

MAN ON FIRE PRESENTS
**THE COMBUSTION
CHRONICLES**

**EPISODE TWENTY-ONE
TO INNOVATE, STAY COOL**

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GUEST: RICHARD PAXMAN

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Shawn: Welcome to "The Combustion Chronicles" podcast, where bold leaders combined with big ideas to create game-changing disruption. I'm Shawn Nason, founder of Man on Fire, and your host for "The Combustion Chronicles." Throughout this series, we're bringing together the most unique and influential minds we could find to have honest conversations about not being okay with the status quo, blowing shit up, and working together to influence our shared future. We believe that when bold leaders ignite consumer-centric ideas with passion and grit, the result is an explosion that creates a better world for all of us. I'm here with my co-host Michael Harper.

On today's episode we're speaking with Rich Paxman. Rich is managing director of Paxman Pioneers and Scalp Cooling. And has been the general manager at Brewfitt, a family owned business at the forefront in dispensing in the pub and bar industry helping breweries and bars give a better experience to their customers and generate more revenue. As well as the operations director and now managing director of Paxman Coolers Limited. Paxman is the scalp cooling partner of choice for many leading cancer centers in the U.S. Today, Paxman has over 600 scalp cooling systems installed in the U.S. across 40 states and in 300 locations. So Rich, welcome to our podcast today.

Richard: Thank you very much. A pleasure to be here.

Shawn: Yes. So Rich we're not gonna waste any time here because this is the obvious question, I think to me and to listeners here, when we will start digging into this is, how do you go from keeping beer cold to changing the face of cancer? And how does someone have the vision to go there?

Richard: Yeah, I guess it's quite a pivot from beer cooling to head cooling. And there's a real story behind it. I think we've all been touched by cancer. I know you and I certainly have. And this all started when I was much younger, I was 10 years old at the time. My parents came to pick us up from junior school one afternoon, which was pretty strange because my dad didn't often do that. And they sort of sat us down and they explained mom had breast cancer. And she'd been diagnosed with late stage breast cancer. It had spread to her lymph nodes. She was in her 30s, four young children. She was a beautiful lady, big curly hair, which was really important to my mom. And she didn't want to lose her hair and be that cancer patient.

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At the time our local hospital in Huddersfield, which is where I'm from, a shout out to Huddersfield, it's in the north of England, were offering her something called scalp cooling. But

it didn't work for my mom. And that was really the first time she was affected by a treatment. Three weeks after her first chemo treatment her hair started to fall out, pillow covered one morning. And that was the first time she was actually affected by her disease and prognosis, the first time she cried. My sister cut her hair off, which was devastating for everyone really. She started now to look like she was ill and dying. So, my dad, who saw this distress was determined to do something about it. And my dad being an entrepreneur and engineering background, and then he has the link, that family history of refrigeration, but specifically beer cooling, something close to many of our hearts.

So, in fact, my grandfather invented a beer cooler in the 1950s, which might be strange to you Americans bearing in mind that you think we like our warm beer. So, understanding cooling and control of liquids and refrigeration, and it gave my dad the idea to start doing something about it. And so along with his brother, Neil, he developed our first prototype in the '90s. And we've been improving it ever since. So, for the last 20 years, developing scalp cooling technology as it's called, and also not only the technology, but really the healthcare market acceptance of scalp cooling, which is the most important thing. Sadly, mom died in 2000, which was 20 years ago, nearly after battling the disease for a number of years. So, this is her legacy. That's the link and it was a quite a long story, but it's our why and it's why we're passionate. My mom's our inspiration and motivation every day.

Shawn: Yeah, I mean, first off, Rich thanks for sharing the story behind it and the legacy that you're leaving and you guys as a family are doing for your mom. You started to hint at this a little bit around the story behind it. But, you know, as Paxman as a company you guys invest really heavy in storytelling and haircare education and community building. How important of a differentiator are these things for you and your company?

Richard: Yeah, our story, it's the why we do what we do is behind everything. I think it gives us real authenticity and what we're about. What's pretty amazing if you ever hopefully come and meet some of our organization is that every single person in our organization's passionate about why we do what we do. And it sort of makes the patient really be at the heart of our decision making. As I said, my mom's that motivation to what we do every day.

