THE OPERATOR'S SCOREBOARD

The six numbers that tell you where your business is leaking – while you can still do something about it.

Most advisors track two numbers: contracts and closings. Both arrive too late to help. Abdel Khawatmi runs a New Jersey region closing a little over $200 million a year, and he tracks six — because the four nobody counts are the four that are still changeable.

ETHOS

By Dino Katsiametis

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Based on a conversation with Abdel Khawatmi, Branch Manager at PRMG, on The Way with Dino Katsiametis.

START HERE

1. Track **six** numbers, not two — content, clients, conversations, credit, contracts, closings.
2. Count a client only when you have their **email and phone number.** Everything else belongs to a platform.
3. **Listen before you advise.** The consultation decides whether the advice is right.
4. **Be stingy with the pre-approval.** Every one that fails devalues every one that follows.
5. **Update every file in contract Monday, Wednesday and Friday** — including the weeks nothing changed.
6. Watch the conversion **between** steps. That is where the leak shows.

> **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> *A file that closes in October started as a conversation in July. If your October is thin, the cause is a July problem – and you are finding out ninety days too late to fix it. That is what tracking only contracts and closings costs you, every quarter, forever.*

When I asked Abdel what he is best in class at — expecting branding, or AI, or content, because he is genuinely excellent at all three — he said one word: **execution**. Then he showed me how he proves it. He does not guess whether the business is healthy. He looks. Six numbers, every week, and the four nobody tracks are the four that are still changeable.

PLAY 01 · CONTENT

Publish on a schedule, not on a mood

The top of everything, and the one advisors treat as optional. Nobody watches a Reel and calls that afternoon — it is the reason your name is familiar when the referral finally comes.

Publish three to five pieces a week and build a queue in front of it. Abdel keeps twelve months ready at all times, so posting never depends on the day he is having.

> *"Do you really have twelve months of content done at all times?" — "We do."*

THE MOVE

A content queue turns a motivation problem into a scheduling problem. Motivation fails under stress. Scheduling does not.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

Posting when you feel like it. That means going quiet in exactly the weeks that are hardest — which are exactly the weeks you need to be visible.

PRO TIP

The deal keeping you up at night usually makes the best post. The queue is the floor, not the ceiling.

PLAY 02 · CLIENTS

Count the people you can actually reach

Every name entering your database this week, from every source. This is the number almost nobody can produce on demand.

Count a person once you have their email and phone number. Not before. And count the ones who are not ready yet — someone who follows you for eighteen months and then calls was not a lead the day they entered.

> THE MOVE
>
> Reach you do not control is not an asset. The whole job of the content layer is converting attention you rent into contact you own.

> THE COMMON MISTAKE
>
> Counting followers. If you do not have their email and phone, you have a number on a screen that belongs to somebody else's platform — and that platform can change the rules tomorrow.

PLAY 03 · CONVERSATIONS

Listen before you advise

Real two-way conversations — phone, in person, or a genuine back-and-forth. This is where operators separate from order-takers, and the first number where quality shows up.

Open with the situation, not the product. A first-time buyer needs to hear what they have paid in rent over five years. A retiring business owner needs to hear about asset depletion and taxes. Lead with a rate and you lose both.

> *"God gave us two ears. Listen first."*

> THE MOVE
>
> Advice given before the situation is understood is not advice. It is a guess wearing a suit — and today's client can check it in nine seconds.

PLAY 04 · CREDIT

Be stingy with the approval

Pre-approvals issued — and separately, pre-approvals that become contracts. The gap between those two numbers is one of the most honest signals in the business.

Treat every pre-approval as a promise with your name on it. The agent on the other side is reading your name, not the borrower's file.

> *"I'm stingy with the approval, because if I give you that approval, I've now stamped it."*

THE MOVE

Your pre-approval is only worth something if it is occasionally withheld. Every one that fails devalues every one that follows.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

Handing them out freely. It feels generous and costs nothing in the moment — until the third one falls apart and that agent stops sending you business.

DO NOT CONFUSE THESE

The *other* four C's

The traditional **four** C's of underwriting — **credit, capital, collateral, capacity** — are a different framework entirely. Same letter, different job.

The four C's describe **a borrower**. The six C's describe **your business**. Credit appears in both and means something different in each. Most people who trip on this framework trip right here.

PLAY 05 · CONTRACTS

Update on the schedule, not on the news

The file is real now and the clock is public. Buyer, seller and both agents are watching.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday updates on every file in contract. Including the weeks when the update is that nothing has changed. The no-news update is the one that matters.

THE MOVE

A scheduled update removes the client's need to wonder. Wondering is where anxiety turns into phone calls, and phone calls are where your day disappears.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

Only reaching out when there is news. Silence in a transaction does not read as calm. It reads as something going wrong that nobody wants to tell you about.

