

Dennis Zink: Business owners and entrepreneurs are becoming increasingly aware that social media is a vital part of any marketing plan. Many of them don't have a complete understanding of this technology. They don't know what it is or how to use it. So stay tuned for answers in this episode of SCORE Business TV, sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Dennis Zink: In this series, experts share their opinions with business owners and entrepreneurs on a variety of topics. Let's meet our expert guests. First we have Mical Johnson. Mical, tell us about yourself.

Mical Johnson: Hi Dennis. Thanks for having me on. My name is Mical Johnson. I'm the president of Cyberize Group. I started that company about a year and a half ago, but I've been in the digital marketing space for almost 20 years now. Starting an agency back in 2003, was the first time I started the agency. And we've been involved in social media since about 2006.

Dennis Zink: Welcome, Jason. Introduce yourself please.

Jason Bearden: Hi, I'm Jason Bearden. I am the owner of Digital Marketing Pro.

Dennis Zink: Right, and let me ask you. I'll start with Mical. Mical, what exactly is social media?

Mical Johnson: Social media is like the new town hall, right? So there is a lot of word of mouth advertising that's been around for a long time. And now that we've gone to more of a digital platform, it's really hard for people to communicate with each other. So now they do it on social media. This is a great place to get referrals from people and also to showcase the best self of you in your business.

Dennis Zink: Okay. And Jason would you like to add to that?

Jason Bearden: Yeah, it's the closest thing to word of mouth that's out there. And the best form of marketing is word of mouth. Social media essentially can heighten your brand, or it could be detrimental to your brand based off of how people are responding to the things that you're putting up. It is so necessary that you actually have a social media page for your business.

Dennis Zink: Mical, how is social media different from SEO?

Mical Johnson: That's actually a really good question Dennis. So SEO is search engine optimization, and if you think of a websites like Google or Bing where you go in there and ask a question and search for specific answers, that's really more what SEO is all about. With social media, think about how you use Facebook. Everybody knows Facebook. They go on there, they look at the stream on there. Anything that catches your attention from a person or a business, then you look at it. So it's really like having a conversation with somebody on the longterm, right, where you can just pop in and out of the party and say, "Oh, this guy's

having a conversation. That guy's having a conversation. Anything that seems interesting, I'm going to jump in there." So that's kind of really the two differences. One is an ongoing conversation of what's happening right now. And in SEO or the search engine optimization, that is more when you're searching for answers for specific questions.

Dennis Zink: Okay. And Jason, Mical mentioned Facebook and there's a lot of platforms. Why don't you tell us what the main platforms are out there, both for business-to-business as well as business-to-consumer, advertising, and in the industry?

Jason Bearden: Okay. So there are several social media marketing platforms that any business can use based off the relevant content and the audience of who they're trying to target. You have Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, LinkedIn. Those are some of the more popular platforms today. So most people all know Facebook. And I always like to say, when it comes to Facebook, they have become the experts in regards to social media marketing, but they're also, over the years, have increased their prices in regards to what it costs per click to drive traffic to their page or try to get them onto an actual landing page itself. As far as a B2B platform, Facebook is a good B2B platform. I like to say there's over 2 billion people on Facebook. Your customers are on Facebook. You just have to figure out how to find those customers. And so really utilizing Facebook is a great platform for any business.

Jason Bearden: However, if you want us step outside the box a little bit, you can start thinking of other platforms, such as LinkedIn, for a B2B, as well as Instagram for a B2C, or Snapchat depending on who your audience and who you're trying to actually target.

Dennis Zink: You haven't mentioned Twitter. That's one of the platforms, correct?

Jason Bearden: Correct. So Twitter is utilized in the same way. It becomes a lot of people that are coming up really don't understand Twitter as much. So as far as ads go, they don't seem to be as effective as the other platforms that are utilized.

