

EPISODE 2: HOW TO CREATE A MARKETING STRATEGY FOR SMALL BUSINESS with Doug Morneau

Marketing for Creatives Show
at IntNetworkPlus.com

Announcer

Turn your hobby and freelance work into a profitable business! Make your marketing easier by applying the strategies of experienced entrepreneurs and have more time to do the work you love. You are listening to the Marketing for Creatives show with your host Marina Barayeva.

Marina Barayeva

Hi, everybody. This is Marina Barayeva. Welcome to another episode of Marketing for Creatives show. Today, we gonna talk about how to create a marketing strategy. With a lot of options, that you have to market your business it's easy to get lost in what actually you should do.

You've heard that you need to create your "ideal client" and go from there, but what it looks like? In this episode, we'll go through the real example of nailing down the avatar of your ideal client and will go forward with developing the marketing strategy, which you can apply to your situation.

And now I'm really excited to be joined by Doug Morneau.

Doug is a serial entrepreneur since founding his first company over 32 years ago.

He has the ability to quickly understand concepts, adapt to new technologies and new media, which makes him a valuable contributor to any sales and marketing problem-solving conversation, or marketing strategy session.

Doug is also a host of the [Real Marketing Real Fast podcast](#). And today Doug is going to help you do get to the details on how to create a marketing strategy for your business.

Marina Barayeva

Hi Doug.

Doug Morneau

Hey, how are you?

Marina Barayeva

Welcome to the show. How are you today?

Doug Morneau

Excellent, thank you.

Marina Barayeva

That's awesome. It's good to have you here. Before we start, you are a serial entrepreneur and expert marketer. For those who don't know you yet, could you tell us a little bit about your background and your experience in business and marketing?

Doug Morneau

Sure. The answer I typically give people when they ask me what I do is that I tell people that I make my clients buckets of money and I keep some.

Marina Barayeva

Fantastic! So we're going to have a lot of money after talking to you (laughter.)

Doug Morneau

Hopefully. I've been in my own business for over 30 years. I've worked in a number of different sectors. I've worked with private companies and public companies, big companies and small companies, and start-ups.

The idea is really the same; we need to generate sales and to do that we need to find clients that want to buy our goods and services, and we need to be able to repeat that over and over again.

In doing that, I use whatever tactic works. I tell people I'm tactic agnostic. While I focus a lot on email, we also use social media, direct mail, and trade shows, go to networking events and speak.

I don't think there's any one right answer. I think there's a bunch of opportunities and as business owners we need to pick what works for us and our style and our business and use that.

Marina Barayeva

That sounds like a bunch of stuff. As creative entrepreneurs or any small business owners, we have the same problem. We can do our work. We have clients. We understand that we should market ourselves somehow. As you say, there are a lot of options. We can do social media marketing. We could have a blog, partner with someone, go to trade shows, network and much more.

There is a lot of information on the Internet. People try a little bit of everything here and there and in the end, nothing really works. You go back to the previous routine: no changes in the business.

How can we create a marketing strategy? How can we pick the directions of where to go, how to market our service or product?

Doug Morneau

While the risk of sounding redundant, I would say you need to figure out who your ideal customer is.

You can call them whatever you want, an avatar or your target audience but you need to figure out who you would like to do business with.

I tell people don't be shy on looking for an easier way. Don't go for the lowest hanging fruit, which may be somebody who's willing to pay the least amount of money. What I have found often is that the line up to sell a bigger client or bigger prospect is shorter.

When you're thinking of your customer avatar or ideal customer, sit back and think of what kind of lifestyle do you want to build and what type of clients you'd like to have, and how much value would you like to provide for them, and how much revenue would you like to generate.

As an entrepreneur and a new young business, don't sell yourself short. Don't cut your prices. Go in and ask for a fair price. Be bold, be confident and just ask.

Marina Barayeva

That's interesting because especially for those who started out but even for those who have been in business for several years, it's usually that you want to keep up with the business. You want to have clients. Sometimes you lower your prices or you had clients who didn't have a budget, so what should we do then?

