



Episode 40: Exploring Sonic Branding with David Meerman Scott

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:00:01 Speaker 1: Welcome to the Neon Noise Podcast. Your home for learning ways to attract more traffic to your website, generate more leads, convert more leads into customers, and to build stronger relationships with your customers. And now, your hosts Justin Johnson and Ken Franzen.

0:00:16 Justin Johnson: Hey, hey, hey Neon Noise nation. This is the Neon Noise Podcast, where we decode marketing and sales topics to help you grow your business. What's up everyone? This is Justin Johnson, and with me I have my co-host Mr. Ken Franzen. Ken what's going on? How's everything going for you today?

0:00:32 Ken Franzen: Things are going great today, Justin. How about yourself?

0:00:36 JJ: I'm doing good as well. I'm excited to hear from our featured guest. He is an expert when it comes to pretty much anything marketing and sales related. Today we have on David Meerman Scott. David is a marketing strategist, international sales and marketing speaker, bestselling author, and co-founder of Signature Tones: The Sound of your Brand. Signature Tones is a sonic branding studio working with organizations on the use of music and sound to establish a unique and memorable identity. His books and blogs are a must-read for professionals seeking to generate attention in ways that grow their business. A frequent speaker for Tony Robbins. David's audience and insights help people, products, and organizations stand out, get noticed, capture hearts and mind. David, sounds like you have a lot going on. Welcome to Neon Noise.

0:01:30 David Meerman Scott: Having a lot going on is a great thing.

[chuckle]

0:01:33 DS: Thanks, Justin and Ken. I'm happy to be here and do some Neon Noise with you.

0:01:39 JJ: Beautiful. Let's do some Neon Noise. Hey David, do me a favor and fill in the gaps on anything I may have missed and just share a little bit about your background.



E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:01:47 DS: No, it sounds good. You got a lot of the high points there. I was a marketing and sales guy at companies for about 15 years. I worked in Tokyo and Hong Kong and New York and Boston for international companies. And in 2002, the company I was working for was acquired by Thomson Reuters and they fired me.

0:02:09 KF: Oh no!

0:02:10 DS: Yeah. And that was the best career move I ever made because that gave me an opportunity to go out on my own. And 2002 was an interesting time because it was the beginning, the dawn of sort of the real time social networking, content creation timeframe. And so I started creating content as marketing and sales purposes back then. Started my blog in 2004, started on Twitter 2008 when it started, and YouTube and all that when it started. And I've written 10 books so far; three are international bestsellers. The one I'm probably best known for is called The New Rules of Marketing & PR.

0:02:53 JJ: Nice.

0:02:55 KF: And your book, The New Rules of Marketing & PR is coming out with an amazing sixth edition later this month, correct?

0:03:02 DS: Yeah. The sixth edition which is remarkable. It came out in the first edition back in 2007, so about 10 years ago. And I was actually writing the first edition in between 2005 and 2006. And I remember distinctly, I was finishing up the book, finishing up the manuscript, sent it to my publisher and it went to print and it came off the printing press, and then Twitter started. And so the book was out and I kept getting these emails from people saying, "Hey David, I love your book but you forgot to write about Twitter," and I'm like "Oh my God..."

[chuckle]

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:03:35 DS: "That's right." I just thought that I had to do an update to The New Rules of Marketing and PR. So the second edition came out about a year later. And now, we continually have new things that we can do, new tools in order to reach people. And so the sixth edition now is on its way out and the new things in the sixth edition are a big section on using Facebook Live. I'm a big fan of the idea of live streaming video as a form of marketing and sales. There's also a section on Snapchat and a bunch of new stories in the book. And it's really kinda cool. That book, it's been really great for all kinds of entrepreneurs to be able to sort of get a sense for how you can reach your audience directly. And in English, we've sold 375,000 copies over the different editions. And then the other thing that's incredibly cool for me 'cause I'm an internationalist, is it's in 29 different languages from Albanian to Vietnamese.

0:04:39 KF: That's awesome.

0:04:40 DS: So what's cool about that is I'm a huge geek about world travel. So I'm constantly getting invited to speak at all these interesting countries where my book is available in the local language. Hey, I get paid to travel, there's nothing better.

[overlapping conversation]

[laughter]

0:04:58 KF: I'm looking at the fifth edition on my bookshelf right now and it's not a little book. It's over, I think 400 pages.

0:05:04 DS: And you know what I did with the sixth edition? I made it shorter.

[chuckle]

0:05:08 KF: No, I love the fact that 400 pages because it's thorough. It's jam packed with a ton of value in...



E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:05:14 JJ: It's awesome.

0:05:14 KF: Is a complete manuscript of... I feel like it's one of those must-haves on the shelf of any business owner or entrepreneur that wants to understand the world today that we live in because in it, you talk about some of the old rules of marketing PR. And I wanted maybe kick-off with maybe you talking a little bit about the old rules...

0:05:37 DS: Sure.

0:05:37 KF: And then segue into the new rules.

0:05:40 DS: Yeah, absolutely. So entrepreneurs, in order to generate business, they need to get attention for their company, attention for their products and services. And for decades, the old rules suggested there were three basic ways to generate attention. Number one, you could buy attention by buying advertising. So, you could buy television or radio or newspaper or magazine ads. You could buy a list and send people a direct mail. You could do a billboard by a side of the road, whatever. Buying advertising. You could try to go through the media and traditional public relations form of generating attention is you have to beat up members of the media and try to beg them to write about you or broadcast about you in their publications. And then the third basic way of generating attention is through sales and primarily sales and traditional forms of sales has been about interrupting people. Calling them up and cold calling them or sending them emails that are unsolicited or knocking on doors or whatever it might be. So, those old rules, many, many entrepreneurs are still using those methods.

