

Kirt Jacobs: Welcome to MoxieTalk with Kirt Jacobs. This is an archived edition when our program was called Leadership Landscape TV.

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Kirt Jacobs: Welcome to a new partnership between Metro T.V. and Y-PAL, the Young Professionals Association of Louisville, called Leadership Landscape where we go inside the minds of local community leaders and allow them a chance to offer some keen insights into how they see themselves and most importantly explore just what makes them tick.

I am Kirt Jacobs current Y-PAL board member and host of Leadership Landscape.

Today our guest is John R. Guthrie, better known as Jack and for those of you do not know Jack, his bio is extensive. Buckle in and settle down because here we go. Jack Guthrie is chairman of Guthrie Mase Public Relations, one of the largest independently owned public relations firms in the state of Kentucky formed in 1997.

Over the years, the firm has served many major national and international corporations including Philip Morris, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, UPS, Eli Lilly and Company, LG&E Energy, the Louisville Regional Airport Authority, the Kentucky Distillers Association, and CSX Corporation.

Jack is a leader in achiever for decades and we are honored to have him here today. While a student at the University of Kentucky Guthrie was editor of the Kentucky Kernel student newspaper and a 1963 winner of the William Randolph Hearst Award for national news writing. He was president of the student chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists and a member of Sigma Chi fraternity. In 1963 he graduated from the School of Journalism and remains an active member of the University of Kentucky community.

Jack started his PR career with Philip Morris Incorporated in New York in 1964 and in 1969 and 1975 Guthrie was selected one of Louisville's outstanding men by the Louisville JCs which in essence is a precursor to the modern day Y-PAL with for those that aren't familiar with the Louisville JCs. In 1971 through 1977, he returned to Louisville and rose to prominence as executive vice president of the Kentucky Derby Festival and currently serves as honorary director. Under his leadership, the festival grew tenfold and achieved national prominence. He is the man in vision behind such notable Derby Festival traditions as the pegasus pin here in front of us and the Derby jacket.

Jack launched his own public relations firm in 1977 as we stated and in 1986 he served on the National Alumni Board of Directors for three terms and was named president. In 1978 he was named Kentucky Outstanding PR Executive by the Western Kentucky University. 1981 he was Trinity High School's Outstanding Alumnus of the Year. The list as going on.

In 1987 was selected to participate in Leadership Kentucky a program designed for future statewide decision makers in 1993 he was inducted into the Communicator's Hall of Fame by the PR Society of America and the International Association of Business communicators.

During 1995, Jack was named Advertising Man of the Year by the Louisville Ad Club and was inducted into Trinity High School's Hall of Fame. In 1996 Guthrie was appointed to the UK board of trustees by then

Governor Paul Patton and serve a six year term. In 1996 Jack was also inducted into the International Festivals and Events Association Hall of Fame for his work with the Derby Festival and was presented this is six, excuse me, Significant Seeger Award by Sigma Chi Fraternity, the highest honor of the national organization bestows on its members.

In 2000 he received the Outstanding Alumnus Award for the UK College of Communications and in 2002 he was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award from the School of Journalism in telecommunications.

2005 he was named honorary co-chair along with former Gov Martha Lane Collins of the Kentucky Derby Festival 50th anniversary celebration.

Jack was recently inducted into the International Festivals Hall of Fame for developing the Kentucky Derby Festival into the nation's largest civic celebration. He served on numerous community boards including Greater Louisville Inc, Caritas Health, Trinity High School, Jefferson County UK alumni, the Catholic school advisory committee, Greater Louisville Sports Commission and serves on the executive committee, committee of Louisville Central Area in the Main Street Association.

Wow Jack. Wow

Jack Guthrie: After going through all that I should probably just get up and leave.

Kirt Jacobs: I need a drink of water. So the first question I got to ask, what drives you to do this impressive biography?

Jack Guthrie: I think making a difference and being involved and Louisville gives you that opportunity to if you want to be part of organizations like Y-PAL or main street or whatever. And you can make a difference in this community. and I want to do to do that also in my business. At the University of Kentucky which is close to my heart so I guess just drives me is making a difference.

Kirt Jacobs: Great. Whom do you credit most influential in your life Jack?

Jack Guthrie: I know a lot of people you know their their parents and especially my father and I'm sure others have said that but I have two teachers. And that's probably where other people might lead to. A teacher at Trinity John Greno. Who was, he was the moderator of the Echo, which was a student newspaper. So I sort of first got involved in the journalism end of things and. He was a mentor there and then when I was in journalism school at the University of Kentucky. J. A. MaCaulay, Mr Mac, was important to us.. Sort of just instilled feeling that if you can do anything you want to do just set your mind to it and always you know keep looking ahead. Don't look back. Somebody might be catching up. Catching up with you.

Kirt Jacobs: I like that. What was the most defining moment of your life Jack?

Jack Guthrie: Probably my decision to leave New York. Really when I originally with Philip Morris which was a great company and we still work for them as far as a firm but I, I started with them in New York City. Was transferred to Louisville. Was here for a while. And then back to New York and then my wife Becky who's put up with me for over 40 years. We made the decision to return and the opportunity presented itself. I wanted to go into business for myself. I wanted to set up a public relations firm and the Derby Festival at that time was looking for some new leadership.