Doug Morneau

It's up to you. I've worked with clients with very small budgets too and sometimes I put that into a different category. I put that into a charitable category. I'll work with a not-for-profit where I might donate a website and graphic design services, or I might charge a very little amount of money to help a young business get going.

But obviously I can't sustain my business working with all the clients at that price point. I have clients that I charge more money to and I don't feel bad because if you have a good service or product that you're offering that helps people to improve their life, their business, be more attractive to the opposite sex, look better, whatever it is they're trying to achieve, you shouldn't be shy for asking people to pay you for that.

Marina Barayeva

If we have a good service or a good product and you're talking about creating the avatar or your target customer. Let's go back to that.

It's actually a challenging question because sometimes when you create an avatar, you think about the client who you would like to work with but it's more likely you have the general idea.

How can we specify that more?

Doug Morneau

I think you need to get deeper than geography, age, income and education.

If you think about how we like to interact, we do business with and we hang out with people that we like, that have similar interests.

You and I are talking today because we met through a podcaster's Facebook page because we're both podcasters. We had a natural relationship there that was very easy to build.

It's no different if we look at your business. When you think of what people who are your avatars what they do, I would think wider than just age, income, education and geography. You might think of what charities they'd be involved in, what hobbies they would have, what other interests they would have.

Where would they hang out when they're not at their place of work? Are they soccer fans, football fans? Where are these people?

The question you're really trying to get answered is who's got them on their mailing list? If you think about your customer, and I said to you, who else has your customer on their mailing list?

Marina Barayeva

I see.

I'm thinking how we can bring more value to our audience. So, how about a little experiment?

I'm a photographer myself and I'm a creative entrepreneur. One of my target audience is professionals or business owners, that's exactly you. You are my avatar.

Let's create the avatar together.

Doug Morneau

Is this something we need to do face-to-face? As photography, I need to be in your studio or close enough geographically to work with you, right?

Marina Barayeva

Most of the time, yes. But I can fly to you if you're going to pay my ticket and for my service, I don't mind that.

Doug Morneau

There you go. That's the right answer.

Marina Barayeva

Let's focus on the avatar.

My avatar is the professionals or business owners, let's say from 25 to 45. They need their headshot, their profile picture because they want to represent themselves online or on social media or a website.

What else should I include in my avatar?

Doug Morneau

That's a great start. I might try to narrow down professionals to a specific vertical.

For example, you might say accountants or you might say lawyers. If you look at a large law firm, it may have 100 partners. Instead of making one sale you could potentially make 100 sales and do headshots for all of them. Or look at accountants, engineers, or architects.

Instead of being just like me. I'm a solopreneur. I'm going to hire you and I've just done some headshots so it's one person, one day and we're done.

There are a couple ways. You may look at going in that vertical and in that case, each of those groups that we've just discussed has a professional organization. In most cases you can get access to the data or the database of those professionals.

You could also look at trade associations, chambers of commerce, boards of trade. Other business networking groups again where the professionals hang out. Where do they go for breakfast meetings, dinner meetings? Where do they have their meet-ups?

Marina Barayeva

We've kind of narrowed down the avatar and we looked for the places where we can find those people. What's next?

Doug Morneau

Next is what are you going to offer them? Take a look at what they've currently got and what other people in your space are doing. You need to come up with the answer to the question: What makes you unique?

The way that I would typically look at this, I would say, "Picture for a minute you're standing at the front of a room, a business networking room, and everybody in the room is your potential customer and you've got three other photographers standing with you. The question is why would I hire you over those other three people?"

Marina Barayeva

Because I'll make you look like yourself, the best version of yourself. I will make you look like you just stepped out of the magazine. As a service professional, isn't that what you want to have because you give the first impression with your image?

Doug Morneau

What I want is a headshot that will get me noticed so when people look at my business they feel comfortable and they feel that they can trust me.

