly because the incumbents are worried about the legal issues. I'm curious on your view. And again, perhaps comparing the US and Portugal is a bit of a David and Goliath. So maybe a smaller country has certain opportunities, but there is a kind of big and small guy side to this, because the big guys are very worried about the legal issues until the regulations in place on AI.

[00:26:24 Tony]: Yeah. Look, 100%. I'm a big proponent of copyright protection and name and likeness protection. I spent 2.5 hours yesterday with a company that's building some very, very deep tech to help the industry move forward in relation to this. I think about all the stories that a writer, producer, director would like to tell that they're unable to tell for budgetary reasons. You know, digital cameras and digital production sort of helped to make a film that would have cost X and cut it down to Y, you know? Are we sort of in a phase where that happens as well?

The YouTubers are doing great. Being sort of the creators that they are and mastering the platforms that they're on. You know, I think the ones that are left behind are these independent storytellers or smaller countries like Portugal that have great content and great stories that are being ready to told, but insufficient budgets to tell them.

It's the age of better, faster, cheaper. But in this case, I think tech can enable better, faster, cheaper at a quality level that consumers want to see and will engage in. And I think really that's the opportunity, Martin.

[00:28:04 Martin]: Again, we're not going to turn the whole podcast into this subject. But there's a question of, if someone is going to use the generative AI, there's always the fear that the model has been trained somewhere else by IP protected material. And as I understand, in particular the bigger players are reluctant to use it for that reason. But do you do you see any kind of room for manoeuvre of smaller players? That's my last question on AI.

[00:28:31 Tony]: I do, because I actually think this is such a big topic that I think it often gets... Like we often go to the to the end state, which is the AI will make a film. The AI will take a copyrighted character and they will alter the character and... I'm actually calling the AI *they*, it's more than one. But I actually go back to basics, right? Can the AI help me budget better? Can the AI help me, aid me in developing a character for a more global audience? Can the AI help me refine a distribution strategy?

I go back to the pieces of the value chain where I think that's where the opportunity is. And frankly, that's where I think the independent filmmaker needs the assistance.

[00:29:31 Martin]: And just on the streaming platforms, I'm curious of your view that these kind of media tend to, there's a kind of certain sense of winner takes all. The kind of Amazon phenomenon when it comes to e-commerce. So you get a very big player and then little niche players. So again, say if we look in the Portuguese perspective, you've got the public broadcaster with RTP Play, with a service, the Impresa Group [with] Opto, you've got these streaming platforms. But how do you see that landscape? Because as you said, the incumbents were a bit reluctant at first. So Netflix got very big and then they came in. So Warner's, Disney and so on. Again, this is a huge topic, but I'm curious to know whether you think it is a winner takes all phenomenon or whether they're going to be multiple players continuing operating.

[00:30:26 Tony]: By the way, this is a whole other podcast as well.

[00:30:29 Martin]: Of course. I'm just raising the issues for the purposes of this podcast. But each of these topics is huge.

[00:30:38 Tony]: I started smiling as you were saying that, because the thing that frustrated me the most through maybe the last 5 or 6 years of my career, where all these headlines titled "The Streaming Wars", as if only one would win or one would stand.

And no, it's not a winner take all. Just in the same way that you and I watch different things. I'll take us back to cable. The average person, even though they had access to hundreds of channels on their cable platform, on their cable box, watch 12 to 15 in the US. And my 12 to 15 were different than yours.

Now, look, in the streaming world, there are the big players that are acting as aggregators. And I do think they will quote unquote, win. And some may already have. On the backs of the smaller players, they've acted as aggregators, right. Amazon has done a very good job aggregating everyone else's streaming service. And I think they've done a great job. They are the new version of pay TV or cable.

Netflix has done a great job, being sort of the place where you sort of like, the default place where you go when you want to be entertained. And they led this original content path.

HBO is not going away and Max isn't going away as a result of those two things being successful. And Disney's not going away. And then you have all these niche services. You know, I ran a company called Crunchyroll in my portfolio at Otter Media. It's very successful. We sold the company for \$1.2 billion. So in a world where Netflix and Amazon and HBO and Disney exist, Crunchyroll thrives. Right?

[00:32:49 Martin]: And again, just very quickly, these are all huge topics, but what's the kind of core business of Crunchyroll then?

