

Well, hello there. And welcome back, my friend, to another episode of the Your Next Best Step podcast. I am your host Theresa Cantley, and I am so super glad that you're here and I'm so super excited for this episode. If you are a local business owner, a restaurant owner, a brick-and-mortar store, you're going to want to listen to this episode. It is going to be filled with really great information. I know it's really going to help you, especially with the holiday, the holiday time coming up. Everything gets really super busy, and this is going to help you to get ready for the holidays so you can prepare, but then also after the holidays so you can keep things going.

And it's based on ... I've worked with, if you know my story, you know I've worked with local business owners for the past 10 years. I also had my own brick-and-mortar business. And one of the biggest mistakes that I see people make that own local businesses is that either they are not doing anything to gather information so that they can, from their customers, so that they can continue to build that relationship with them, other than them just happening to come back in their business, or they panic, and just scramble, and do whatever they possibly can do, any random marketing tactic, any new social media strategy that comes up that might not even fit their business and where their ideal customer is. But they just do anything and everything, coupons, upon coupons, upon coupons, and random advertisements. They spent a ton of money scrambling to get new traffic, new foot traffic coming in their door.

And while that's all great and everything, and you want to attract people, what they do is they just scramble for all these random ways to get new traffic coming in, and they forget about and don't even pay attention to the customers that they've already attracted and maybe have been customers for many, many years. I know a couple times when I've recently when I've gone to ... When people have contacted me and it's the first time I'm meeting them, and I ask them, "What are you doing for marketing?" And they say, "Oh, well, we post on Facebook." I'm like, "Okay, well do you have an email list?" And they look at me like I have three heads. They're like, "No." Or if I get someone who says, "Yes, I do have an email list," I'm like, "Okay, great. Do you have different segments by what people have bought, how they came to see you? Do you have any of that information tracked?" And you guessed it, probably the answer is absolutely no and they're not even really sure what to do.

So I wanted to talk about this episode. I mean, some of the episodes that we talk about is a lot more about mindset or kind of being an entrepreneur and the difficulties and struggles that entrepreneurs go through, things I've gone through, things I've worked with clients on to get them through, but this episode is definitely going to be a little bit more tactic, a little bit more strategy. But also, there is a piece to it, a creative piece, that I want you to pay attention to because it's the biggest thing that, like I said, a lot of local business owners forget. And I get a lot, oh, email, it's white noise. No, it's not. If you do it right and you understand the goal of what you're trying to accomplish, it can be one of the biggest benefits and the biggest things in your business.

Business owners don't realize that there are a lot of gold nuggets, there are a lot of opportunity in just connecting back to and interacting with people who have already visited your business. People forget about them. They forget about the fact that they already have customers. They don't connect. They don't reach out. They don't even remember when they come back in the store. I know I've experienced this time and time again. You come back in a store after you've been there, maybe you've been there three times, and they don't even remember who you are. How bad is that?

What we are going to focus on is something that I actually teach inside my Restaurant Growth Formula, my Business Growth Formula programs and is really part of the customer experience that you build in your business, which is one of the experiences that makes up the growth formula, the Restaurant Growth Formula and the Business Growth Formula. So we're going to get into this, and we're going to talk about it.

Because when we are building a customer experience ... And it just so happens I had a meeting with one of my clients last night and their entire staff, and this was a big thing that we talked about. When you are building a customer experience in your business, we want to take into consideration what does a customer experience actually do for that connection and that interaction. Connection and interaction are huge in building any kind of an experience. So what is really behind doing that, okay? It's not just about building your list and using it to market to people. That's not what it's about at all, although a lot of people teach it and a lot of people think that's what it's about. They teach that and people think that's what it's about, but it's not. The idea behind building a customer experience ...