Dennis Zink: Okay. So Facebook is like the 400 pound gorilla in the room, but I understand that Instagram is kind of ... more people are interested in learning about Instagram these days than even Facebook. Mike, can you comment on that?

Mical Johnson: Sure. It really comes down to, again, your audience. So when we talk about audience, it's the customer that you're trying to reach, whether it's a business owner or somebody who's going to buy your widget for your company. So Instagram does really well in things that are visual because it's all pictures. So when you're looking at recipes and you can see the food, the outcome of it. When you're looking at anything really in the health and fitness space, because people can see body and everything else like that. And also in the clothing and retail space that way. So you can see what something's going to look like on a

model or anything else. So Instagram is becoming very, very popular that way, and especially in those specific categories.

Dennis Zink: Okay. Jason, why is it important for businesses to be involved in social media?

Jason Bearden: In my opinion, it's the closest form to word of mouth marketing that there is. And word of mouth marketing is the best marketing that you can do today, and social media is the closest thing to that. When people today are looking up a business or a brand, I mean will they go to your website? Yes. However, what's more effective of where they're going to judge you is going to be on your social media platforms, and that's why it's so important. I would say before a business, get a website up, which that's important. That's a must. I would say get your social media business page up first.

Dennis Zink: Jason, can you expand upon that?

Jason Bearden: Yes, of course, Dennis. So what that means is that if they can build their business Facebook, let's just say their business Facebook page, their business presence on social media, they have a better chance of reaching their customers than they would on their website. And the reason why I say that is because they can actually engage in real time with their customer base. Now, one of those things is in order for you to be able to respond to your customer base, you have to build a customer base and not just that, a relevant customer base. Okay. Somebody who is interested in your brand. I always like to say this. If you have 100 customers who are relevant to your brand, that's more powerful than a million people on your page that aren't relevant to your brand. So it's so important that you start building your brand through your social media marketing platforms because you're going to be far more effective in gaining brand new business that way.

Dennis Zink: Mical, how do you do that? How do you engage your customers and build that brand and build that customer base?

Mical Johnson: That's the million dollar question there, right? And there's a lot of different philosophies out there. Personally, what I like to do is really tell the story of the business because when when you're interacting with your customers, there's a lot of other things that are going on. There's what's going on behind the scenes at your business. There's how you're interacting with certain customers and you can have an ability to highlight people.

Mical Johnson: What I'm finding is that people are more interested in the meat and potatoes of the business than just the superficial stuff from the brands like 20 years ago, right? So if you think back to, I'm dating myself a little bit, but if you think back to some of the bigger brands in the '70s and '80s, nobody really cared what was going on behind the scenes. But now, especially for the younger crowd, they want to see the behind the scenes action. They want to see how did you actually come up with that decision to do something. And the best way to do that is with

social media. All right? So you can post on your Facebook with whether it's an audio or a video or even just the images that you're doing on there as well.

Dennis Zink: What tactics are most effective in social media and building your engagement?

Jason Bearden: Well, having relevant content. Your content must be relevant to your audience. If it is not relevant, your post or the things that you're putting on your social media platform will not be optimized because nobody is actually engaging with your content. The only way that people are going to actually see your content is if people actually engage with your content. And what I mean by engagement is anytime they like your post, anytime they comment on your post or anytime they share your post. See there's two aspects to social media. There's the social media, what I call management, which is your daily posts that you're putting out, the content that you're putting out, which takes a long strategy in order to achieve the success that every business owner wants. And then there's your social media marketing ads, where you can literally target cold traffic who might be relevant to your brand, to start to create an audience that will drive traffic to your brand and also your page.

Dennis Zink: Interesting. Mical, can you comment more on acquiring new customers with some of the things that you've done?