So, our story really allows us to relate to patients and their families a lot more. And that ultimately allows us to, yeah, differentiate ourselves from others within the market. I think it became more clear to us when we moved into the U.S. market as well, because of how much patient interaction we now get on a daily basis. And so, yeah, just haircare education, that

community building is incredibly important, to give a sense of support for everyone, and ultimately that means the best possible outcomes for our patients.

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Michael: How has this affected your personal journey, in terms of, you know, the world is not always customer centric. It's not patient centric. It's not human centric, in terms of the organizations that we build and the companies that we create. How do you see that differently? You have this lens of this patient centric, human centric world. How does that play into your work and your life?

Richard: So I strongly believe, perhaps my shareholders might not like it always, that if we do the right thing by the patient, and sometimes that is not commercially sensible, but ultimately, it's the right thing overall and long term, it will pay dividends and be successful. So, we do make patient centric decisions on a daily basis. So, we always put the heart...the patient at the heart of why we're doing what we do. An example I guess, today we've got a patient in Canada, who is about to refuse chemotherapy because she's concerned about permanent hair loss and also just hair loss in general. Now, ultimately, getting a system to that lady, doesn't perhaps make commercial sense, but I personally feel it's the right thing to do. It's the ethical thing to do. Long term making those decisions for those patients will benefit everyone.

Michael: I don't know if it's real or perceived, but that's not how we typically roll as people and leaders, right? It's almost like you're swimming upstream. You're going against the grain to make those decisions that way. But what I mean, what do you attribute that to and how do we get through it? This couldn't have been an easy journey for you.

Richard: I think I attribute that to our personal story and understanding how that affects people. But I also think it's the person my mom was, and that's instilled in myself and other members in my family. So, I think it's our values. It's what we built our company on. And ultimately, I believe that will drive success.

Shawn: Yeah, digging a little bit more into that Rich, you guys just in April, I think, made some philosophical business decisions. And I haven't sat in any board meetings or executive meetings, but you guys did this transformation from going from Paxman Scalp Cooling, to actually launching a new website called coldcap.com. And that website isn't about the business. It's not about the numbers or even selling the product, but it's about the patient. And not many businesses are taking that big of a step. Can you walk us through that journey? I'm sitting here

right now with the site up and, you know, it says, "We're here to guide you through the cold capping process." Like this is so patient, human centered.

Richard: Thank you and I'm pleased you see that. I was just having a discussion with an advocacy group today and they also saw how supportive it really is. The first step was to move not fully aware from scalp cooling because scalp cooling still is...it is still Paxman Scalp Cooling, and that's very much about the science, the data, the development, perhaps the company information, and perhaps where you would go to learn a bit more about the technical aspects of what we do. What's become very apparent is that in the world of scalp cooling, and patients and hair loss, cold cap is ultimately what people are talking about. It's a cold cap. It really is. So, I think that transformation in terms of how we package it became clear, spending more time with patients and really wanting to own that messaging which is important.

From a website perspective, I work with some very creative people not only in our direct team, but our agencies that support us from a brand perspective and a marketing perspective also. And it was very clear that what we needed to do is be able to support that patient, not only from an informed...information and education point of view, but really from the beginning of their journey right through to the end of their journey. And that's not the day they stop scalp cooling. But the weeks and perhaps even months after they've stopped scalp cooling. So the development has really allowed us to reach out to that patient, provide them a supportive tool, from diagnosis right through to post-haircare and give them the best possible opportunity to get the best possible results.

And the feedback's been phenomenal. It's really helping. And there's decision guides there, so, they can make an informed decision. And this is not about yes, you should try scalp cooling. It gives them really good, strong data to make a decision on whether it's right for that patient, right for that disease type, right for that regimen type. So, it's yeah, absolutely, patient focused. I'm very proud of it, and proud of the team that we're involved in. It's phenomenal.