0:07:02 DS: And so what I propose is that there's a much better way to reach people because now, the ways people are buying has changed and we all know that. Everyone listening in on this knows that, because if you need to make a decision about a product or service, let's say you wanna go on a ski holiday or you wanna buy a new set of golf clubs or you need a new piece of software for your business. First place you're gonna go is online. You're gonna go to Google or you're gonna go to the social networks and ask people for their advice. So, the whole idea of the new rules is how can you be in front of people at the moment that they're looking

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

for a product or service just like yours, as opposed to spending all of this time and effort to try to interrupt your way into people which is the old ways that people have been doing that for decades.

0:07:57 KF: Sure. So what about the listener who is intimidated by... Because a lot of this involves technology and they see this mad rush of competitive landscape in front of them. Everyone's rushing to these. There's so many different platforms and so much opportunity. What do you say to that person there who is looking at, and still sitting on the sidelines waiting for I don't know what 'cause I see so many doing that. I think they're confused, scratching their head. What do you say to that person there that's confused and/or intimidated by the technology?

0:08:36 DS: Yeah. So I think the first thing I would say is that this is the world today and if you want to grow your business, if you want to be successful into the future that you have to figure this out one way or another. Whether it's you yourself figuring it out, which I highly recommend, or working with somebody to help you to figure it out. But I believe it requires a mindset shift and I think the same kind of mindset shift is required to, for example, get fit and healthy. So when I turned 50 a couple of years ago, I weighed 215 pounds. I was overweight, I didn't feel good and I decided to have a mindset shift around fitness and health and began exercising everyday, began eating much better and I'm about 157 right now. I'm 6 feet 1 inch. I'm 56 years old. I can bang out 12 pull ups in a row, Saturday just for fun I swim three kilometers in way less than an hour.

0:09:48 DS: So, I've gotten incredibly fit. I had tried that dozens of times in my life and it never worked. It only worked when I made the mindset shift. So I think for those people who are fearful and I totally get it. I've spoken with hundreds of people who have been fearful in this way, that if you just begin to make the mindset shift that this is the way that people are making purchase decisions today because guess what? This is the way you make purchase decisions today. You're going to the web when you have a problem to solve. You're not waiting for a magazine article to tell you the answer or going to the library to search on something, you're going to the web. And so that's the first observation. The second observation is that yes, there are tons of tools out there, but you don't have to do all of them. I will give you permission not to do all of them. I myself don't do all of them.

0:10:52 DS: So, it's a matter of choosing what are the several things that are going to be effective for you. So, some people aren't really very good at writing, but they can maybe create a YouTube channel. So, there's a really cool guy called Matt Risinger. He's actually, his story is in the new sixth edition of the The New Rules of

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

Marketing and PR. He runs a custom home building company in Austin, Texas and his was a new company about 10 years ago. He was competing against builders who have been in the market for 10 and 20 and 30 years before him. So, it was very difficult for him to build a word of mouth network. It was very difficult 'cause he didn't have any money. You're just starting out to spend money on advertising. So he built a YouTube channel and he started to educate people about how to build houses. And his YouTube channel started with just him with a very simple video camera that he gave to one of his workmen and said, "Hey, film me and I'm gonna talk about some aspect of building."

0:12:00 DS: And he put those up once a week and his YouTube channel starts to catch on and then he started to get inquiries from the building supply companies like Anderson Windows and the people who make doors and the wood companies and whatever. They say, "Hey, we really like your video channel, can you talk about our products and service?" So he started to sell sponsorships on his YouTube channel. So, very quickly, he built an amazing channel so that last year, 2016, he had six million views of his YouTube videos and then a stat that I absolutely loved is that he made \$150,000 in sponsorship revenue on his YouTube channel which is essentially his marketing and then his business is running at about \$15 million a year now. The homes he builds range in from about \$10 million to \$5 million and he's doing a four or five or six houses a year. So, he's doing really, really well and it was all on the back of a YouTube channel.

0:13:10 KF: That's great.

0:13:11 DS: That's just to illustrate that you don't have to be fearful, "Oh my god, I can't write. So, therefore, I can't do anything." I mean, in Matt's case, he just said, "Hey, I can film some YouTube videos." He was a real big fan of This Old House when he was growing up, and so he said, "Hey, I'm just gonna create a version of This Old House, put it on YouTube." So, that's just one illustration.

0:13:38 DS: Another buddy of mine is, he runs a surf school on Nantucket Island and he's built his business on the back of Instagram because Instagram is a very visual medium and his Instagram ID is nantucketsurfing. So, he's got a good following, and then he, everyday, will do... Shoot photos both from the land using his iPhone and also from the water using a GoPro and then he'll put those shots up onto his Instagram and it's become like the de facto place for surfing on Nantucket Island and he just happens to run the local surf school and that drives people to his surf school.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:14:19 DS: And then very, very cleverly, he shoots pictures of his students. Many of them are kids. So, he first asks permissions of the parents if it's okay for him to post the photos if they're underage, and almost everybody says yes. So, he posts those photos sometimes to his Instagram and also his Facebook and then the little kids... Imagine a 12-year old surfing for the very first time. They're incredibly stoked if there's a picture of them in the water and then they share it with their friends on Facebook and then, "Gee, we're going to Nantucket, too. Maybe we should take our kid and have them go to the surf school." I know that was a very, very long answer to a very simple question but getting over the fear, developing a new mindset and then I think realizing that you don't have to do everything. You don't have to go and do all of these various different things. You can just create something that you're comfortable with.

0:15:17 JJ: I love it.

0:15:18 KF: You break up an interesting point that I wanted to ask you about because you made note of going with the medium that fits your personality, comfort level, what your good at, whereas sometimes I think business owners, entrepreneurs look at competitors that are having success and try to mimic what they are doing or try to copy a pre-written formula of another. Would you say that it's better to go with a medium or a form of communication that you find more comfortable even if it's against the perceived blueprint that is working for others or do you feel that it's a combination of both?

