

BUSINESS FAMILY STORIES

Beyond the field: Jerry Jones and his family as a legacy

BY: NOOR CHOUDHRY



Jerry Jones, 2008 (Shutterstock)

Even if Sundays have never been for football in your household, you've heard of the Dallas Cowboys, the richest franchise in the NFL according to [Forbes](#) and, arguably, the most distinct NFL brand to exist. For **Creaghan McConnell Gould**, the Jones family exemplifies what it means to be a successful business family.

This generational success is the hard work of Jerry Jones, Owner and General Manager of the Dallas Cowboys. Since he kicked off his ownership in 1989, Jerry hasn't just developed the team on the field, but the team at home too. Today, three generations of the Jones family, including Jerry's three children and a few grandchildren, work within the organization.

In Jerry's own words in his recent monologue in Paramount's [Landman](#) series:

“ *I'm not saying I've done anything right, but I made my mind up a long time ago... I was gonna work with my kids. And they're involved in everything [...] And so when I got the Cowboys, I got it so that we could all work together...*

I thought I was doing it for them. But the one that got the most out of it was me.

[...] I'm pretty proud of them Cowboys. I'm pretty proud of the stuff we've done and oil and gas. It pales in comparison to how proud I am to have lived my life working with my kids.”

While the team on the field hasn't played at the championship level in years, the Cowboys franchise continues to grow and flourish, chronicled in depth in the family's latest Netflix documentary, [America's Team: The Gambler and His Cowboys](#). As of last year, the franchise reached a valuation of **US\$13 billion**, a record-breaking valuation for any sports franchise, also making the Cowboys **the most valuable NFL franchise for the 19th straight year**.

While many NFL teams operate as family-owned enterprises, the Jones family stands in a league of their own, doubling their franchise worth from just four years ago. So, what's the secret sauce? And how has the Jones family managed to distinguish itself from other [family-owned NFL franchises](#)?



Shy Anderson Jr., Haley Anderson, Charlotte Jones, Eugenia Jones, and Jerry Jones April 2014 (Shutterstock)

Building a foundation

Jerry learned lessons in family business early. Long before he took on the roles of Owner and GM of the Cowboys, he worked at his father's insurance company while dabbling in other business side projects. Jerry implemented these early lessons within his own family business. He trained his children on his definition of a disciplined work ethic at a young age and showed them the consequences of a life lived otherwise.

Once, Jerry drove his oldest son, Stephen, to a job interview at Wendy's when he was caught hosting a pool party when he should've been training for college football. While Stephen never actually ended up cleaning the grills and griddles, he did learn a lesson in accountability that day. Jerry also challenged his kids to aim high academically, pushing Stephen to major in chemical engineering.

Additionally, Jerry never ducked from having challenging conversations with his kids. Charlotte Jones was once fired from the Cowboys franchise by her father for underspending the annual marketing budget. After giving her a crash course in tough love, he eventually rehired his daughter.

Early on, he carved his presence deep into his children's lives, often showing up to their sporting games and making family dinners a priority. Despite holding two major roles as an Owner and a GM, which is generally unheard of in the NFL, Jerry always made time for *the business of the family*.

In 2017, Charlotte told The Dallas Morning News:

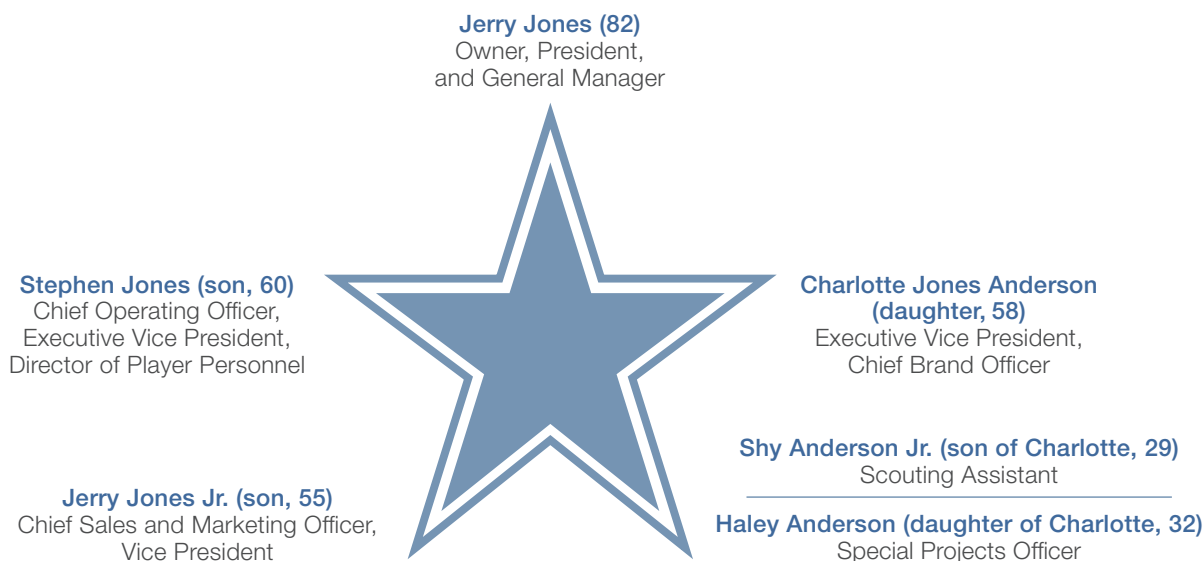


"My mom and dad stressed the importance of family... It was family first. At dance recitals and school events, my parents were always there. They gave us the gift of their presence."

Building a legacy

With the extra care that Jerry has taken to develop his family, it's no surprise that today, the Jones family remains largely unproblematic, especially in the landscape of NFL business families. For instance, the Jones family strikes a stark contrast against some other families who've found themselves caught in a family-versus-family-versus-NFL conflict.

The Jones family has a 51/49% ownership split, with Jerry and his wife Gene owning the majority. Jerry trained his kids, Stephen, Jerry Jones Jr., and Charlotte, from a young age to understand, share, and strategically navigate their 49% together. This involved the siblings discovering their unique strengths and learning how to complement one another while operating under their father's leadership.



The Jones family often interviews together, praising one another for their hard work and dedication to their respective responsibilities. The cohesion within the family has translated into positive business results in the form of revenue, brand value, consistency, and, of course, longevity. The family continues to operate with corporate-level sophistication while maintaining and championing the familial trust and bond that got their dynasty started in the first place.



Drafting the playbook

Jerry didn't just build a football empire — he built a family, a support system, and an organization that could sustain and nurture it. Despite all the noise around the Cowboys, Jerry endured, seeking out creative and lucrative opportunities to grow the franchise into the monumental machine it is today.

In a league where success is often measured solely in trophies and trades, Jerry defined it differently: by the strength of his relationships. Through holding his family accountable, offering ongoing mentorship, and trusting his kids in their respective positions within the company, Jerry built his greatest achievement — his family's legacy.

ADDITIONAL READING AND VIEWING:

- [Forbes: The NFL's Most Valuable Teams 2025](#)
- Watch Jerry's monologue about the importance of working with his family in [Landman](#)
- Watch [America's Team: The Gambler and His Cowboys](#) on Netflix

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