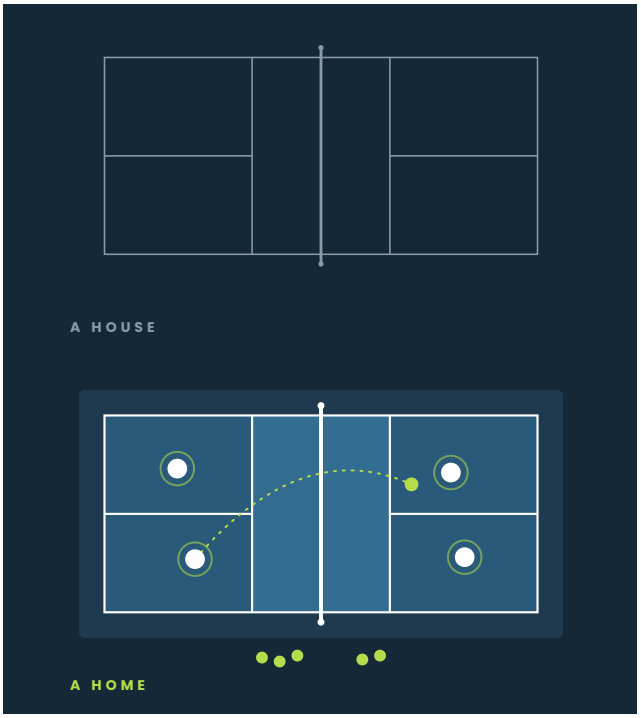
COURTSIDE NOTES

House or home?

What we learned selling our club.
For independents and franchisees who want buyers to feel what they've built.



LISA & DUSTIN DEMERITT

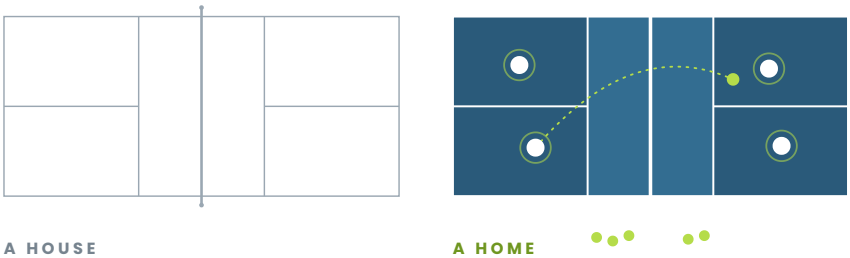
A companion to The Open Playbook.

01 TWO HOUSES. ONE HOME.

Buyers pay for what they can feel.

MOST OWNERS THINK — Buyers buy the numbers.

WHAT WE LEARNED — **Buyers fall for a feeling, then check the numbers.**



A HOUSE

A HOME

Picture two houses on the same street. Same size, same yard, same price. Walk into one and it's a nice house. Walk into the other and you can picture your life there. That one sells first, and for more.

Clubs work the same way. Same courts, same lines, same numbers. A buyer walks into one and sees a business. They walk into the other and feel a community. That feeling is what they pay for.

AT PICKLES

Our first sale presentation looked at us through a business lens: courts, square feet, the lease, earnings. All accurate, and it undersold us. So we rebuilt it ourselves. Every number stayed, moved to the back. Up front, we showed what it felt like to walk in, who played and why they came back, and what a new owner could build. Same club. Same books.

BUSINESS LENS

OUR LENS

It more than doubled our price.

TRY THIS

01 Walk in like a buyer.
Come through the front door on a busy night. What do you feel in the first five minutes?

02 Read your numbers cold.
Hand your financials to someone who's never visited. Ask what they think your club is. That's your house.

03 Finish one sentence.
"Our club is the place where…" That's your home.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE — A stranger can feel your club before they read a single number.

02 SHOW THE FEELING

The story that fills your courts sells your club.

MOST OWNERS THINK — You get ready to sell when you decide to sell.

WHAT WE LEARNED — **You can't create a feeling at the end. You can only show the one you built.**



We never had an exit date. No three-year plan, no five-year plan. We told our story every day for one reason: to fill our courts.

That same story is what sold the club. When the day came, we didn't have to describe the feeling. Years of it were already there, dated, and told by our players, not just by us.

> AT PICKLES
>
> We shared everything. We filmed our tournaments, posted the wins and the funny moments, and told our players' stories in their own words. We did it to bring people in the door. In the end, it was also the proof a buyer could feel.

IF YOU'RE A FRANCHISEE

Every club in your system has the same floor plan, the same logo and the same software. To a buyer, that's the house. Your people and your local story are the home, and you're the only one who can show them.

TRY THIS

01 Show one moment a week.
A first win, a comeback, a Saturday full house. Share it like a player would, not like an ad.

02 Keep it all.
Save every photo, video and kind word in one place, with the date. That's your story, and your proof.

03 Lead with it.
To a new member or a buyer, open with the feeling. The numbers come second.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE — If you sold tomorrow, your story would already be told.

We sold in 2024, and timing helped. Today's buyers ask harder questions, so a feeling with proof behind it matters more, not less. What worked for us, not financial or legal advice.