I would say one of the advantages that you have just knowing a little bit about you is that you do a lot of work in social media. A photographer that's a portrait photographer, while they might take great portraits or great headshots, you understand that people are going to use your photos for Facebook and Twitter and LinkedIn and all the different sizes that go with that.

You may offer something different. You may say that I do headshots but beyond headshots for websites I make sure that I incorporate them and set them up so you've got a variety of photos that you can use across all your social media platforms.

Do something that's a bit different. From my experience with working with photographers, just that all by itself would make you stand out from the crowd. I've worked with a bunch of photographers and very few of them do anything with social yet everybody these days is on social media so you're going to add value to me and you could probably charge more because you're going to have to take more photos.

Marina Barayeva

For now we put together and created the avatar, we looked for the places where we can find those people, we offered out services.

Now let's step a little bit away from me and look at the creative community in general. What's next?

Doug Morneau

You need an opportunity to present in front of those people that are potential customers. One way is one-on-one where you may go to meetings or associations or meet-ups and you might meet people and exchange business cards and start to develop a relationship where they trust you.

The other is you may get an opportunity to go speak. There's a lot of social media, not just you, but there's a lot of association meetings for people in the arts, artists and creative types where you may go and try to get on to be a guest speaker even if it's for a short period of time.

Because what I've found is that the audience will tend to trust you more because you're a speaker than if we just meet you in the room.

I've been in situations where I've gone and I've been paid to speak at an event and I felt a bit guilty because I generated so many sales from people in the audience but I was already paid by the organization to speak.

Whether you're speaking for free or speaking for a fee, you're positioned as the expert and that's a great way to network and get your name out there. Similarly like what you're doing right now: blogging.

Marina Barayeva

But those are two wide options. How can we choose what exactly we can do next? How can we put it more into the strategy?

For example, if I go networking I spend a lot of time there and I shake hands with everyone but I don't have too much time because life is limited. The day is limited. Speaking is another opportunity, but a little bit of here and there and in the end you get tired and you go back to your work.

Doug Morneau

My recommendation is to set aside a day a week for marketing.

If you think of **Michael Gerber's book The E Myth**, about working on your business, not in your business. All of us, me included. I need to set aside a day to do marketing for my own business while I would like to be doing other stuff.

And you're right, you only have so much time so you want to be really picky on what networking events you go to. You don't want to go to everything. You want to find where your best customers are and you're going to need to go there and put some time in. There's no short cut.

People buy from people they know and the only way they're going to know you is if you're there.

If you find that's the wrong place and you're not generating the types of leads or business, then move on.

Sometimes you need to get out there and try it and you'll say, "Hey, this works really well. I'm getting a constant flow of leads and potential clients. I'm converting the clients and they're giving me referrals." Or, "I've been here for a month or two months and I find this is a dead room. There are four other photographers here or there's four other whatever, fill in the blank, web designers here, and I'm not getting the business. Someone else is already entrenched."

There is no magic wand but it also depends on your personality style. If you're not comfortable going out and meeting people, then obviously that's going to be a difficult or more difficult thing for you to do.

Marina Barayeva

Besides the networking and meeting people in person there are also a lot of other options like you said, blogging or social media marketing, or email marketing. You're good in that but what should we do?

Doug Morneau

You're going to need to pick a couple disciplines and try them.

We can narrow them down to things like LinkedIn. I do very well on LinkedIn. I built a profile that looks like a decent profile. I figured out who my avatar is. In my space was looking to connect with people in the venture capital business in the US and in Hong Kong.

I specifically went and requested connections and from that I was in New York and I set up two days full of meetings with people I had never met except for on social media. I have had

investors fly from Germany over to Vancouver, I'm in Canada, to come and meet with me and look at business opportunities.

That was an example of taking LinkedIn as one platform and working that platform to build connections and have engagement and talk to people, before I said, "Hey, buy my stuff."