And we're going to talk about some things, other than just building your email list. We're going to talk about some other things that you can actually do to go into this full experience that you're working on. But the three things that building a customer experience, if you do it the right way, the three things that we want to do is we want to build or we want to show integrity, that whatever we say we're going to do we actually do, okay? We want to build knowledge with our clients. We want them to get something more out of it than just buying something from us, okay?

A lot of businesses out there, a lot, a lot, a lot, all they focus on is the product that they build, what color it comes in, and what the promotion is of the week, okay? Yes, that is important in some cases, but most often it's not. Because when you have people out there and you see their promotions and they're saying, "I sell these sunglasses in these colors and these shapes," that becomes white noise, which is what a lot of people focus on. But where the knowledge piece comes in, and also the next one, which is trust with our customers, where those two things come in, we actually start to build that relationship.

So you have the first person which is saying, "I sell these sunglasses in these colors and these shapes," okay? Kind of flat, right? But when you have someone who says, "I sell sunglasses that will fit these different face shapes. And if you're struggling to buy sunglasses to fit the shape of your face, we can help you. We can help you pick the right fit so they're comfortable. We can help you pick the right fit that accentuate the features of your face. And they also come in these colors," so you can see the difference in where you're starting to build that relationship. And obviously when they come in there you're going to help them to pick the right sunglasses for them. And then also, you're showing them the knowledge that you have and how it can help them, but you're also building trust. Those are the three things that we focus on when we are building a customer experience.

So people say, "Okay, well customer experience, it's how you make the store look when they come in." No, that's part of it, but it's much, much more than that, okay? What it comes down to, I like to say, are these three experiences that can also be part of what we call our sales funnels, which gets into segmentation and email lists and stuff, but we're just going to talk about these three experiences that we want to focus on in your business, to create, or to build, or to show integrity, knowledge, and trust. Because remember, your business isn't just about selling a product or service. It's about creating a unique experience that transforms someone's life.

I don't matter what kind of ... It doesn't matter what kind of business you have. You could have a retail store, you could have a restaurant, you can have a yoga studio, you could have a dental office, it doesn't matter. Every business creates an ... or can create an experience. And every business provides some kind of transformation in the lives of their customers, okay? And there are many, many, many businesses out there. I see them all over social media. And all they want to do is just sell their product, okay? And that's fine. That works for some people, but it's not sustainable. So we want to focus on these three experiences.

The first one is the one that everybody is focused on, is just scrambling to get more traffic and scrambling to get new customers. And that's fine, because obviously we want to keep the steady flow of new people coming in, right? I like to call that the attract experience. That's for people who don't know who you are, who don't even know ... don't know where your store is, don't know where your restaurant is, okay? So that experience that we create is going to attract and engage them, and how we do that is we figure out ... One of the key things is figuring out who it is that you're really serving, who it is that you really want to attract in your business. You not going to attract everybody, okay? You are not going to be everybody's cup of tea, and that's okay.

So the more clear we are on who we are trying to attract into our business, as well as what problem we're solving for them ... And every business, like I said, every business provides a transformation. Every business provides. They have a solution to a problem that someone has, okay? In the retail world, it could be people are sick of Me Too stores. People are tired of ... Their ideal customer is tired of salespeople jumping on them as soon as they come in. Maybe it's that people are tired of poor quality. Whatever it is, you are providing a solution to a problem that your ideal customer has.

And the more we can really fully understand what that is, as well as what you do differently than anybody else that's out there, what makes you super unique, what are your super strengths, your superpowers ... So we can combine those three things together, that's how we can attract new people. It's not just about being in everybody's face about 20% off, \$10 off, get this free, buy one get one free, like that's like ... A lot of people do it, and it does work, but we want to be different. We don't want to be like everybody else, okay?

So again, that attract, to attract and engage people, to also show them that whatever you say you do, you actually do, okay? And when you can figure out who your ideal customer is and what is that solution that ... what's their biggest gripe, and what is that solution that you provide to them, the more you're going to be able to adjust your marketing message so you can get more foot traffic through your door, right? And whatever advertisements you're doing, whatever Facebook posts you're doing, whatever Instagram posts you're doing, you're showing up in the right areas where your ideal customer is, where they're hanging out, the more you'll be able to attract people into the business.