FROM THE FIELD

My father's hamburger rule

He ran burger joints before he moved into Mexican food, and he gave me a rule I have never stopped using:

> *"Worry about making the best hamburger you can make. The money will come. But they call it fast food for a reason — if somebody waits twenty minutes for their burger, no matter how good it tastes, they're going to be angry while they eat it."*

Quality does not survive a bad wait. Neither does a loan file. And speed is not something you can want your way into — without process there is a bottleneck every single time.

PLAY 06 · CLOSINGS

Track it. Celebrate it. Do not manage from it

Units and volume — the only number most advisors track, and the least useful of the six.

Record it, then go back to the other five. This number was entirely determined ninety days ago.

> THE MOVE
>
> Closings is a receipt, not a steering wheel. By the time it moves, every decision that caused it is already behind you.

PLAY 07 · THE AI LAYER

Calendar first. Content second. Findability third

Abdel is aggressive with AI, and the sequencing is the interesting part. Most advisors start with content generation. He starts somewhere else.

Feed it your calendar and ask where the time actually went. Not what you planned — what happened. Then use it against the content queue. Then write, constantly.

> *"Post blogs till you're blue in the freaking face to the point where AI has no choice but to recommend you."*

> THE MOVE
>
> AI recommends what it can read. Every piece of written content is a vote for your name in a conversation you will never see happen.

> BEFORE YOU CONNECT ANYTHING TO A CLIENT FILE
>
> Borrower documents — **pay stubs, W-2s, tax returns, contracts** — contain non-public personal information, and lenders have obligations about where that data goes.
>
> Keep it inside systems your company has approved, and check with **your compliance department** before pointing any AI tool at a client file. Nothing above requires it.

PLAY 08 · THREE AVATARS

Client. Referral partner. Loan officer

Abdel builds for three audiences, not one. Most advisors build for the client, then wonder why agents do not engage and good originators never call.

Write for each of the three deliberately. The content that earns a client's trust and the content that earns a peer's respect are not the same content.

> *"I'm not for everybody."*

THE MOVE

A brand designed to offend nobody ends up meaning nothing to anyone. Specificity is what makes the right people certain.

PRO TIP

When I asked for his ethos, one word: authenticity. Not as a value on a wall — as a filter.

THE PRINCIPLE

"You cannot fix a number you never counted."

WHAT HEALTHY LOOKS LIKE

These are the ranges I look for. They come from running the business, not from a study. Your own numbers are the ones that matter, and one quarter of counting gives you a baseline better than any benchmark I could hand you.

STEP	WHAT CONVERTS	HEALTHY RANGE
Content → Clients	Engagements that become a contact you can reach	*count it first*
Clients → Conversations	New names that become a real conversation	**15–70%**
Conversations → Credit	Conversations that become pre-approvals	**50–75%**
Credit → Contracts	Pre-approvals that go under contract	**50–75%**
Contracts → Closings	Contracts that fund	**90–98%**

On the first row. Most advisors cannot calculate this, because nothing in their funnel ever asks for an email. Someone comments, gets a reply, and stays a stranger you cannot call.

On the second row. That spread is enormous, and it is honest — because this step measures two things at once. The first is follow-up discipline. The second, and the larger one, is **where the name came from.** A referral and a purchased lead do not convert alike and never will. My own conversion here has always run high, and the reason is not technique — it is that I have built on referrals rather than bought names.

On the last row. Below 90% is not a sales problem. It is an operations problem, and more volume will only break more files.

Read it as a chain, not a scorecard. One weak link explains everything downstream of it and nothing upstream. Check weekly, judge monthly.

YOUR NEXT MOVE

One number. Four weeks.

Do not build all six this month. Build one — the step where you genuinely do not know the number. That is not a coincidence: the one you cannot answer is usually the one that is leaking.

YOUR NEXT MOVE

Pick one of the six — the one you cannot answer. Count it for four weeks, then tell me what it showed you.

See How Ethos Advisors Do This →

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LISTEN TO THIS EPISODE

The Operator's Scoreboard: The Abdel Khawatmi Six C's

The Way with Dino Katsiametis · S2E03 with Abdel Khawatmi



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A FINAL THOUGHT

I spent years managing from the closing report, which is a bit like steering by the wake. The month I started counting the four numbers in the middle was the month the business stopped surprising me.

Pick one number. Count it for four weeks. Then come tell me what happened.

— Dino

ETHOS LENDING

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Abdel Khawatmi appears as a featured guest of The Way with Dino Katsiametis. Methods described are his own. Views expressed are the individual's own and do not represent their employer.

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