0:16:05 DS: So, actually, I'm gonna go down a slightly different path. I think that one thing that's essential is what particular medium or tool or social channel are your buyers likely to use? And then that wasn't one of the ones that you just suggested. So, that's an important thing to consider. So, for example if you're selling enterprise software, you probably ought to be on LinkedIn.

0:16:38 DS: However, it's probably not such a great idea just to devote all of your attention to SnapChat just because most enterprise software is purchased by people who are in corporate organizations and they're more likely to be on LinkedIn and much less likely to be on SnapChat. So, the first consideration would be where are the buyers that you're trying to reach? What social network are they likely to be on? So, once you've checked that box, then, I totally think that you should focus next on what you're comfortable with and I would actually encourage you not to try to do what the other guys are doing. If your competitor has a really popular blog, I would think that that's a reason for you maybe not to necessarily push in that direction but maybe rather well, maybe we can do something around video 'cause they're not doing video or maybe we can do something around infographics 'cause they're not doing that or maybe we can create an online course

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

that we can offer for free that can educate people around this particular market expertise that we have. So, there's lots of different ways that you can get out there and then you can also do more than one of course.

0:18:00 DS: But yeah, I tend to be a contrarian when it comes to what the competitors are doing. And I would like to see people go down a different path than trying to copy what somebody else is doing.

0:18:14 KF: I love it, it's so important to... You get those conversations, you engage with these conversations where people are talking about what the direct competitors and its perceived success... And it sounds a little bit like maybe some of the old rules, because of the old rules that you talked about, the buy your audience, leverage the media or the sales. Back then, you had no options. Today we have all these different options. There's plenty of platforms and mediums that we could leverage.

0:18:46 DS: Yeah absolutely. There's tons of them. That being said, I do think there is one other consideration and that is that, I think everybody should own some real estate on the web. And here's what I mean by that. Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat, they're all great, but ultimately the content is owned by those social channels, and the various search options are sometimes difficult. If you go to Google, and you're trying to find something on LinkedIn, it's either hard or impossible. So, I always recommend that every organization definitely have a web presence, a website in a minimum, but could be a blog or could be some other forms of content that they own, that's on the web, that their URL that they own that drives back ultimately to their business. I think that's essential for every organization even if they end up doing a great job with something like YouTube or Facebook or LinkedIn or some other social channel or Twitter. Ultimately, they're going to need their own web presence, which is real state that they own that gets driven back to them in the search results.

0:20:10 JJ: Great point.

0:20:11 KF: Absolutely, because you look at how Facebook changed when they placed the algorithm in their feed in the post, we used to be able make to our pages that would reach much of our audience, now reaches very little unless it gets a lot of sharing and interaction without paying to play.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:20:34 DS: Yeah, I've had that problem too. I used to get really, really good engagement with my Facebook posts. I'd have hundreds of people who were sharing and reading my stuff. I'd have dozens and dozens of comments and several hundred likes even just on a real simple post. I'm not getting anywhere near that anymore. And every time I send something they immediately ask me if I wanna pay to boost it.

[chuckle]

0:21:01 JJ: No.

[chuckle]

0:21:03 DS: Yeah, it seems like they've changed the algorithm such that they're doing it to make money for Facebook rather than necessarily doing it for their audience. And then on the flip side of it, I no longer get my feed in chronological order. Now, I'm seeing messages from people from some weird algorithm where they decide that I'm gonna be interested in something when I'm not necessarily interested in it. So yeah, so that's what can happen. You can build an amazing presence on a social network like Facebook and be humming along and doing great, and all of a sudden that Facebook can take that away from you, just by changing the way they do their algorithm. So that's why it's so essential to have your own real estate on the web.

0:21:53 KF: I couldn't agree more.

0:21:54 JJ: Absolutely.

0:21:55 KF: And you made mention of the sixth edition, you're covering Facebook Live and Snapchat, which we see video becoming more and more of a major component on these social platforms. Talk to us a little bit more how much emphasis we should place on video in our content marketing mix. Is that something because we're seeing more and more of it and we just kinda... I don't know if this contradicts the discussion we just had or not but, the increased use of video and presence of video, it almost seems like the photo is gone by the wayward and a text post is getting buried by all this visual content.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:22:40 DS: Yeah, never mind the algorithm part because I'm not an expert on Facebook's algorithm or any of the other social networks' algorithm. It used to be when I did a Facebook Live it was seen by thousands of people, now when I do one that's not necessarily true, although it can be. But what I think is so cool about Facebook Live, and for those people who have not experienced it, you just use your smart phone, access Facebook, and then there's a little button that says, "Go Live," you press it, and then you're live. You're transmitting a video at that moment. It's so darned easy.

[chuckle]

0:23:24 DS: It's like so freaking easy. And that's one of the reasons why I'm a big fan of Facebook Live, is because if you have a decent following on Facebook, or if you're trying to establish a following on Facebook, it's just so easy to create these little videos. Now, the question is, "Okay, well what am I gonna do a video on?" Well, at a conference you could interview somebody and take three minutes to interview them using your smart phone, using Facebook Live. You could do a little "how to" tutorial using Facebook live.

0:24:00 DS: You could like, for example, I wrote a book called Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead, I'm a fan of the Grateful Dead. And so some of the former members of the Grateful Dead have been touring this summer under the name Dead and Company, and with John Mayer filling the Jerry Garcia role. So I went to two Dead and Company shows in Boston at Fenway Park a couple of weeks ago. So I thought, "Well shoot, I'll just broadcast one of those songs on Facebook Live," which I did. And then I also broadcast a song on Twitter's video streaming feature. And it was cool because it took me 10 seconds to set it up, three or four minutes to hold the camera, and several hundred people saw it. And people remember, "Oh yeah, he's the dude who wrote the book Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead," so it's kind of part of my branding that I'm a Grateful Dead fan.