Mical Johnson: Yeah, absolutely. So to kind of dovetail off of what Jason was talking here, when you were still creating content for them, and content really is videos and images and posts and everything like that. So when we talk about content, that's what we're talking about. When you find something that is really hitting with your customer base, then that's where I start using social media advertising. So then I'll take that and I'll say, "Hey look, you know what? Let's get a broader reach than the people that are just interacting with it right now," because I know they're passionate. I know they're interested because of their actions, their engagements, the comments and the likes and the shares and everything else like that. And so that's a really great way, low cost way to actually go out there and acquire new customers is by finding the content that's engaging already in your social media profile and then advertising that to a very similar audience.

Mical Johnson: So that would be one way. The the other way that you could do the customer acquisition side of it is really coming down and looking at what is some of the best deals that you've had within your business that have brought in new customers and then promote those on social media as well. So if it's a restaurant, maybe it was a lot of buy one get one free things or it was a special Thursday offer that you ran. And you can always promote those kinds of things on social media as well. You just want to change the message a little bit so it's more engaging and entertaining for the people that are watching it on social media. Otherwise you won't get past all the other things that are out there.

Dennis Zink: Jason, what do you do if you don't have a large contact base, customer base or potential customer base to grow that?

Jason Bearden: Okay, so the first thing you want to do is you want to utilize the people who will support you most. You want to start inviting the people who are already on your personal Facebook page to come and follow you on the business page. Once you've established that, then you want to start looking for groups. You want to start joining groups. You might even want to start your own social media group. Okay? And at that point, you would have control of that group, so you could actually invite people who might be relevant to your actual brand. And at that point, once you control that group, essentially people will be able to post in that group, but you will control what comes in and what goes out of that actual group, as well as be able to market yourself at a higher caliber as you start to build your brand and your business Facebook page.

Dennis Zink: Mical, I know LinkedIn has, I belong to I think up to 50 groups. I used to be capped I think at 50. I don't know if it still is. So I figured I'd use up all my 50 and join everything just so I can see what's going on in different areas that I was interested in. Is that still a valid way to get involved and learned about both your industry and what people are doing and to engage audiences for social media?

Mical Johnson: It is still a very valid way in. Think about it as just little community organizations in there. Right? So, with every organization that's out there or industry that's out there, there's always going to be little groups of people that congregate together, whether it's formally or informally. And that's really what those groups are. You want to look for ones that are active because they all have a life cycle. So just because they have 30,000 people in it, if they're not posting every single day in there or having conversations in there, it's probably not worth your time to get into that group. So just paying attention to really the activity of the group based on the size of the group. Because I've been involved in groups that are less than 100 people that provide a ton of valuable information for me because everybody's posting and everybody's helping each other out. And that's really what the community group is for, whether it's LinkedIn or Facebook or any other channel that has it.

Dennis Zink: How do you measure social media activities?

Jason Bearden: So there's several different ways to actually measure social media activities. One is engagement. How many people are actually sharing your page and the content that you're actually putting up and how many people are actually commenting on that content. Another way to do it is to see, what's your ROI, right? And there's ways to actually measure that, but Facebook actually has a back office that you could actually go in and see what your results are and how they're actually responding, your customer base is actually responding to those actual ads or those actual postings that you're actually putting out on your social media platforms.

Dennis Zink: And is that similar to Google Analytics, Mical?

Mical Johnson: Well, the Google analytics are going to be specific for your website. So Facebook does have an analytics platform as well that you can look into that you can put it on your website, but it also will do everything that's on your business page. So you'll be able to look at that. The metrics that I like to look at, it really just depends on what the goal of the post is, right? So if I'm posting something on the page and it's getting a lot of reach, meaning it's being shown to a lot of people, then that could be good enough for me. And think of that as a branding exercise. You want people to know who you are and what your name is. And so you make a post specifically to get that shared.

Mical Johnson: The other side of it could be if you're running an ad to it, then you need to generate some type of revenue with it. So maybe the goal is to get a certain amount of dollars out of that ad with whatever you're spending. So you'll be able to track that. Another one would be if you were running an event and you're like, "Hey look, I just want to make sure that we have enough interest in the event." And so the gauge that I would look on that is how many people are showing interest in going and attending the event. So with each one, you just have to look at it and what is the business goal for that post? And then you can really break down what the metrics are that you need to look for on that.