Kirt Jacobs: OK

Jack Guthrie: And that gave me the opportunity to come home so. Otherwise you know whether I would still be in New York or Washington or wherever it might be. But we wanted to make Louisville and Kentucky home for ourselves and our children

Kirt Jacobs: We are glad you did. If there is one. You know looking back over this impressive of history of years. What is your biggest professional regret? In other words, if you could armchair quarterback your life and look back on it would you do anything differently?

Jack Guthrie: No

Kirt Jacobs: No

Kirt Jacobs: tried. You know I want you I think anybody. You have to look in the rearview mirror you need to take a look about where you've been but don't look back.

Kirt Jacobs: OK

Jack Guthrie: and don't second guess yourself.

Kirt Jacobs: OK

Jack Guthrie: You know keep going forward. Look for the next opportunity. You have to remember what bridges you cross. Try not to burn too many of them along the way. An. Hopefully I haven't but there's a you know I was thinking about that last night about the regrets. No I don't have any regrets. The glass is always at least three quarters full or maybe totally full.

Kirt Jacobs: You are in PR

Jack Guthrie: Well I guess so. you spill a little water out every once while I just fill it up and keep on going.
Kirt Jacobs: Nice. On the flipside of that Jack, what is your biggest professional triumph?

Jack Guthrie: Oh I would think just starting my firm which I did 1977 and some people sometimes says well how many people started it and I tell them there were three of us. Me, myself, and I. And we each worked an eight hour shift but developing the firm and running it for now 28-29 years. That I feel was a, was significant and I enjoyed every minute of it.

Kirt Jacobs: What do you find exciting about all of this? From the Derby pins, the Derby jacket, the Derby Festival , starting your own firm

Jack Guthrie: A couple of things. One is watching the people that have come through and worked with me at Guthrie Mays and some of the responsibilities they now have. Some of the young people that came in that show you that this community is certainly open to young men and women and entrepreneurs. So seeing that they have succeeded in their particular positions that, that certainly is something that excites me. And also watching those things that I've been involved with. The Derby Festival of course being a major part of my life

Kirt Jacobs: Right.

Jack Guthrie: I was involved in the original start of what now is Main Street and did the first study years ago when I was involved with the chamber in the early 70s and if somebody just said could you have imagined Main Street becoming what it is today my answer would have been no. I mean I felt there was the potential because we returned to the river

Kirt Jacobs: Right.

Jack Guthrie: But Main Street is just this phenomenal.

Kirt Jacobs: Phenomenal isn't it. What is your favorite word? If you had to pick one in the lexicon of English language Jack. Is there one word that stands out for you?

Jack Guthrie: Integrity. And because you don't have time to wonder whether you said the right thing or you did the right thing or whatever. But try to have as much integrity in your life as possible and that won't let you down. Now there's also a couple of words I don't like.

Kirt Jacobs: OK Throw it out there.

Jack Guthrie: One is impossible.

Kirt Jacobs: OK

Jack Guthrie: Cut it out of the dictionary. Take it out of your vocabulary. Because it can be done. It's just finding that way and there is there a way to unlock that. So take the word impossible out.

Kirt Jacobs: I like that. That's cool.

Jack Guthrie: Just get it done.

Kirt Jacobs: Since this show is about leadership Jack, can you define leadership in one word? If you had to pick one word?

Jack Guthrie: Commitment probably would be the first thing that comes to mind. And staying power is two words. But that commitment. You know to to make a difference get it done. To get out in front. You know. What is the story about if you're not the lead dog the view never changes.

Kirt Jacobs: Nice. Nice I like that one. So if you're going to be in a dinner ride or whatever.

Kirt Jacobs: Right

Jack Guthrie: But get out front and demonstrate how things can get done and be willing to be part of it all.

Kirt Jacobs: If you could you, know we talked about regret earlier. If you could change one thing what would that be? In your past.

Jack Guthrie: My waistline.

Kirt Jacobs: Jack. Stop, stop man.

Jack Guthrie: I've been fighting that for years and I've loved I'd like to have yours

Kirt Jacobs: Oh, well hey. I plead the fifth. Well on our last question that we like to ask our guests and it's one that can bring some unease if you will to some of our guests, when the great day comes how do you want to be remembered Jack?

Jack Guthrie: Somebody that loved his family, loved his community and was proud every day to get up and go to work and try to make a difference.

Kirt Jacobs: Try to make a difference. That's good stuff. I want to thank you Jack for being on Y-PAL's Leadership Landscape. Thank you very much sir it's an honor.

Jack Guthrie: My pleasure. Thank you.

Kirt Jacobs: Until next time I'm Kirt Jacobs on Leadership Landscape. Thank you.

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Kirt Jacobs: Thank you for listening to MoxieTalk with Kirt Jacobs. This episode was archival audio from when we were known as Leadership Landscape TV. If you have any feedback, general comments, or a recommendation for a suitable guest feel free to email me at kirt@moxietalk.com or catch us on Facebook under MoxieTalk with Kirt Jacobs, or on Twitter under [@kirtjacobs](https://twitter.com/kirtjacobs) or our extensive website at www.moxietalk.com