Number two. So after you attract them, they come in. The next one is what I like to call the educate experience. That is when we can nurture, we can educate, and we can really start to build the relationship. The attract one is like, "Ooh, let's go on a date. Let's go on a date." The second one, that educate one, is when they're actually in your business. They actually become a customer. Now it's time to educate them and to build knowledge. This is where the knowledge phase comes in.

When we are in this experience, this is when we can really focus on what the experience looks like in our business. What are the positive language cues that we use? What is this? Really understanding your

brand, and the story behind your brand, and really understanding the why. Using different things, this is where you can collect people's email addresses and you can focus on the segmentation that you want. Is it by product? Is it by the event that they're coming to? Whatever that looks like to make sure that you're capturing information from people so you can keep in contact with them.

This is also where you can really focus on consultative selling. You can focus on your staff, your employees, teaching them how to engage with the clients. Teach them how to engage with the customers that are coming through your door. Also, it's if you have a retail store, it could be how you merchandise to keep the flow moving so that people feel super, super great. I like to say when they come into a business they exhale, they don't inhale. They're not like ... but they're like, "Ah, this is comfy," you know?

Or also, and this is a big thing, is educating people on ... If you're a gift store, maybe it's giving them some ... And you offer classes or you offer consultations for interior design. Or maybe it's just maybe you have some handmade stuff in your store. Maybe it's educating them on the artisans. Maybe if you have a card store educating them on where different things are found or whatever it is, starting to really build that knowledge. I have clients that focus on Celtic culture, so they weave that in because there's different symbols and Celtic symbols that are in the jewelry that they sell or the wall art that they sell. So they incorporate that into the training so that their employees can explain those things to people that come through their door.

But again, part of it is also letting them know and set the expectation when they do register for your email list that they're going to ... how often they're going to hear from you and how they can find you, how they can find you so that they can keep learning even more about what's going on in your business, new events that are coming up, new promotions that are going on, maybe even new product that's coming in. Maybe if you have classes that you teach, letting them know how often you're going to hear from them, what they're going to hear, and what they can expect. That's how we can really start to build that knowledge of who you are and what your business is, and also deepen the relationship that you have with your clients. So the interaction and the connection during the experience starts to really go up, and that's exactly what you want.

The third experience that we focus on, this is like what I like to call ... This is where you build your tribe. This is where you build your lifelong customers, and that's the experience that I call the thrive experience. This is where we can really nurture and build confidence in who you are, and what you do, and how you can help them. And ultimately that builds the trust. That builds the trust, and that also makes you the authority, makes them want to come back time and time again.

So how do we do that? Well, if you're collecting the email list and you're also segmenting it on maybe an artisan that they bought, or an event that they attended, or maybe how they found you from a podcast episode, or an advertisement, or whatever it is, okay? What you can do then is then send targeted emails out talking to those people about the things that they're passionate about.

One of my clients sells pottery, a specific type of pottery. So they have their list segmented by people who have bought that pottery, and these people are like diehard fans of this pottery. So whenever, if they have the artisan comes in that makes the pottery, or if they have a new piece, a new signed piece that's coming in or a limited edition piece, they specifically ... They know these people are super passionate about it. They specifically will send a targeted email to those people letting them know

what's happening with that line of pottery, all right? It will also get woven into their general email that they send out, like their weekly here's-what's-going-on, but they also send some targeted things out knowing that ... letting people know that they care about them, that they care about what they're passionate about.