[00:32:55 Tony]: Crunchyroll is the Netflix of Japanese anime. It's as niche as it comes from a content style, yet, I think the most recent number they announced is that they have 13 million subscribers globally. And so then you get to your question on the country, then you have language based services, right? Portuguese, Brazilian, etc. And I think the challenge there, and a bit of a theme for me, is that they're competing with each other. Whether it's Portugal, Spain, you name a country. These more local streamers, if you will, are competing with each other as opposed to coming together to compete with the big global platforms.

And you know, in the US we have this service called Hulu that was ABC, NBC and Fox that sort of came together and said "Hey, we've got to embrace the internet, let's do it together and aggregate all of our content." It's worth a lot of money. And quite frankly, in Portugal... Look, I'm a consultant. I can say these things objectively, right? That's what I would like to see. And I think that's what the country needs in this vein.

But it's also what the diaspora needs. I mean, you go outside of Portugal as a Portuguese, interested in Portuguese content. You're going to your cable network or you're going to a couple of these apps that aren't optimized for international distribution. So I think there's a huge opportunity in the industry kind of coming together and reaching more people.

[00:34:50 Martin]: But just to clarify, I wasn't sure if you meant exploring between countries - say, between Portugal and Spain or France or whatever - or within one country like Portugal, multiple players, creating a bigger platform.

[00:35:09 Tony]: But it's more the latter for me than the former. I think the former can come after, but I think first there's a real opportunity to sort of come together, and put Portuguese language content on a single platform and distribute that globally. It's just more cost efficient. And just more effective, I think, to get to the consumer.

[00:35:36 Martin]: I'm tapping into your insights and your brain on these subjects and each of the topics we're doing in a very concise form. But with these new platforms and the technology's always evolving... There was a fear that films were dying out and the pandemic obviously forced the closure of the theaters. So, the streamers were getting bigger subscriber numbers. There has been a reduction of film going, even post-pandemic. Series were, I think, probably still the hot area. High budget profile series. What do you see? Within these trends of what's growing, what's declining, whether even it's other things, social media or things we haven't even seen yet. Video gaming obviously another area. Where you see the growth and the areas that are going to have more difficulty?

[00:36:46 Tony]: Look, it's funny, you know, at every corner, every time you turn a corner, there is something new, and that new... Unfortunately, there's only 24 hours in a day. And so the question is, if you squeeze the balloon, where does the air go?

The pandemic, I think, gave lots of fuel to the streaming services. Speaking from experience, the volume of subscribers and traffic that we saw on Crunchyroll during the pandemic was beyond comprehension. Nothing that we ever thought. And so I think it really fed that medium. And yeah, the theater suffered as a result. And so there's a whole, there's shift in the volume of content that's going to theaters and the volume of content that's going to streamers.

But if you look at the number one streaming service on connected TVs, it's YouTube. Right? So, you know, we always say premium is in the eye of the beholder, right? If you ask my kids where they spend... You know, 18 and 21, they're not children... Where they spend the majority of their time, it's Netflix and YouTube. Those are the two that they mention.

I think what's happening is these immersive experiences are becoming real opportunities. And super engaging. The Sphere in Las Vegas is just a different way never before seen or experienced. A different way of consuming content. And I'm a big believer that that's like the next wave and the next opportunity for storytellers.

[00:38:46 Martin]: But do you see that, more obviously immersive media... We can consume it through kind of goggles, the kind of Apple glasses or like the Sphere, in spaces where we can do

it communally. And inevitably, both of those things are going to go on. Personally, the VR goggles, it's very impressive, but I don't like that kind of enclosure it creates. And I'm more attracted to the public spaces, as it were. But I'm curious to know how you see those things evolving.

[00:39:18 Tony]: Look, I think it's a leap, right? I think the VR sort of goggles experience gave us an introduction into what these immersive experiences are like and the type of content that can be created for these worlds. But the physical spaces is what brings them to life in a way where consumers can really engage in a more fluid, kind of method. Again, I reference my son. He's a big Manchester United fan.

[00:39:53 Martin]: Good. My team as well.

[00:39:57 Tony]: A couple of really good Portuguese players on it, which I think has influenced that. We watch Man-u games on television or in our devices. Getting to the stadium and to see them live is going to be really difficult for us. We might do it once or twice or three times or whatever it might be, but if there was an opportunity for me to go into a sphere like experience, which there is now, and sit behind the Man-u goal and then the second half behind the Man-u goal, that would be pretty amazing, right. I'm really excited about opportunities like that.