The challenge I see in social is people get on there and go, "Good, somebody's following me." And the first message they get back is, "Hey, buy my stuff." I don't even know who you are. Why don't we start with building a conversation a little bit first, looking at your profile, looking at your background to see is there something that you can help me with or I can help you with and then we can start a conversation, realizing that not everybody is our customer.

Does that better answer your question or no?

Marina Barayeva

It is better.

I know you have some experience working with creative entrepreneurs like you told me about the artist who you worked with who organized the event. Can you give us some more examples of how they put their skills, their services and how they applied the marketing there?

Doug Morneau

She is an artist in Thailand. She had talked to the hotel and the hotel basically had seen what she was doing, saw some of her work and it was their suggestion, not hers, because she was out there meeting with people in the hotel. They offered to put on an art show. At their expense, they put on the show. They invited their wealthy clients. It was a Four Seasons over there and they invited their clients to come to her show. She sold a lot of her work face-to-face, because she was the artist, she was there meeting the people who were buying the work.

From that, she grew her business to start doing prints and selling them online. That's where I was helping to set up a website where she was ecommerce enabled and she could display all of her artworks so people could order hand signed limited edition prints.

That wasn't my idea. That was her idea. She was in, talking to the hotel and they approached her and said, "We love what you're doing. We would like to help."

I would say be open. As an entrepreneur, what I think often we do is we're afraid to talk to bigger people or bigger companies. I've had an opportunity to talk to some amazing people because I asked.

Marina Barayeva

That's what I was going to ask you about. Because as creatives, not only creatives but everyone is shy to go out and really talk to... Like that girl went to the hotel and talked to them and they offered to represent her.

What would you advise us to do? How to pick the people, how to come to them, talk to them, collaborate with them?

Doug Morneau

We need to be honest and somewhat transparent. You don't go to somebody and say, "I'm brand new. I've never done this." You don't need to have that discussion but you can tell people that you're new at this and often you'll get more attention than I will if you're a new business.

If you talk to the media, for example. One of my ideas or one of the suggestions we've done very well with is getting media attention with local newspapers, radio stations and online sites. That's by going to them and saying, "We're a new business and we do this or I'm in this area."

The client approaches them directly so it doesn't appear that they're working with an agency so they look like a small business. I think generally people in the world want to see other people succeed. There are always exceptions to every rule but I'm always happy to help small businesses.

In terms of how do you find them? In that case for her, she just happened to be in the right place and she was prepared to answer the questions.

I think sometimes it comes down to... We, me included, sometimes need to suck up the courage and think of what's the worst thing that could happen if I phoned, fill in the blank? Who's somebody that you want to talk to?

I'll give you a specific example. I was at a presentation in Vancouver and this man was talking. I really enjoyed his presentation and like everybody else at the end of the presentation I went up and asked him for his business card.

But unlike everybody else the very next day I sent a note to his office and I offered to take him for breakfast. The reason I offered to take him for breakfast was because I didn't have a big enough budget to take him to lunch (laughter.)

His secretary said to me, "Gerry's just left town. Can I tell him what you want?" I said, "Yes, I'd like to take him for breakfast and I promise you two things. I'm not looking for a job and I'm not looking to sell him anything."

She contacted him and got back to me a couple of days later and we set up a breakfast meeting. I promised him I'd only keep him an hour. The person I ended up taking for breakfast and spending an hour and a half because he insisted that I talk to him about my career goals and what I wanted to do was the President of Chevron Oil Company.

He's a really big deal but I would suspect that nobody else bothered to take him for breakfast. I bet you a bunch of other people phoned him and tried to sell him stuff. I had an hour and a half of his undivided attention. He was a pure gentleman and the nicest guy.

I've done that over and over a bunch of times. It's not difficult, you just need to be paying attention and then when you see the opportunity, even though in the pit of your stomach you feel sick, you have to go, "I'm going to do it anyhow because I'm probably not going to get sick. I'm going to suck up the courage and go do it."