Dennis Zink: Jason, what are the best platforms to reach a younger audience?

Jason Bearden: Okay, so those platforms would include Instagram, Snapchat, and believe it or not, YouTube is essentially a pretty popular platform to reach a younger audience because it's the second largest search engine on the market underneath Google, which-

Dennis Zink: And it's owned by Google.

Jason Bearden: Exactly. It's owned by Google.

Dennis Zink: Okay. And Facebook owns Instagram, is that correct?

Jason Bearden: Yes. Facebook does own Instagram.

Dennis Zink: All right, so there's a lot of platforms owned by a few a players, pretty much. How about Twitter? Who owns Twitter? Mical?

Mical Johnson: Twitter is independently owned. So Twitter, I look at Twitter more as a real time, almost news feed. If you think of the old ticker tapes that would go out there. When breaking news happens, you're going to be able to find it first on Twitter and then you can find out what the conversation is about that and then take it to the other social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram or anything else like that.

Dennis Zink: How about Pinterest? Let's talk to Jason. What about Pinterest? I used to hear a lot about Pinterest-

Jason Bearden: Pinterest is very interesting because they just went on to the open market. That being said, there's lots of changes that's happening regarding their ad platform, but as far as Pinterest goes, mainly women are searching a lot on Pinterest and if your customers are women, you would most likely need to be on Pinterest and really utilizing that platform to your advantage.

Dennis Zink: Okay. My daughter cuts hair and she's really good at coloring and she's been posting, I see, on Instagram. So is that the best place for her to post, Mical?

Mical Johnson: You can do stuff on Instagram very successful, especially if you're using the short form video on there when it comes to salons. So before and afters, you can put things on there, but short form video works really well on Instagram as well. So what I've seen, what other salon owners do is they'll do a little short where somebody turns around and they're just hair flowing and all that kind of stuff. Nothing that none of us could be able to do, but with these women, they like to see all those different angles. Right? And so getting even this slow mo video that goes in there, watching the hair drop, those can be very, very powerful on things like Instagram.

Dennis Zink: I'll have to ask her if she does beard coloration. Of course that wouldn't apply to you, Jason. How about reaching a more mature audience? Jason, would you come in on that?

Jason Bearden: Yeah, I mean Facebook, the older generation are all on Facebook, believe it or not. A lot of people don't think that, but if you want to reach an older generation or maybe an audience that's more on a B2B, you could utilize Facebook and LinkedIn for that, as far as if you want to call mature audiences.

Dennis Zink: Okay, and Mical, what does it cost for me as a business owner to have a campaign, a social media campaign? Is it free or do I have to hire somebody like you guys? What are my options?

Mical Johnson: It really is going to be depending on the scale of the campaign, right? So if you're a small business owner and SCORE deals with millions of small business owners, then you really have two options. You can do free, which means you're managing it yourself, and you can start with a couple of a couple hundred dollars to do that. And again, you want to look at what's my business goal behind it. Am I looking at branding where I want to make sure that I'm staying in front of people? Like realtors for example. It's really good for them to always have everybody know that they are a realtor because there's thousands of them out there in every single market and do something like that.

Mical Johnson: Now if it's something, a business like a restaurant or they have a brick and mortar somewhere, then running the advertisements based on any sales or promotions that you're doing and getting that in addition to the normal content posting that you're doing also can be very effective on that. If you're going to have somebody like Jason or myself running an advertising campaign for you,

generally it's going to be a larger scale. So where you're looking at driving in hundreds of high value clients or thousands of ones that are less than \$100 over a course of months, then that's something that we would be a gauge for. And that could be a couple thousand dollars a month to run that.

Dennis Zink: Jason, what do you think the biggest misconception is when people think of social media? What don't they really understand?