[00:40:48 Martin]: And I'm curious with, as we're discussing, you've obviously on the basis of your experience, these two hats, as it were, the content and the finance, the business side, which some people find difficult to combine. But you very much had both in your career. How do you combine those two hats, as it were, because there are different sides of your personality, in a way.

[00:41:13 Tony]: Yeah. Interesting. I don't fancy myself as a creative. I wouldn't even try. I'm an operator. I'm a business person, right? But I think what's unique about me in this business is this is a business where it really was divided. Left brain. Right brain. And I know the value of the creative side of this business. And I recognize the value, you know, it is about the content. It is about the story. It is about the quality of how that story is made, that then flows into how you operate and operationalize and monetize this stuff.

And so, I am far from a creative. I get scripts and I don't know what to do with them, script coverage is not for me. But if somebody says "Look, I got a script and this is really good, and here's the budget and..." You know, I immediately move into "Okay. If the story is so strong..." Because at the core, the story is our product. "Then what are the options to go monetize it?" Almost like what do you have to believe in order to make it? And that's kind of how I start.

[00:42:29 Martin]: And as we're winding up, I'm curious, you yourself have done some work as a podcast host. And you could give me some tips, I'm sure. And some of the guests have actually been Portuguese nationals, working in the States as well. I think Joana Vicente, you interviewed. And also with the *Expresso* newspaper, you've been writing some material, I think, and doing the podcast. Talk a bit about what you've been doing as a podcast host.

[00:43:03 Tony]: Look, it's an interesting project. But it goes back to, in service of what? The purpose of. So my podcast is the first English language project for *Expresso* newspaper. And so my client has a growth opportunity. And I participated as part of that growth opportunity. And so that's really exciting. I mean, that's a platform that's had a lot of firsts, right? Including being sort of the independent voice of news and information in Portugal.

And so that's ultimately, if I go to the highest level, that's the beauty I think that I see in that. It's challenged me. It's not a place, something that I am natural at. I hear myself in the middle of these interviews and I'm like "Man, I shouldn't have done that."

[00:44:06 Martin]: I feel the same sometimes. Yeah.

[00:44:10 Tony]: But growth has been... Personal growth and professional growth has been part of it. And then look, the last thing which actually might be the most important thing, it's very much on mission. It's called *The Heart & Hustle of Portugal*. I think Portuguese people have a lot of heart, and Portuguese people have a lot of hustle. They've had to, in order to survive and thrive. And the intent was to find Portuguese individuals that have gone out into the world but never really lost the heart nor the hustle, and to help them tell their stories.

But since Portugal has become so global, you know, 10.5 million tourists in our country last August, also finding non-Portuguese people that see and feel the heart and hustle of our country and our culture. And that's the journey we've been on with that. And as I said on my Instagram post, this might be quote unquote successful, it might not be, but it's an incredibly cool project, and I'm really proud to be part of it.

[00:45:20 Martin]: And linked to that, and sort of I think we can wind up with this, in in the States, the people who are Portuguese, zero generation, first generation... But you're not alone, right? Throughout your life, that has been part of your identity as a world and people you've been linked into. It is a micro community within the States and within the media area. Is that right?

[00:45:50 Tony]: It's a micro community, period. You know, our family, we were just up in Boston, Massachusetts, this past weekend. And we went and had dinner at a fine dining Portuguese restaurant run by a chef named George Mendes, who is a first generation Portuguese American, but who had a very similar upbringing that I had.

And so we tend to find each other. And it's fascinating because you call a guy, like I called him to a mutual friend. We went and had dinner and I said "You should be on my podcast." And it didn't take four phone calls. It was like, whatever you're doing to advance this culture, I don't care if you have one listener or 100 million listeners, I'm in. And so, we are a community, and we do try to find each other, but more importantly, we try to help each other.

[00:46:45 Martin]: That's great. Well, Tony, that's been a fascinating discussion on each of these topics. We could do a separate podcast, but we have a limited time as well for the listeners. On behalf of everyone, thanks Tony Gonçalves for being with us for this podcast and wish you all the success with these exciting projects you're working on.

[00:47:05 Tony]: Thank you. Martin. It's been a real honor and it's been a real pleasure.