Shawn: Yeah, can you just give us the one-minute explanation, so the audience really understand what the cold cap process is. This was really new to me. And we've actually been in this space within MOFI, our consulting group, for two or three years in the cancer space, but not necessarily hearing about this. Can you give us a quick explanation around what this means and how, and what it does for patients?

Richard: Absolutely. Yeah. So, scalp cooling can be offered to also tumor cancer patients who are undergoing chemotherapy that causes hair loss. Hair loss is caused by the damaging effect

of the chemotherapy treatment. Chemotherapy is designed really to target rapidly dividing cells. And that unfortunately means that chemotherapy is not only damaging those cancer cells, but those healthy cells. So ultimately, hair cells are damaged, the hair then falls out. So, what we do is we cool the patient's scalp, and we cool the patient's scalp using a refrigeration system. So, a fridge which connects to a single patient use cooling cap, and the patient wears this cooling cap for 30 minutes before the chemotherapy treatment. So, on the day of chemo, during the infusion of the alopecia causing chemotherapy, and then 90 minutes afterwards, depending on the drug regime.

So, at this lower temperature, what we try and do is induce vasoconstriction. So actually, you're restricting the amount of blood that gets to those hair follicles, ultimately protecting those hair follicles from the chemotherapy treatment. What we also know is at lower temperatures, we see a reduction in metabolic activity and a reduction of metabolic rate, therefore reduced cell division, so less targeted effect of that chemotherapy. And then more recently, we've been investing heavily into the biological reasons behind scalp cooling and really proving it from a scientific point of view. And what we see at lower temperatures is less drug diffused through the cell membrane, both actively and passively. So again, protecting those hair cells from that really toxic chemotherapy. And ultimately, we maintain a patient's hair, not all of it, patients do lose hair, and not everyone's successful, but it's well into the 50%, 60% across a wide range of chemotherapy regimens, and even higher with some taxane based therapies.

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Shawn: Thanks for that explanation. We use this term in MOFI around creative disruption. And so how do you see creative disruption playing a role in Paxman and even in your own life as you're taking on the leadership of these companies?

Richard: Good question. I think creative disruption has a key role in what we do. And I think it will allow us to do better than we are currently doing. We invest heavily in research and development. And we have a really wide, multi-disciplinary team, looking at all aspects. And we really, really encourage as much creativity as possible, and really want those sort of those new ideas, those creative ideas to not particularly throw scalp cooling out of the water, but make us think differently, make us do things differently so ultimately, in the long term, we can get a better scalp cooling product, it might be something in conjunction with scalp cooling, it might be redeveloping the way we offer scalp cooling in terms of whether it's the cooling cap, for example, or the refrigeration system. And again, I suppose it's the same within our organization with anything we do, always wanting to improve. And I think that notion of creative disruption really drives innovative approaches to do better. For me, this treatment, not working for all

patients, frustrates the hell out of me, excuse my French, and I want to do better. And hopefully, allowing that sort of innovative way of thinking will ultimately mean we do better in the future.

Shawn: Awesome. So, I'm gonna turn this a little more personal to you as a leader, as a man. What has been your biggest personal hurdle as you've been on this journey, and what has scared you the most, and how did you overcome it?

Richard: So, I guess life throws many personal hurdles at you. I've enjoyed many of those that have been challenging at times. For me, probably the biggest personal hurdle or a couple of them relate to not a full belief in what I do, but having a confidence to take the business from where it was when I joined to where it is today and ultimately, much further and that's a belief in yourself. There's been many challenges with that in terms of touching on a family business but growing in terms of numbers of people. So, that's probably pushing me out of my comfort zone from what I knew to the unknown as the business really develops and grows very quickly from something that makes me very uncomfortable would be public speaking.

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In fact, it makes me feel quite sick even now, so I continue to try and work on that from a personal perspective. And then really personal, I came out when I was younger, about 19, and I was reasonably okay, with that with my close family and friends but it's taken me some time and probably only until just recently where I'm feeling comfortable about my sexuality even in a work environment has been tough, I think and it has not affected my work as such, but perhaps being true to myself and engaging in open relationships with other people in my international work, but I'm at peace probably with most of that now, but enjoying a challenge always. So yeah, that's probably where I'm at.