Jason Bearden: From a business perspective?

Dennis Zink: Sure.

Jason Bearden: Well, I don't think they understand one, how effective they could be if they did it correctly. I think a lot of times business owners today think, "Oh, I'm just going to put a posting on Facebook or Instagram and it's going to work wonders for me." There's a lot of aspects and a lot of things that actually go into social media marketing. One of those things is having amazing copy. How are you talking to your audience? How are you establishing the copy enough to where you're going to get a response from them, which takes a strategy behind that. It's not as easy as just putting a posting up and all of a sudden business is going to come flowing in. There is a lot of different aspects in regards to social media marketing.

Jason Bearden: I hear it all the time with business owners. "Yeah, I've done that. I've been putting postings up and they're not getting a response." But then again there's a competitor there of theirs that's doing it correctly, that's getting the majority of that business, and that's a reason why I think social media marketing is so important today and it is a must that you have to be doing it correctly. And maybe if you don't know how to do it correctly, hire a mentor or somebody to teach you how to do it actually correctly so you're not missing out on those actual opportunities that could be revenue coming into your actual business.

Dennis Zink: Mical, how do you reach a specific target market? So let's say I want to reach, 18 to 25 year olds that are male that drink Budweiser on Saturdays. How do I reach them?

Mical Johnson: Okay, so you would want to have the content be very relevant to the audience, making sure that if you're targeting, the frat boy here that you just described, things that they would be interested in versus things that they would not be. So quick examples on that is that audience is going to be interested in maybe beach body stuff. They're going to be interested in UFC stuff, but they're not really going to be interested in maybe a DIY home improvement project because most of them are renting anyway, right? So just make sure that the messaging is going to match the audience that you select.

Dennis Zink: What was UFC?

- Mical Johnson: UFC is going to be more of a mixed martial arts. It's kind of like boxing, but they have a lot of other stuff in there as well. Kicking and grounding, all that kind of stuff.
- Dennis Zink: Okay. Jason, in this typical social media marketing campaign, what does it cost approximately?
- Jason Bearden: That's a great question, Dennis. There's a few aspects when it comes to an actual social media marketing campaign. One of those is media buying. What it costs to actually purchase the ads on a daily basis through all your social media marketing platforms. The other is the cost of the person actually managing that actual campaign.
- Dennis Zink: Okay. And Mical, do you want to add to that?
- Mical Johnson: Sure. The only other thing I'd add to that is the content. Because if you already have preexisting content on your website or assets that you have, such as PDFs or videos and anything else that can be used in the advertising, then then you don't have to factor in that cost. But if you don't, then you're going to need to factor in an additional cost to create that content, specifically for social media.
- Dennis Zink: Jason, can you give me an example of a client and what their budget might be?
- Jason Bearden: Yeah, so I actually deal, one of my clients is a nail salon, small business. Their whole mission is to get brand new clients. Well, I recommended to them that they spend a minimum of \$600 on the ad spend. And then my retainer fee was around \$1,500. So it was \$2,100 a month to actually run that campaign.
- Dennis Zink: Okay. And Mical, how about you? Do you have an example?
- Mical Johnson: Yeah, sure. So similarly instead of a nail salon, we were working with a dentist. And with the dentist, they were spending a couple thousand dollars a month on the ad spend and they would fluctuate month to month based on the availability of appointments that they had. And so our job was to actually use Facebook to generate phone calls for them. And then our fee on top of that was very similar to that \$1,500 as well. So now you're talking about \$3,500 a month and that would be a typical small business campaign would be something like that.
- Dennis Zink: Okay. Well that gives me a great idea. I want to thank our guests for appearing on this episode of SCORE Business TV. I'd also like to thank our sponsor, Wells Fargo. To reach Mical or Jason, go to our SCORE TV website. Please tune in for our next episode. Until then, this is Dennis Zink. Thank you and have a great day.