

Your listening to the Your Next Best Step podcast episode number 21. And today we are talking about how focusing on promoting your products that you sell in your store, or the food that you serve in your restaurant, or the service that you provide is actually hurting your business and what you need to do instead. So, stay tuned because we're getting started.

Well hello there and welcome back. It is such an amazing day today. I have gotten so much stuff done. It's amazing when you have a daily process to get stuff done and you really stay focused. Sometimes, I don't know, sometimes when it's nice outside and it's sunny it's so hard to keep your head like together and in the work that you need to do. But today, I don't know, today was good. And I know Mercury's in retrograde or something, I don't know. But anyway, today was an amazing day and I hope it was an amazing day for you too.

And today we're talking about a topic that is something that I am, this is my super strength, this is my ... It always has been even from way back in the day and we're talking going way back in the wayback machine when I used to work in retail. This is something that I did not realize was my super skill, my super strength, until down the road. But it is something that I have definitely always been interested in, and always been good at, and is something that I am a specialist in. And it is all about how to stop promoting your products that you sell, and the food that you serve in your restaurant, and maybe even the service that you have that you provide in your brick and mortar business and what you need to focus on instead.

Because here's the thing. What I have found in my life here on this planet is that a lot of businesses and times are changing. I don't know if you've heard about this new term of experience economy but a lot of businesses have always wanted to solely focus on because we think that our sales come from our products, our services, the food that we sell. So, that's what they want to focus on when they're promoting, when they put together their marketing and they're promoting things on social media, that's what they want to focus on. They want to focus on the product itself. I see it a lot. Even way back in the day when I was in retail or when I worked at a printing company and everybody always wanted to focus on. I mean I sold shoes at one point. And we sold shoes and we had to fit people for shoes. Or I sold, I worked at The Limited and I sold clothing because I was a fashion design major. Or even when I worked at the lab equipment company, the owners always wanted to focus on the product.

And way long time ago when I talked about, I just mentioned that I used to sell shoes was the first place that I actually learned how to do this. And the whole concept is, because you're probably thinking, "All right Teresa, if we're not focusing on the products that we sell that doesn't make sense because that's how we make our sales. And if we're not focusing on promoting the food that we have in our business well that's what makes us money. So what the heck are we supposed to focus on instead?"

Well, long ago when I worked at the shoe company the name of it was The Shoe Tree. And then eventually they changed the name to Sage. But I worked for this gentleman, this entrepreneur, and he was so super wicked smart. And the thing that he did ... Because think about it there's tons, and tons, and tons, of shoe stores out there. So what he did is he looked at it from a different angle and the owner's name was George. And what he did was instead of just focusing on the products that we were selling, which were shoes, he focused on building a unique experience.

And what that looked like was yes we sell shoes however we will come out and work with foot doctors and we will learn about different things that people would come to us to get fitted for for shoes. If they

have foot problems, or ankle problems, or knee problems, or back problems. And we would get educated on that and then we would bring that education back into the store. So, when people came in we would talk to them about what they were looking for or maybe did they have any back problems, did they have any foot problems, did they have toe problems, did they have knee problems, ankle problems, whatever. Did they have pain anywhere?

And then what we could do is we could match that up with the different types of shoes that we sold. So for example, we sold Birkenstocks. Everybody's heard of Birkenstocks I think. And if you haven't, I don't know, maybe you are too young although Birkenstocks are still around, I don't know. Anyway, we sold Birkenstocks. Birkenstocks have a very high arch support. They have a foot bed in them where your toes actually grip the toe area, the toe ridge. And what that did is it actually exercises your foot when you're walking. They mold to your foot. So the more you wear them, the more they'll mold to your foot. So, if you have back problems, or knee problems, or certain issues with your feet Birkenstocks would be a good shoe for you to wear. But if you're flat foot, maybe that's not such a good shoe to wear because it has a super, super, super high arch. And if you have shin splints and you get them all the time might not be a good thing for you to wear. S

So, there were different things that we learned from working with these foot doctors and working with the shoe companies that had a higher purpose. And these shoe companies, he would specifically search out shoe companies that were really well made, many of them were actually handmade, but really well made shoes, really good for your feet, really good. I mean we had a whole line of shoes called SAS, San Antonio Shoe company, that had a very, if you know anything about shoes it had a very high toe box so it was very deep. So, if you had any kind of problems with your, very good for diabetics because of the removable shoe the insole that was in the shoe. It wasn't really tight on the foot. So, diabetics typically have a lot of trouble with their feet. So, a very, very good shoe for it. My father actually wears them. And if you had any type of toe ailments, if you have surgery on your foot, it was a great shoe to wear because of the amount of room and the construction of it, and so on and so forth.