0:24:53 JJ: That's pretty cool.

0:24:54 DS: So, it's kind of as simple as that. So I am a big fan of it, and I think people should experiment with it and see if it's something that they like, because some people really get into it, and find that it's extremely helpful for their business. Again, because it's so easy, and it's free, and if you end up figuring it out, and

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

having fun with it, and finding a little niche, it's entirely possible that you can build an incredible foundation and grow your business as a result. I had one cool experience. I was on the stage at a Tony Robbins event. I speak at all Tony Robbins Business Mastery events around the world. And I was on a Tony Robbins stage in January, and I did a little section in my... I have a two and a half hour slot at Business Mastery. I did a little section on news drafting, which is an awesome concept about how you can draft off of the news to get exposure. So it was about a 15 minute section in a two and a half hour speech, and I had Tony Robbins' social media guy hold my iPhone, filming me using Facebook Live, but filming me so that he could see the whole stage from the camera, and then he would sometimes go zoom in on the audience and whatnot. So anyway, he was filming me about 15 minutes, and then we posted it, and then it got shared by a bunch of people who were there because I said, "Hey, I'm filming this on Facebook Live, if anyone wants to see it when you get back to your room." And it had 75,000 views.

0:26:33 KF: Wow.

0:26:33 DS: And just, it took five minutes to set up, and we did it. It took absolutely no work. And I don't have 75,000 followers on Twitter. I have 125,000 on... I mean, sorry, I don't have 75,000 followers on Facebook. So, I'm reaching tons of people who don't know me yet, and maybe some of those will buy a book. Maybe some of those will be interested and hiring me to speak at their event. So something like that is just a really cool way to get yourself out there.

0:27:02 KF: Perfect. In the video you're talking about, we're not... This is live. This is, press the record button or play, yeah, record button, and you're live. This isn't staged. This isn't [0:27:13] ____ and all the...

0:27:14 DS: No. You're live. No. No. I call it a business casual video.

[chuckle]

0:27:25 JJ: I love that.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

[chuckle]

0:27:27 DS: When I started my career in the late 1980s, my first job was on Wall Street. Man, I wore a crisp, sharp suit and tie with shined shoes every single day. On Fridays, at 4:30 PM, you're allowed to loosen your tie. [chuckle] Other than that, you had to be buttoned up. And now, practically every market is incredibly casual. I go to meetings in Boston or San Francisco, wherever I go, and I wear jeans and a decent shirt, and in the summer I'll wear a polo shirt. It's completely changed. So, I think of videos the same way. You used to have to have lights, and makeup, and scripts, and multi-cameras, and all this, and it was a big fat expense. But now I call it business casual video, and just, hey, come as you are, and no makeup. You don't need to comb your hair, you just shoot, you just turn on your camera and shoot. And while it is called Facebook Live, and you literally go live, and people can be watching your stream live, Facebook does then archive it so you can see it again. And so you can point to it later on, the next day, two weeks later, a month later, whatever it is.

0:28:43 KF: Sure. And I love the term there, business casual video. That's fantastic.

0:28:50 JJ: That was great.

[chuckle]

0:28:51 KF: Because even if you wanted to, and this is one thing that I've, talking with a lot of business owners and entrepreneurs, they tell me, "Ken, I'd love to do video, but to hire someone to, I don't have a place to shoot video," they have to hire someone to come in to shoot the video, to insert B-roll, background music and this long... And it doesn't have to be, the video doesn't have to be that high production. There's nothing wrong with it. I think the high production video is fantastic. But the point I'm trying to make is that it doesn't need to be even recorded video, even if you're not shooting live and you want to record a video, and then check it out, and then post it. I just did this for a position we're hiring here at the company. I was gonna post it on Facebook, anyone knowing anyone that wants to be a Content Manager at Neon Goldfish, please apply. And I said, "You know what? I'm just gonna shoot a quick video." And I did a couple takes, but I did a video, I used a tripod 'cause I had one here at the office. Took me five minutes, put it on Facebook, and I had 1700 views in 24 hours.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:30:01 DS: Nice. Yeah, exactly, exactly. Nice. Awesome. That's exactly what it's like. That's exactly the idea. And it's just so darned easy. So, that's not to say that a high production value video is going away. I myself occasionally will do a high production value video, but I'm doing a lot more casual videos than I am the full blown, expensive kind of videos.

0:30:31 KF: Sure. So you mentioned newsjacking. You have a book on newsjacking, and I believe an online course on it as well. Is that correct?

0:30:38 DS: I do. Actually I have two online courses. One online course is called Master Newsjacking, and the URL is newsjacking.com. The other one is called New Marketing Mastery, and the New Marketing Mastery is the program I developed with Tony Robbins, and we make it available at all the Tony Robbins events. But New Marketing Mastery, if you go to that URL, newmarketingmastery.com, you can find it. So, newsjacking is this incredibly cool concept that I pioneered, and it's basically what you do is you look at what's going on in the news. It could be in the international news or national news or it could be just local news if you're running a business that you serve customers locally, or in your marketplace if you're serving a niche market. So you follow the news, and then you figure out what's going on in the news that you have some kind of expertise around, or what's going on in the news that you might poke a little bit of fun at. And then you create a piece of content that injects your take on that news, so that the media can find it, and also potential customers can find it, and also it ends up getting shared by a lot of people.

0:31:53 DS: And it's a great concept to generate attention in a really big way. I'll give you an example. So a young entrepreneur by the name of Trent Silver, is he runs a bunch of different little companies, but one of the little companies he runs is called Cash For Purses, and what Cash For Purses does is they buy used handbags from people, high end Louis Vuitton, Prada, Coach, bags like that, fix them up if required, and then they sell them through either eBay or through their boutiques. And Trent told me that his biggest challenge was how does he get more handbags to be able to sell, high quality handbags. So, he looks to the news to try to find stories that are interesting that he can tie his brand, Cash For Purses, to.