Marina Barayeva

Yes, sometimes you just have to go and do it.

Doug Morneau

Yes.

Marina Barayeva

We've got a good base. Let's get to the topic exactly. With all of this base, how can we create a marketing strategy?

Doug Morneau

Once you know who your potential customers are and you know where they hang out, then you just need to create a plan of how you're going to speak to them and what sort of messaging you might have.

One of the ways, if you're talking to people and you're not going to be face-to-face may be on social media. I love the fact that you can direct message people on Instagram.

Marina Barayeva

I like it too.

Doug Morneau

Gary Vaynerchuk was ranting and raving about it once on a video and I went, "Okay, I'll give it a try." That evening I sat down, I sent out some DMs and I got some responses.

Marina Barayeva

I actually keep my Instagram for that. Instagram is not popular in China, even more, it's blocked here. We don't really use it. But I use it for connecting to different people. It's just awesome.

Doug Morneau

To answer your question, to be really specific, I would pick one or two tactics that fit your avatar and your style.

If you're good at writing then maybe blogging is a good way to do that. You may interview people, similar to how we're interviewing people now and you're interviewing me, because it's a chance to connect.

I found with my podcast, I've been able to leverage that to interview people that are CEOs of companies that are in my space.

Again, as a business owner you're going to need to pick one or two of those tactics and work at it. It's not easy. You're going to have to roll up your sleeves and grind through it but you're going to have to be consistent.

Whether it's Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or blogging, it's going to be different for everyone.

I'm on all the platforms. I use all the platforms. I might be a bit crazy but that's the business I'm in. I try them all. I tag everything I do so I can see where every single referral comes to my website. I can tell you how many come from LinkedIn versus Twitter, which Twitter accounts they come from, which ones come from Instagram, which ones come from my email signature.

You need to draft a real simple plan. A marketing plan should be about a page.

- Who are your perfect customers?
- What products or services are you going to offer them?
- Where are they?
- Who else has them on their mailing list?

Maybe a way to short cut getting people into your sales funnel is you look for who else has them on the list and if they're on my list you may approach me and say, "Hey, Doug. I see we service the same types of customers. I have an offer that would be good for your audience. Would you be willing to send it to your audience?"

Marina Barayeva

How do you connect to those people? That's an interesting idea.

Doug Morneau

You have to pick them. First of all, look for people that have obviously a good reputation and that are an authority in that space, and then just approach them. It's very likely that nobody's ever talked to them before.

If they're experienced in the space, they're probably going to ask for a large percentage of the sale in the joint venture. But if not, they may ask for a very small percentage or they may not ask for anything at all because they want to help you out.

I've done this with direct mail and I've also done it with email where I'd approach a company, either on my behalf or a client's behalf and say, "We service the same type of customer. Would you be willing to send this offer to your list of people? It would be good for them."

For example, in your business you might be able to team up with web guys and graphic designers who need good photography. You may reciprocate to them. You may say, "You know what? I don't build websites. I'm willing to send an offer out to my group of people on what you do."

Marina Barayeva

We've got the plan. We put it down on to the paper. As you say, do we need to test it and try? How long should we try it for? When do you know that it's time to move on to another tactic?

Doug Morneau

I think you should always test. Once you get established and you've got some stuff that's working. I always test new stuff. I have a baseline and then I test new stuff. When something new exceeds the baseline, that becomes a new baseline and we move along.

Then it's your question... It's really tough to say because it depends on what the buying cycle of your client is.

If they're buying a big piece of equipment that might be hundreds of thousands of dollars, then obviously you're going to probably take months, maybe a year to get to that sale. If it's a consumable good, if you're selling coffee, or nails, cutting people's hair, it should be pretty darn quick.

I'll give you an example because before we got on, we talked about hair stylists. I was at a business networking event and one of the door prizes was a free haircut. It sounds kind of hokey, right? It's like, "It's a free haircut." I ended up winning the door prize. I was unhappy with the hairdresser I was going to because she was a complainer and I couldn't stand the negativity so I switched. Here's the great news, I switched, my wife switched and my two daughters came with me.