So the point is is that we didn't just sell shoes. And this is like Apple. They don't just sell computers, they sell an experience. They don't just sell phones, they sell an experience. Apple's philosophy is that they want to help people bring out their creative genius and everybody has it. Oh, and by the way, "We have great phones, and we have great technology, and whatever." So, same thing with the shoe place, The Shoe Tree, it wasn't just about selling shoes it was about, "If you have trouble with your feet or if you're in pain we can help you get comfort. Oh, and by the way, we sell really good shoes." So, it wasn't about the product and the service or I shouldn't say that. It wasn't about the product. And I mean service, like if you were a yoga studio or you're a chiropractor, it's not about the product, it's not about the menu items, the food that you sell in your restaurant, it's about creating your own unique signature experience that really is what sets you apart.

So many businesses, especially brick and mortar businesses that I've worked with, what I see is a lot of people wanting to chase trends. A lot of people wanting to focus, okay we need to just keep promoting our products and keep putting coupons out there and keep putting ... We just need to just keep advertising the product and what ends up happening is you end up swimming in a sea of sameness because that's what everybody else is doing. Everybody else is putting coupons out there and advertising their products. And how many, I mean we used to have when I had my first brick and mortar store we were in this small town and my business partner and I used to laugh about how many, I mean it

was a small town, how many hair salons were in this small town. I mean there had to have been three on each street and there were only five streets in the town. It was nuts.

So, when you are just focusing on being another hair salon, or another retail store, or another restaurant by just focusing on the food on your menu and the products that you're selling you end up being just like everybody else. You end up swimming in a sea of sameness. And what happens with that is eventually you become invisible in your community. So, and like I said, we are always taught that, I open up a business. What do you sell? Well I sell laboratory equipment, or I sell Irish products, or I sell, or our restaurant is a pizza shop. Okay. And then that's what you want to focus on.

But the way that the world is changing, and like I said I brought up this term experience economy that is starting to, you're starting to see it here and there and everywhere. And that the new what I like to call the new generation economy is not solely about the product that you sell. It is about the experience and the transformation that you create for people. Well, when I say that to a lot of businesses that I've started working with brick and mortar businesses are like transformation on a resale store. "How the heck can I have a transformation?" Well it takes a little bit of creativity but think about it. Think about Anthropologie, or the Capital Grill, or Zappos an online retail business. Think about unique businesses like that, Apple, they didn't just focus on and build these huge businesses based on the products that they sell because there were other people out there that were selling the same products. What they did is they focused on creating a transformation.

So, with Anthropologie I mean if you've ever done any marketing studies, and case studies, and stuff, I mean they wrote the case study on defining your ideal customer and how you can create your business to attract that ideal customer. And, when you walk into an Anthropologie you are transformed. I mean there is a transformation that happens when you walk in you exhale you don't inhale. Everything is laid out in a specific way so that the displays are like sculptures, and when you're walking through everything flows in a way so that. I means some retail stores you walk in and it's like, so you inhale because it's overwhelming and it's just coming at you. Whereas when you walk into an Anthropologie it's all the flow of the space and you get a feeling of adventure and you get a feeling of excitement. And then like I said, when you look at their displays they are like sculptures. So, that's one way that you can transform people.

Another way is with a brick and mortar store, retail store. What other things can you do that would appeal to your ideal customer? I brought up Anthropologie. I mean they detailed out every single thing that their ideal customer is passionate about, things that they like, things that they don't like. And then that's how they build that experience into their stores. And that's why you get that feeling, that transformation that you're going on a trip, that you have this adventure, that like I said you have these works of art which are actually they're displays of cups, and plates, and whatnot. So, it's creating an experience like no other.

And with a retail store, if I can go back to what I was saying before, with a retail store it also doesn't have to just be about what you're creating in the store visually or the feeling that people are getting. That's part of it. But it can also be part of bringing inspiration from outside. So, that experience can be all encompassing in maybe adding in education. It could be online courses in something.