0:32:47 DS: So, as an example, recently Lindsay Lohan was having money troubles and she was in the news because she was having trouble paying her bills because she hasn't gotten any movie gigs recently. So, Trent Silver created a blog post where he offered to buy Lindsay Lohan's used handbags. And that was really cool because members of the media were getting tired of the same storyline of, "Oh Lindsay Lohan's having money troubles. She's not getting any movie deals, she might go bankrupt." And all of a sudden, they could

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

say, "Oh, and maybe her financial troubles will be solved if she just sells all of her used handbags to this company, Cash For Purses." And he ended up getting stories written about that on the Huffington Post and in People magazine and in a bunch of different publications, dozens of different publications. And what Trent told me is that once those stories all came out, he was having a huge spike in traffic on his website, and he generated 8,000 online inquiries, and about 18% of them ended up closing. In other words, people sold them his... The handbags, and he generated \$250,000 in new business just by doing that. And by the way, it's free. Newsjacking is free. Just create content around a story that's happening in the news.

0:34:15 KF: That's great. And the timeliness of that, it has to be paramount. You have to jump on that right away while it's still relevant, correct?

0:34:24 DS: Yeah, the timeliness is really important. Absolutely. The timeliness is essential. When the story is happening, that's when the public cares about it, that's when it's really interesting, that's when people wanna know right now. I'll give you an example in my own world. I started writing in August of 2015, so almost exactly two years ago. I started writing about the US presidential election, and this is the fifth US presidential election cycle that I've written about. I started writing about it when I was writing in magazines. This was before I even had a blog. But I wrote about it starting on my blog on the '04 cycle and then the '08 cycle and whatnot.

0:35:12 DS: So, I'd written a lot about the primaries, and I'd written a lot about the general election with Clinton versus Trump. And I live in the Boston area, so I went to a bunch of different, first primary events in New Hampshire 'cause New Hampshire is only an hour for me. And then I went to some of the general election events in New Hampshire. And New Hampshire of course, being the very first primary state. New Hampshire also of course was the swing state this year. So I saw Donald Trump speak multiple times, I saw Hillary Clinton speak multiple times, I saw Bernie Sanders and a bunch of the other candidates speak, and started writing a lot about Donald Trump being the most real time candidate. And I wrote a lot about Donald Trump's use of Twitter, and his use of real time.

0:36:00 DS: And Donald Trump, by the way, also his use of newsjacking. And one example of Donald Trump newsjacking was when Hillary Clinton was giving her Democratic National Convention speech, probably the most important speech of her entire political career. During that speech, Donald Trump was live tweeting it, and that by live tweeting it, Donald Trump made it possible for his quotes to be in all of the stories about Hillary Clinton's speech and that's the whole idea of newsjacking. Put your stuff in the market at the right

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

moment, which was a brilliant strategy. I'm not talking about Donald Trump's politics. I'm not commenting on politics. I don't comment about politics. I only comment about marketing and sales, but Trump was the best marketer, and everybody thought Hillary Clinton was going to win the election and all the polls suggested that, all the reporters suggested that, every story said Hillary Clinton's gonna win the election, and there's almost like no doubt in anybody's mind in November of last year that Hillary Clinton was gonna win. And then, holy crap, Donald Trump won. And I spent, after it was clear that he won, I spent about an hour and a half writing a blog post and the title of the blog post was "The best marketer was the elected president". And I referred back to some of my other blog posts.

0:37:24 DS: That came out at 4:00 AM in the morning on the day after the election. So, in other words, only about two hours after the election was finally called for Donald Trump. And I got so much coverage from that one blog post because I got written up in about 10 different media publications as a result of that and I make the majority of my income from paid speaking gigs. I charge \$25,000 for a speaking gig. I ended up booking a bunch of speaking gigs because people said, "Oh, this guy is the expert on Donald Trump's marketing. We should have him come and speak at our event." So, you never really know when one of these opportunities are gonna come up so the speed is incredibly important, and in my case, I put that blog post about two hours, roughly two hours after Trump was named the next president, named president-elect. Had I waited, it wouldn't have been successful. I had to put it out right then. Even if I had waited until noon the next day, it wouldn't have been successful. So, all about doing it right at that moment.

0:38:30 JJ: Brilliant.

0:38:32 KF: Yes, to say the least in just watching. So it's always the news coverage the, main news channels, where you would recommend that people monitor for opportunities. I know that I receive emails twice a day from Help A Reporter Out with different topics based on the things that I'm interested in or I think I could contribute to, and I've responded to some, but I've not been successful, but I probably haven't worked that as hard as I could have. What would be your suggestions? And obviously I don't wanna take anything away from your course or your book.

0:39:12 DS: Oh no, no, no, I'm happy to give away the secrets. The course provides tons of details on all of the stuff, but here's what I do. Everyday, I read the daily print newspaper of wherever I happen to be. I live in the Boston area, so when I'm at home, it's the Boston Globe, but if I'm on the road, I get the local daily newspaper because I wanna know what people are writing about in the newspaper. I wanna know what the

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

editors are writing. I know it's really old school, but it's an interesting way to just get a sense of what stories are out there. Every single day, probably between three and six times a day, I look at Google News. So Google News, you can get on the web which is just news.google.com or you can get the Google News app which I have for a smart phone. And Google news tells me up to the moment what's going on in the news. I have no personalization on. I'm not looking for a particular search term. I'm just looking in general what's going on in the news. And then those are really my primary sources of finding out what's happening in the news and I'm constantly looking for something that's interesting, that is relatable to my area of expertise that I can then create some content around.

0:40:35 KF: Interesting. So you're keeping the newspaper, the print versions at least, going a little bit, right, doing you own part?