Shawn: Well, thanks for sharing that Rich, first off. We have another organization within our ecosystem. And you and I've talked about this called Truth Tellers. And it's really focusing on men living authentically in the land of bullshit and bringing a community of men together that are really ready to have those real conversations. And so you sharing that knowing that you had come out to your family, in your late teens, early '20s, but now that you being a successful business leader, and being okay, with that, and knowing and being confident, that's a powerful story for our audience to hear. And I'm sure that would actually make your mom really proud to know that you're living and standing in that truth today and the changes that you're bringing about within Paxman. So, it's a shout out to you. Kudos to you. When you start looking what's going on in our world today, there's such great divides and such wide spectrums and this new

norm that we're all trying to face, what would be your advice to the young Rich, the 19-year-old Rich? What advice would you give him today, looking forward into the future and what we're facing, not just within, you know, personally but globally, politically? What would be that one thing that you would give advice on to him?

Richard: The one thing. So, I think for me it's really embracing the change and the new normal and not pushing against it but as I said, embracing it. But seeing the good things and being positive about this change. Now we talk about the new normal and sort of COVID-19 up to the eyeballs at the moment, but what I think we need to do and albeit it's affecting many people in many different ways and very difficult ways, and all of us I think, but actually grasping onto those bits that are good, that are positive, and I think life is a lot easier if we do that and hold on to those things. So really embrace the change and find those bits that are positive and focus on those. And I think that's the most important thing. From what I was just talking about, I guess with perhaps coming out, just be true to yourself. And yeah, be comfortable with yourself. Generally, people like you for who you are. And don't forget that.

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Shawn: I love that. I love that advice. We're kind of coming to the end here, and we could keep just having a conversation. But we do this section at the end Rich called the combustion questions and we use this really great scientific algorithm. It's Michael's brain, which is a scientific algorithm, if you know Michael very well here with us. But he's generated three questions that we're gonna just...he's gonna read off to you and we'd love to hear your thoughts and opinions about. So, Michael, take it over.

Michael: Yeah. All right, Rich your combustion questions. Are you ready? I hear a lot of enthusiasm.

Richard: I'm not sure yet. (all laugh)

Michael: Question number one. If you started a band, what instrument would you want to play in that band?

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Richard: Ooh, good one, saxophone.

Michael: Because?

Richard: Well, my mom loved the saxophone. And it reminds me of long fun days at beach clubs in the summer.

Michael: There you go. I'll take that, yeah.

[00:21:15]

Shawn: I would love a long beach day at the club right now. (Shawn laughs)

Michael: All right. Question number two.

Richard: Admitting it right now, yeah? (all laugh)

Michael: Right. Question number two. What is your favorite word?

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Richard: My favorite word, cold cap. (Shawn and Rich laugh)

Michael: That's a good word.

Richard: I only know one.

Shawn: I heard a birdie said, through the grapevine Rich that you liked the word shall, too. So, is there some truth about that too? (all laugh)

Shawn: It's a good word.

[00:21:53]

Michael: All right, your final question. What do you think about '80s music?

Richard: I love '80s music. If you ever get in my car, you will find it on Heart 80s. And if you look on my iPhone, I'm embarrassed to say over half has all our music, it's probably taken over by the best of '80s. So, it's great. I'm an '80s baby so it's a good period.

Michael: What about the '80s music just gets you excited?

Richard: I guess it gets me excited, I like listening to it. Yeah, it's good.

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Shawn: Well, Rich, thanks so much, uh, for doing this with us. Thank you for the legacy that you have built with your family, for your mother, and how you guys are really changing the face of cancer and doing powerful things. So, thank you for being with us.

Richard: No, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you. It's been fun.

Shawn: Thank you so much for listening to this episode of "The Combustion Chronicles." None of this is possible without you the listener. If you'd like to keep the conversation going, look up Man on Fire on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and at manonfire.co. Give us a shout. Let us know what you think. And please, subscribe, rate, and review if you like what we're doing and if you don't do it anyways. And remember, always stay safe and be well.