Marina Barayeva

Wow.

Doug Morneau

Twelve years ago. Every three weeks I get a haircut. The hairdresser might be going, "I can't afford to give away a haircut." She gave away one haircut and she's got thousands and thousands of dollars of business off of one haircut.

Marina Barayeva

What do you think about those free services? It's one of the marketing strategies that people use: offer their services for free. What are your thoughts about it?

Doug Morneau

As long as you've got a plan in place to convert that free person into a paid sale.

In the industry, they call in a lead magnet. If you're giving away a free report, a free tutorial, a free consulting call for 15 minutes, or a sample of your product, that's fine as long as the people that you're targeting are the kind of people who can buy your product or service.

If you ever go to a Costco or a big department store where they're sampling, you'll see the line-ups of people for the free samples but the question is are they the people that are going to buy the product?

If you're selling, for example, a high-end steak, an Omaha Steak, people might go and sample it but are they willing to pay \$50 for it? If they're not, then you're giving your samples to the wrong person.

When I do give away free stuff, I'm always really particular to make sure that they are the same people who could pull out their credit card and buy the services at a later date.

If you do a free thing online, lots of people will show up. I've done free stuff online but very narrow market. I would send a free offer to a mailing list of people who are my potential customers.

Marina Barayeva

If you would put everything we talked about and you would put it in the strategy, what are three steps our listeners could begin with to get their marketing strategy written down and ready to execute? They could follow the paper and which of those steps can they do already today?

Doug Morneau

It depends on what kind of business you're in.

I would say the quickest thing to do is to meet people. If you meet people face-to-face really it's the lowest barrier to entry because you just need to find where they are and go there. It might be a chamber, a training event, an industry event. All you need is a business card. If you're brand new and you don't have a business card, you can go there without a business card and tell people, "I don't have any cards today," or, "I ran out of cards." Ask them for a card and promise to get back to them. That's easy, that's something you could do today.

If you're already in business, the one thing you could do today would be go look at your existing clients. The first thing I would do is go to my existing clients and look at the people that I like working with the most. I would contact them and ask them for a referral.

I would phone them and say, "I've enjoyed working with you. Are you still happy with our services and what we're doing?" "Yes, I think you're great and wonderful." After they say all that, you say, "You know what would be really helpful? Do you have one or two people that you could refer me to that you think would be a good fit?" If they say yes, you take down their information and the next question is could I use your name when I call them? That's easy and you can do that today.

If you're not comfortable on the phone you could send an email although as much as I do in email, you still get more responses if you phone people. But if you go, "I just can't pick up the phone. I can't do that." Then type up an email.

Marina Barayeva

Thank you. Well, Doug, you're wonderful too. Thank you so much for sharing all of this with us today.

How can we get in touch with you? Where can we find more about you? What do you do and how can we connect with you?

Doug Morneau

You can connect with me on all of the social platforms. I don't use Pinterest much but if you go to Doug Morneau, M-O-R-N-E-A-U, on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) or [LinkedIn](#), I'm

there. Or go to my website, it's dougmoreneau.com. I've got a blog there. You can sign up for my email if you want to get an email. Every Monday I send out marketing tips. Right now I'm focusing on email because those have been podcast guests but I will go through a variety of different disciplines and happy to answer questions.

Be social, I answer back. If you follow me on Twitter, I will follow you back. If you ask me a question, I will answer you, and the same on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Marina Barayeva

Fantastic. Thank you so much for being here and I wish you to have a good day.

Doug Morneau

I really had a great time. I really enjoyed speaking with you and I look forward to following your success as you continue on your business.

Thank you so much for joining us for this episode today. For the show notes and the full transcript go to intnetworkplus.com/2

And if you have the questions or topics that you would like to hear about on the show just email me to marina@intnetworkplus.com

Announcer

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