I mean I have a customer that I work with that is a retail store, traditional brick and mortar retail store, but they've added in an education piece. So, they've taken the knowledge that they have and what their

ideal customer is interested in or what their customers are interested in general and they've created a whole other income stream but a whole other piece that adds to the experience that's an education piece. So, it's an Irish shop. And I've talked about them many times before in the podcast but they've added in a whole education piece that teaches people about the Celtic culture, whether it be what is a tartan, and how to get fitted for a kilt, or what are the seven tribes or nine tribes or however many there are of of the Celtic culture, the Celtic folklore.

So, they're not just promoting, they'll do pieces where they promote different artisans or products that they have in the store, but then they also talk about when we have the different solstices which is part of the Celtic culture, or they talk about Celtic folklore or Celtic holidays, and they bring in that whole education piece. They have workshops, and book signings, and just different things to create that signature experience. And that signature experience is something that only they do.

And when you start to shift, and it is a mindset shift because everybody is like, "I am a dentist and I need to focus on my services as a dentist." Or, "I am a hair salon and I need to focus on what we do here at the hair salon." And while that's all well and good and you can be the best hairdresser out there, you need to be able to really give people something to talk about. You need to really be able to create something that completely redefines customer expectations, that really makes you unique, that shows people what you do differently than anybody else in your industry. And what ends up happening, I have another client, what ends up happening is when you can make this mindset shift and it is hard and it took a while too for the leadership teams in both of these businesses to really come onboard and really have that shift in that thinking and stop thinking just like a restaurant or just like a retail store and start thinking like an icon.

Because what happens is when you focus on creating your own signature experience, whatever that looks like, and it takes into account your strengths, what your customers want, and what you can do to give to transform them when they come into your business. It could be classes, it could be workshops, it could be, like I said, it can be the way that you display things. It can be the visual that people see. It can be the smell that they smell when they come in. Anything that creates that experience. But what ends up happening is you end up being the trendsetter. You end up being the icon in your area which is exactly what happened with both of these businesses and other businesses that I've worked with.

I have another client who owns a gift shop. But instead of just owning a gift shop, because there's other gift shops in the area there's tons of gift shops, she figured out what made her different and brought in inspiration from her previous career which was a teacher. So guess what she's doing? She's teaching. She has an additional space that's attached to her business that she actually teaches classes there. She holds book clubs there. And just figured out what her passions are and brought in inspiration from outside of her industry to create her own signature experience. And guess what happens? Her business increases, her impact increases. She becomes the place to go. Just like these other businesses, they became the place to go. And it wasn't just about, like I said, it's not about the product that they're selling or the food that they're creating, it's about bringing people together for whatever it is that they believe in that they stand for.

So for example, the restaurant has a stand for good quality food, good quality food that people can afford, and then having a place that people can gather and enjoy life. Just take some time to just relax. There's no TVs in the restaurant, zero TVs. And the owner wants it that way because he wants to give people a reason to gather, and talk, and connect and not have their head in their phone or have their

head in the TV. So, they want to bring people, that businesses philosophy is bringing people together for the sheer enjoyment of life through food, and drinks, and fun. So that's what their business is about. The other businesses, it's bringing people together. So, bringing women together to laugh, to have fun, to gather, and also get really cool things for their home to make their home warmer, to be able to decorate their home inexpensively, and have it look amazing.

So, whatever the experience you want to create it has to come from you and it has to come from inside. It has to come from looking at what makes you unique and bringing inspiration from outside so that you can figure out what you do so amazing, better than everybody else so that you can transform your business into being an icon. Just like Apple did, just like Zappos did, just like Anthropologie did. And so can you. And this is something that when I taught, when I work with people and we talk about this signature experience, there is a signature experience which is the overarching thing that we ended up creating. And it's comprised of five different experiences that we actually focus on building.

So the first one is the experience with your employees. Because obviously you want your employees to be happy, you want them to have the brand, you want them to be able to carry out your vision and your message and what the brand is all about to the people that they're working with. So that's one experience that we end up creating.

The second one is leadership. What does the leadership need to look like? To be an icon, to have this signature experience, and to really carry this out, the leadership needs to show up a certain way and you need to show up a way to them. So, there's a whole experience that we end up creating around leadership. And then, there's the community who you are visible to. So, it's the people around you. Because again, it's not just about you making money. When we build a signature experience, it's about, and this new generation economy and this new generation business that I talk about, it's not just about what you do but it's about the collaborations that you can do with others so that you can have more creativity and create more solutions and everybody can benefit.