0:40:41 DS: Sadly, for print newspaper, they are going in the southerly direction, in terms of readership, but I am one of the loyal readers that will continue. But yeah, I read my breakfast with the print newspaper every morning and the reason for that is that so many people do follow the news electronically, but either the algorithms or the personalization that they have in place, they tend to focus their news reading habits in certain directions based on their interest and that means they're crowding out the possibility for something serendipitous that they never thought to ask for.

0:41:26 KF: So you're speaking at lots of events, you're creating tons of content, you're monitoring the news for opportunities to jump on. How do you manage to get all those done in a day. What does your day look like? Do you have any specific habits or routines that you employ?

0:41:47 DS: Yeah. I'm pretty efficient. So, I'm pretty good at moving from one thing to another pretty quickly. A lot of people specifically ask that question around social media. How can you keep up with social media or in the case of news tracking, how do you keep up on the news stories? And the answer is actually simple, I find time for social media and looking at the news and all those other things during downtime. So, before we started recording this Podcast I had a call with one of my advisory clients and there was about five minutes in between the two calls, that was five minutes that I could check out Twitter to see if there's anything going on, return a tweet, that kind of thing. So it's not like, "Oh my God. I have to now spend two hours on Twitter."

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:42:38 DS: It's like, "No, there's five minutes in between two meetings that probably would have been down time anyway. So let's turn it into something that's good." So, the whole idea of social networking, I believe, is a real time endeavor. I make it into a real time thing, as opposed to blocking out time, rather than that, I find the time during the day. And then, I carve out time where I try to turn everything else off, for when I'm writing 'cause that's where I know I need to be thinking and typically, I'll write early in the mornings, I'll typically also write on Saturdays. If there's nothing else going on, I'll block out almost an entire Saturday and then I'll be doing some net new writing like for a new book or something.

0:43:27 KF: Nice. So David, tell us a little bit about your company Signature Tones, and talk a little bit about sonic branding. This is a newer term that I'm thinking a lot of listeners haven't heard of, and I'm really interested myself to learn more about sonic branding.

0:43:44 DS: Yeah, it's an interesting concept. I started this company very recently, last couple of months with a fantastic musician, named Juanito Pascual. He's a touring musician, has a bunch of albums out. And I'm a music geek and have no musical ability, and so we combined our areas of expertise to create this company together. Sonic branding is the use of music in a company's branding activities and marketing activities. So, typical uses of music would be for example, a sonic logo, now a sonic logo is between, say, three and a dozen notes, where that becomes a very distinct image of a company based on sound. For example, people are familiar with the NBC tone, they're familiar with the Skype ring tone, for example, or familiar with the Apple start up chime, when you first start your your Apple computer, things like that, those are all sonic logos. So, my company creates sonic logos for companies that they can use in their marketing.

0:45:04 DS: Another aspect of sonic branding is the creation of an original song, and original songs are used by companies in their branding for things like YouTube videos or podcasts. You could have, for example, for the Neon Noise Podcast, I think you need to have your own theme song. So my company could create the Neon Noise Podcast theme song that would be created especially for you, and that would be based on the brand, and based on who you're trying to reach and sort of the attributes of what the podcast is like. There's a lot of people who do use music, but most people don't even consider that they can have custom music that can be made especially for them that they can own. The other options for music are that number one, you steal it, which I highly do not recommend 'cause you can go to jail. In other words, you use music you don't have permission to use. The second thing that people do is they use stock music. You go to a company that can sell you for a couple of hundred bucks some music that you can use.



E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:46:15 DS: The problem with that is that other companies are using that music as well. But with owning your own music through some custom sonic branding, that's yours to use in anyway you want, you have complete ownership over it, to use in anyway you want. It could also be used at trade shows, it could be used when you walk on stage at a speech, it could be used in TV or radio commercials, the music can be used in all kinds of different places.

0:46:43 KF: Is sonic branding, something reserved for larger corporations or is this something that smaller business owners and entrepreneurs could consider using as well?

0:46:57 DS: Oh, it's basically for any kind of organization. It could be for very small organizations. It's not as expensive as you might think to create a custom music or to create a sonic logo. And it's kind of one of the last untapped areas where you can really do some interesting custom branding. And you know most companies understand that they need to have their own visual logo, they need to have a logo that represents their company visually, a graphic. Most companies recognize that they need to have words and phrases that they use to describe their company and that's something that can be unique to them. Many, many companies recognize they have a color scheme that can be determined, that can be the thing that they focus on with what colors are appropriate for their brand, but there's almost nobody who's doing a custom branding around the use of music. This is sort of a similar kind of expense to creating a logo, it's not expensive.

0:48:15 KF: And you bring up the sense of hearing or sound and it is when you really think about it, a seemingly untapped or under-utilized way of communication from a branding aspect that I don't know many using and I consider myself to be decently aware in the marketing world. And when you brought up sonic branding, I read into it and understood it a little bit better, but it wasn't a term that I was overly exposed to or familiar with. My initial instinct was, that major corporations like McDonalds the 'Duh-duh-duh-duh-duh' type instance would be...

0:48:56 DS: But see, you remember that.

0:49:00 KF: But I do, yes. I have small children and my one, my middle child, she's four and she is the little princess of jingles on TV when they come on.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

[laughter]

0:49:11 KF: She just rattles them off left and right and I just chuckle, but their frequency. So, when you're looking at that, that frequency comes into play, because in order for your brand, much like a visual aspect where it's seen over and over and over again from a logo standpoint for it to be recognizable, do you recommend a certain level of frequency? Or is there a certain type of marketing plan, or you mentioned some of the different things were when you come out on stage to speak, or we talked about the creation of video in some of these... We have a podcast here, which has audio. When you're looking at the small business owner, entrepreneur who is employed with a certain marketing mix, obviously there's the idea behind, "Oh, I have to have a method of getting this out there," correct?

