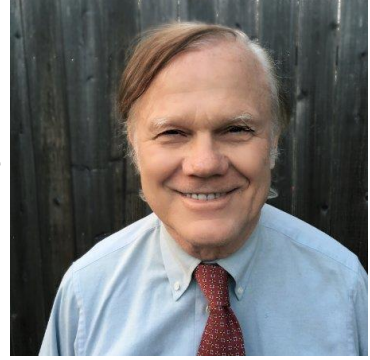Welcome to the latest edition in our series of profiles where we shine the spotlight on AireSpring's amazing partners. This time we're speaking with Joe Budelis, Founder of Persimmon Telecommunications.

Hello, Joe. Thank you for agreeing to speak with us today. To begin, please tell us a little about yourself and your background and the history of Persimmon Telecommunications.

No matter the industry, my career has always been focused around finding optimal solutions. Before I stepped into the telecom space, I worked in IT consulting, project management, and data management for a number of firms, many in the Financial Industry. For example, I worked on a small team at Mobil Corporation optimizing energy management, ultimately saving Mobil $125 million in expenses. Later on, although I was working full-time in IT, I had the idea to optimize air travel. I founded my own airplane charter business, which was sort of an early version of Uber, but in the air. As president and chief pilot, I carried passengers in shared rides mainly between Princeton and Nantucket.

My focus on optimization and cost-savings was what led me into the telecom world. For a couple years, I was living in Princeton and commuting to Dallas, Texas. In those days, long distance charges were steep, and my interest in finding better solutions motivated me to find a better, more cost effective approach. I became a telecom agent to sell long distance to myself! Soon enough, I was helping friends and family find cost-effective and reliable telecommunications services. After the turn of the century when the demand for the IT consulting that I'd been specializing in was declining, I began a more intensive ramp up of my Telecom business. I connected with Patrick Oborn and Adam Edwards of Telarus and have worked with them ever since.

How long have you been working with AireSpring?

It was through Telarus that I met AireSpring's National Director of Channel Sales, Charles Lomond. Looking back, that must have been at least ten years ago.

What do you like about working with AireSpring?

Not only does AireSpring have a wide selection of carriers and services to choose from, but its back office software in the QuoteSpring quoting tool makes it very easy for me to do my job successfully. The ability to run quotes in very little time gives me the advantage of responding to customer requests quickly.

While AireSpring's quoting model makes it very easy to work independently as an agent, I still count on AireSpring's staff! For over a decade, Charles has been an awesome Channel Manager. I've drawn from his wealth of telecommunications knowledge and experience on multiple occasions, and he is always there to assist me in developing proposals and closing deals.

I also like that AireSpring provides continual training each month. It really helps to be kept up to date on the latest offerings and constantly refreshed about the many complex products and services in telecommunications. In a word, AireSpring makes it easier for me to sell services and serve my customers.

What is the secret to success in this industry?

There are many approaches which any telecom agent can use, and take advantage of to successfully serve customers. As I mentioned, I use back office software all the time, allowing me to lean less on others to find pricing and generate quotes. I also use back office software for partner referrals, giving me access to a network of service providers who can offer services which are complimentary to my own. That way, I can keep my clients close even if I personally cannot offer the solution they are looking for. You are the ultimate solution provider when you send potential customers to other vendors for the solutions they need. And, some of my partners send me customers.

What do you see as the next big thing?

As many in this industry will tell you, cloud applications are becoming ubiquitous and bandwidth needs are growing. Also, it seems that SD-WAN is poised to become a dominant technology in the coming years. It opens the way for businesses to use bandwidth more efficiently, without incurring the costs of traditional WAN solutions. It appeals to me as an optimizer, since SD-WAN literally optimizes your WAN to take full advantage of your network links.

SD-WAN adds incredible value since it doesn't necessarily require higher bandwidth fiber to satisfy bandwidth needs and, in many cases, can reduce the need for expensive MPLS circuits. Traditional WAN solutions typically added more expensive high bandwidth fiber and/or MPLS circuits in order to satisfy growing bandwidth needs and to maintain quality service. In contrast, SD-WAN uses not only expensive fiber and T1 circuits but also lower cost best effort circuits and automatically directs traffic in real-time to optimize service quality.

It also makes circuit backup much easier. A by-product of traffic being dynamically shared across multiple lines is that customers already have an automatic failover system built in to their network when they use SD-WAN.

What are some of your hobbies and interests outside of the office?

I regularly do tai chi and yoga (a strong interest of my wife) to keep my mind and body strong and healthy. Just over the Thanksgiving break, my family and I went to the Bahamas, where I was able to do yoga every day at the Yoga Retreat on Paradise Island. Years ago, I learned to windsurf on Nantucket, and these days I windsurf here in Jersey during the summers.

I've been involved with so many entrepreneurial ventures that it must have rubbed off on my daughter, Kristina. She currently is growing her own company in New York City, where she runs a peer to peer photographic and video equipment sharing service. Notice that what she is doing is optimizing the use of equipment. As of the beginning of this year, her startup reached 3000 clients in the NY metro area. She has office space on the 40th floor of the Hearst Building in Manhattan. I'm quite proud of her!

Thanks Joe, for sharing with us! Good luck to your daughter and her entrepreneurial ambitions!

For those in the NY area, you can check out Kristina's company, KitSplit, [here!](here)