You can also start to do some different things, like we call analog, okay? That is more sending out a thank you note, a handwritten, personalized thank you note to customers that come in. Maybe even also, this is something that we used to do in our brick-and-mortar store, we would take notes. I did them mentally because I have a photographic memory and I just remember everything. But my business partner would actually write notes down. So if somebody was having a ... If they came in and they were looking for a piece of jewelry for their son's wedding, we wrote down ... We wrote notes about it so the next time they came in, after we sent our nice thank you note our handwritten thank you note, the next time they came in we would remember and say, "Hey, how was your son's wedding? How did it go? How are things?" These are all remembering this stuff. These are all things that can be in that education experience, that educate experience. They're educating you on who they are, and you're educating them on who you are so that you can then build this thrive experience.

With the thrive experience, it could also be just how are you going to connect in an even more, even deeper fashion? Maybe it's offering creating a membership for VIP clients, a shopping membership. One of the things that we came up with in this meeting last night is for people who have been frequent customers, they're going to do personalized shopping via FaceTime or Zoom for these VIP customers who have been in there time and time again. It's a service they're going to offer them.

This is a chance. Like I said, there's some strategy behind it because you're strategizing how your solutions, and your products, and your services solve a problem for your clients. So you're really understanding them and the psychology behind what they're thinking and even their shopping behaviors, or their browsing behaviors, or dining behaviors, but you're also getting creative using digital and analog, using digital and live, to make sure that you are connecting with them on a much deeper level. And the only way that we can do this, the only way is that, again, if you are super clear on the solution that you provide, who your ideal client is, and where they're hanging out, and what makes you unique.

So many times I see local business owners who just want ... because they're scrambling so much for new traffic, that they just want to do what everybody else is doing because they think that what those other places are doing is working. And then if they do it, then it's going to work for them and they'll get more people. But you don't know what those other people are doing. You don't know if it's working for them. You don't know if they're making pricing errors or service errors or whatever. So if you're trying to mimic what they're doing instead of figuring out what you want to do differently, if you're just mimicking that, well, then you're perpetuating the mistake and you're perpetuating the problems that that business might have.

But the other thing is that's not your journey. That is not your journey to live, and to build, and to have. You have your own journey as a business owner. And the more you can embrace what makes you different, the more you can embrace building these three experiences to have that iconic customer experience, the faster you are going to be able to grow your business with people who are new, people who are existing, and people who have never heard of you before. That's how you are going to uplevel the connection that you have with your clients, with your customers, to ultimately have them come in

time and time again. And again, how do we do that? We build integrity or we show that we have integrity. We build knowledge, and we also build trust.

A lot of people just want to focus on we're just going to post on a Facebook page or we're just going to post on an Instagram page. You know what? That only goes so far, and it doesn't ... It just starts to build that know, and like, and trust, just starts it. It doesn't deepen it. And the more you can focus on building these three experiences, the more you can take care of people. You can weed out the people that aren't really your ideal customer but also bring in more of the people who are.

And again, I have seen people who focus on this. They focus on it, they work with it, they start small, and then they start to build it. And their business has grown 20%, 30% faster than they ever thought possible because what they're doing is they're focusing on their own journey. They're focusing on their own super strengths and at the same time using what makes them different, and what makes them unique, and putting it back into and investing back into their customers.

I hope this episode helped you. I hope you go back and take a look at your ... If you don't have a customer experience, maybe it's ... it's probably time to create one. If you are one of those people out there who is saying, "I sell sunglasses in these colors at this price," you might want to relook at what you're doing so you can be one of those people that if you're looking for sunglasses and you've had a really hard time getting sunglasses to fit the shape of your face, we have the answer for you. We can help you. You can come in and try on sunglasses, and we can help you find the right shape to fit the shape of your face so that it accentuates all of your amazing features. Oh, and by the way, they come in these colors. Come visit us today. Wouldn't you rather be like the second one and create a different experience for people?

I'd love to hear from you after you listen to this episode. What helped you the most? I would love to hear what you have to say, and I would love to hear if you've implemented any of these things to build your own iconic signature customer experience. So until next week, take care. Be well, and I will see you soon.