0:50:08 DS: Yeah. I mean I think it partly depends on how an organization might use it and you would make that decision before you would say, "Okay, well here's sort of the frequency." We built a sonic logo for a company... Actually, we're in the process of building a sonic logo for a company now, that they're a smaller company, they're actually a startup, and they're going to be doing management of condominium complexes. And they wanted to have a sonic logo specifically because they wanted to have consistent music on hold when people call in, because there were a lot of telephone calls, and they didn't wanna do what most companies do, default to some crazy music that they have, or do nothing, or some notice from the CEO or something. So, they're gonna have their own music for on hold, they're gonna use it for other purposes as well, but that's primarily what they wanted. And then one of our other clients, they're a company that is in the solar power business. And they really saw an opportunity for sonic branding, because they... That nobody else in the industry uses sonic branding, and they looked and they looked, there's like a couple of dozen companies that create these high-end level installations of solar power around the country.

0:51:41 DS: And they checked, nobody else has any Sonic branding at all. So, they wanted to stick out. We talked earlier in our conversation about how you choose which social network to spend your time in and part of that would be not talking what the competition is doing. And I think this idea of sonic branding is something similar is that it's one of those vast untapped areas that we have an opportunity to do something and that many people aren't. And it's exactly the reason why I chose to create this sonic branding company, is that I've been looking at creating a marketing agency of some kind for 15 years now, and I'd never done it. And I'm thinking to myself, do I create a search engine optimization agency, do I create a public relations agency, do I create an advertising agency, do I create a content marketing agency? And I rejected every one of those ideas, because I thought, "You know what, there's people who are doing this pretty well right now.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

It'd be hard to compete with them. Some of my friends are doing those sorts of agencies, I don't wanna compete with them." And then I was thinking, "Wow, sonic branding is fascinating. I don't know anyone who's got a sonic branding company. Maybe I'm gonna focus on that, it's untapped, it's an opportunity, and it's also something that excites me, because I'm a music geek."

0:53:11 DS: And then I found this wonderful partner in Juanito, he is an amazing composer and can compose these really cool music, these really cool sonic logos. So, I just think it's an interesting, untapped, unique opportunity for the right kind of company to be able to get themselves out there in a new and unique way.

0:53:32 KF: Thanks for those examples, 'cause I think that will really help see the different applications, because myself, my brain kept getting stuck on television, or these mass medias with these giant spends and things along those lines. So, it's helpful to really understand how someone that's not advertised with those types of resources, they can adopt this, like you said, untapped medium and incorporate it into the marketing mix.

0:54:04 DS: Yeah, and right, exactly. I mean in my case, I run a one person company, and I've got a custom song that I have. I've actually had it now for 10 years. I had it way before I started my sonic branding company, and that's one of the reasons why I got interested in doing this. So, I use my music as background on my YouTube videos. I frequently will use my music when I'm walking onto the stage before I give a speech. So, there's a number of different places that I'm using that music and I paid for it a long time ago, I paid for it 10 years ago and it's like continuing to be incredibly useful, even though the nominal fee I paid for 10 years ago is like, gosh that's been monetized like 100 times over.

[chuckle]

0:54:50 JJ: That's great.

0:54:52 KF: Now, what about the process when working with Signature Tones, how does that work? If someone was to say, "I listened to this podcast, I'm interested, I wanna know more. I wanna contact

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

Signature Tones." What can they expect to experience from the first call, and how does that method work? Or how does that process go through from start to completion?

0:55:12 DS: Yeah, sure, absolutely. So, what we do is... First of all, our pricing is transparent it's \$5,000 per sonic logo and \$12,500 for an original song, or \$15,000 for a package of both. And so, there's no haggling over pricing and whatnot, that's what we charge. And then what we do is, I'm the marketing guy. So, I've done marketing discovery work for my entire career. So, I conduct personally the marketing discovery work about the brand and I lead the people, typically either through Skype or telephone, lead them through a branding discussion about: What is your brand? What are your brand attributes? What are your aspirations for the future? I ask questions about who are your existing and potential customers. I wanna know about any websites or social media presences that you have so that I can be able to get a sense independently, and doing independent research to understand what your brand is and who you are. And then we agree on... We get down to the point where we agree on a series of brand attributes and there's typically eight or 10 or 12 of those one or two word attributes.

0:56:40 DS: And then that's what Juanito goes into the studio to work with, and then we also ask about music. Are there any types of music that you can think of as being particularly appropriate or inappropriate for your brand? So, for example, for the solar power company, they were really interested in something that had a bright and cheery kind of feel to it, something that was very positive and upbeat for the future and they ended up going with a song that has a Reggae twinge to it. So, it's kind of got a Reggae beat to it, because they felt that was something that put a smile on your face, and made you feel like the sun was shining outside in solar power. So, then I do all that marketing, then Juanito goes in the studio, he creates some sample music. So, we'll just shoot little phrases of music, or little ideas for a logo. And at that point, it's just simple stuff, and then there might be six or eight or 10 of those that people share and we call it, almost like a wine tasting, where you sit down in a quiet room and you pour the wine and you taste it.

0:57:56 DS: In other words, you listen to the different music that he sent through, and you taste each one and listen to them in different orders and clear your brain and really give it some thought, and then we wanna know the feedback from that. And then we go through several iterations of that and we get down to the point where we end up with the final version of your song, and then you're given that final version in different lengths. So, if it's a song, there might be a 30 second length, a minute length, a two minute length. If it's a logo, you might get it with a couple of different instruments. There might be the guitar version, or there might be the sort of piano version or whatever. And then those are yours to keep, you have full ownership over them, total, complete rights to use with any way you'd like to.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

0:58:44 KF: Exciting.

0:58:44 JJ: That's great.

0:58:46 DS: Yeah, it's really interesting stuff. You need one for your podcast.