And it's also about, so that's about the community around you. How can you collaborate with more people and be more creative so that you can all achieve more? And I mean it could be like with a workshop. Maybe in a workshop you're bringing in the local vineyard in there and you're doing some kind of a food and wine pairing, or you're bringing in local breweries, or you're bringing in ... One of my customers, there's a place, a bakery down the street that does dog biscuits, and dog cakes, and all that stuff. So, they brought them in and had a joint event with them. But it's about collaborating with your community. But it's also about people who have started following you on social media or people who have joined your email list. They haven't bought anything from you yet but they're visible, you're visible to them. When you do an advertisement.

So, what kind of an experience can you create that aligns with that signature experience we're trying to create for your business in general? What does that look like and how can you create an experience for the people that you are visible to so that ultimately they want to buy from you, they want to come visit you time and time and time again? And then of course you have your experience with your customers. What does that look like? What does it look like when they're actually in your place of business? But then what does it look like afterward? Because we want them to come back, right? So that's the fourth experience.

And the last experience is the experience you create for yourself as the business owner. As the business owner, we often forget about ourselves and we are just constantly serving, serving, serving. But we also want to make sure that we create an experience for ourselves and we're showing up the way that we need to show up every day for our employees, and our leadership team, and our community, and our customers, and ourselves so that we don't forget about ourselves. So, the signature experience is that much even greater. And that's how we can really become an icon.

And I have this formula, this process that I take people through when I work with them. And I actually have a program called the business growth formula. And it's a six step process. And what it really does is that's where we really get focused on putting together your purpose because this is how we create the experience. We talk about our part. We really get clear on what your purpose is. And there's two steps to that. And then, from there we can really get clear on what your vision and your mission is. And there's two steps to that as well. And then from there we can really start to build your signature process and have and create the blueprint to create this amazing experience and the five experiences that are found within them.

And after that that's how you can really start to create your own rules breaking all the other rules which there really aren't any but really create your own rules that sets you apart from everybody else. It awakens tastes and it can really merge tradition with that new generation economy and that new generation business that really sets you apart from everybody else. And from doing this and building all these different things in these programs and building these five different experiences that's how you really start to create trust, and knowledge, and connection with people instead of just being having promotion, after promotion, after promotion and being just like everybody else in your area. That when we can really build that trust, and that connection, and that knowledge, that's how we can create that transformation for our customers. And we do that through the signature experience. That's how you start setting the trends.

You're not chasing trends like everybody else looking at, oh okay what's going on in the industry today or what types of food are people making? That's how you create the trends. You set the trends that everybody else wants to follow and you don't have to compete against anybody because really there is no competition. When you create your own signature experience that is based on what makes you unique, what you do better than absolutely everybody else and what you want to be known for. That's how competition, there is no competition. And that's why when I talk about the new generation business and the new generation economy which I like to look at as the experience economy that's how we let go of competing and we start collaborating. And we let go of thinking in the box and we start thinking outside of the box and that's how we can really learn how to own our future and not just own a business. It's all through the signature experience.

So, I hope that this episode helped you. Like I said this is my super scale and I could seriously talk about this for four hours. But think about it. What are you focusing on in your business? Are you chasing industry trends thinking that your chef is the most important person in the business or that you need to focus on your products are the most important thing that you need to get out there? Are you solely, do you have blinders on? Do you have tunnel vision where you're like, "I am a cafe and I need to just focus on being a cafe." Or are you focusing on building an experience?

And like I said, I have a signature process that I take people through to build out these five experiences in a six step process that really takes them from just being another business to being an icon in their

This transcript was exported on Jul 09, 2019 - view latest version [here](#).

area. And the growth that happens when you do this. And it takes a lot of work, not the work that you think, but it takes a lot of work. But once you do it, the growth that happens is unbelievable. So think of it, gave you some things to think about and some examples of my history and the man that I originally learned this from, George from the shoe tree, and why I have the super strength. I have done this for people for over 25 years now, focusing on stopping to promote just solely promoting the product and the food that they serve or the products that they sell and really starting to focus on the transformation that you can create by creating a signature experience. So, I hope you have a great rest of your week and until next time take care and be well and I'll see you soon. Bye for now.