0:58:49 KF: I agree, Justin.

0:58:52 JJ: Absolutely.

[laughter]

0:58:53 KF: 'Cause we have an intro, but we went the route where we purchased a piece of stock music.

0:59:00 DS: And there's nothing wrong with that, except that there might be another podcast that's out there that has the same...

0:59:01 KF: Sure. No, we build websites and sometimes those websites we build are based on what the client has for assets, we have to use a stock photo here and there and it's always frustrating when you see a stock photo you've used on another website, it's just kinda like... It just doesn't feel authentic.

0:59:23 DS: My favorite example of that is I've got two photos I use in my speeches. I have this riff on stock photos because I hate them.

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

[laughter]

0:59:30 JJ: So do we.

[laughter]

0:59:32 DS: I mean stock photos are okay in some purposes, but for the most part if you're trying to represent either your customers or your employees, they're not good. But I have a wonderful picture of IBM's home page, and another wonderful picture of Constant Contact's homepage and the same dude is in the same...

[laughter]

0:59:53 JJ: I love it.

0:59:54 DS: And I said to my friend at IBM, whose name is Tim, I said, "Tim, do you really understand that Constant Contact's... The same guy is pimping..."

[laughter]

1:00:04 KF: Oh, it's funny.

1:00:05 DS: So, that can happen with music...

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

1:00:07 KF: Sure, sure absolutely. So Signature Tones, you got the sixth edition of The New Rules of Marketing and PR, you're speaking at Tony Robins events along with other events. I think that you've spoken at at least one INBOUND conference which Justin and I are familiar with.

1:00:24 DS: I've spoken at every INBOUND 'cause I'm on the Advisory Board of HubSpot.

1:00:27 JJ: Nice.

1:00:29 DS: And I wrote, I was the instigator and wrote the foreword to Brian and Dharmesh's book called Inbound Marketing, and my book Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead is co-authored with Brian Halligan who is the CEO of HubSpot.

1:00:43 KF: Beautiful.

1:00:44 DS: So yeah, I'm pretty well tied to HubSpot. So yeah, I've spoken at all of their INBOUNDs and I'll be there again this...

1:00:49 KF: Well, I think we're gonna be there as well so maybe we'll run into one another.

1:00:52 DS: Oh good. I'm gonna be curating and hosting and acting as MC for the Bold Talks [1:01:00] ____ this year.

1:01:00 KF: Cool. Very cool.

1:01:01 DS: So, come up and...



E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

1:01:02 KF: Definitely.

1:01:03 JJ: Absolutely.

1:01:04 KF: So, outside of all those things that we just covered, do you have anything new you're working on or anything that you see coming down, whether it's in the world of marketing, in sales, or the digital world that you're really excited about?

1:01:22 DS: I've been exploring a few things. I've got a couple of things that I'm kind of playing around with. There's nothing that's really worth talking about yet. I am interested, although I have been, it's not necessarily new, I have been for a couple of years now, in the convergence of marketing and sales. That's something that's fascinating to me. How it used to be there were two very distinct disciplines, marketing did one thing, sales did another. Marketing generated leads, sales closed leads. But I think we're in a real convergence world now where those things are really coming together such that it's not one does one thing and one does another, it's really, the concept that marketing creates can close deals. A good salesperson can generate leads, so I see that convergence as being really interesting.

1:02:18 JJ: Very interesting. Hey David, what is the best way for listeners to get in touch with you?

1:02:24 DS: So, let's see, newsjacking.com. So, just Google newsjacking and find me that way. On Twitter I'm dmsscott, D-M-S-C-O-T-T, that's a good way to reach me. I use my middle name Meerman professionally, so I'm David Meerman Scott. The reason I do that is because I'm the only David Meerman Scott on the entire planet.

[laughter]

1:02:50 DS: So if you Google David Meerman Scott, you get me and only me which is a really good thing. When I, about 1996 I was, I wanted to get my own website and so, Google didn't exist, I think I probably used

E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

Yahoo or whatever was the right thing at that point and I typed in David Scott and I got an Ironman triathlon champion and I got the...

[laughter]

1:03:17 DS: I got the commander of Apollo 15 who walked on the moon, I got a member of Congress, and I go, "Oh, shoot I'm not gonna get very far with David Scott." So, I started using my middle name. So, if you Google David Meerman Scott, you get me.

1:03:32 JJ: Beautiful. Alright, David, hey before we say goodbye, what is one piece of parting advice for our listening audience?

1:03:40 DS: Most important thing is that all of these things we've been talking about are fun, and I think marketing is really fun and interesting and exciting. It used to be, when I first started doing marketing, it was awful. Creating brochures was dreadful. But what we've been talking about for the last hour is interesting and fun, and let's make marketing fun again.

1:04:04 JJ: Love it. Well let's make marketing fun again, alright, I love it. Hey Neon Noise Nation, we hope you enjoyed our conversation today with David. Be sure to go over and check out his website at newsjacking.com. We've got signaturetones.com, and davidmeermanscott.com. David, thanks again for being on the show today.

1:04:25 DS: My pleasure, Justin and Ken It's really been great.

1:04:28 JJ: Loved it. Ton of great value. Neon Noise Nation, I hope you enjoyed everything with David Meerman Scott. The show notes from today will be available at neongoldfish.com/podcast. Until next time, this is Justin, Ken and David signing off. Neon Noise Nation we will see you again next week.



E40 EXPLORING SONIC BRANDING WITH DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

1:04:48 S1: Thank you for listening to this episode of the Neon Noise podcast. Did you enjoy the podcast? If so, please subscribe, share with the friends, or write a review. We wanna cover the topics you wanna hear. If you have an idea for a topic you'd like Justin and Ken to cover, connect with us on Twitter @neongoldfish or through our website at neongoldfish.com.



www.neongoldfish.com/podcast



www.neongoldfish.com