

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

## Stand Out from Your Competition

August 25, 2020

Panelists:

*Dave Priddy, President/Founder, DK Sales Consulting LLC*

*Scott Plum, Professor, Minnesota Sales Institute*

*Ben Theis, Owner Skol Marketing*

*Alan Wallner, President, Visionary, Conscious Branding*

### Alan Wallner (00:14):

Hello, everyone. Welcome to Thrive!cast I'm Alan Wallner the president and visionary of Conscious Branding and Thrive!cast is a series focused on you, your business and your success. And with each episode, we focus on a topic to spark new thoughts and generate ideas and push the boundaries of what we know is familiar. And hopefully as a result, we may even frame up a new mindset to ignite your business forward and inspire action. The thing about business is we all want to attract more customers and one way to do that is to be different and to stand out from our competition. And interestingly enough, sometimes we think lowering your price is seen as a way to stand out, to attract more customers or to close the deal. Today we're going to take a look at why lowering your price is not a good idea and what you can do to stand out from your competition and build your business in a healthier way.

(01:16): But first, I want to introduce you to our panelists. We have Dave Priddy, he's the president and founder of DK Sales Consulting. They've been a leading coaching and training sales organizations for more than 20 years and he has a passion to maximize people's talents and their potential. Dave teaches his clients to understand why customers make decisions in less than 90 seconds. We also have Scott Plum today. He's a professor at Minnesota Sales Institute. Scott is also known as Professor Plum, not from the game, but from the guy who hosts the podcast, What Salespeople Need to Know about Selling. And he co-hosts the weekly podcast called Get in the Door Podcast. Scott has a second book coming out this fall.

(02:14): It's titled "Doing It for Real: Is Your Commitment Greater than the Consequences." We also have Ben Theis. He's the president of Skol Marketing and Ben works with small businesses and nonprofits to get found online. He worked for Google and leverages his expertise to help companies be seen through search engine optimization, also known as SEO, and social media and search engine marketing also known as SEM. Ben brings a methodology focused on target audience behaviors and understanding how to motivate people to take action. So, Ben, thank you for being here today. And I'm glad to see everyone got the memo and wore white shirts today. So we're all coordinated, so that's good.

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

## Leverage the Four Ps

### Alan Wallner (03:07):

I find today's topic interesting because everyone is unique. Yet with our businesses, it seems as though we feel we don't have differentiation from our competition, we're always seeking it. So I always find that interesting; typically when we're looking to differentiate the four Ps of marketing: product, price, place, and promotion, come to mind and they're the first place businesses go to differentiate or stand out from their competition. So I'm curious what your thoughts are on using any or all of the four Ps as the best means to stand out. So for instance lowering prices can be an easy way to stand out and get more customers. But is it the best way? So with that, I will start off with Ben.

### Ben Theis (04:07):

All four Ps are important. That's why we call them the four Ps of marketing. I think it's important to try to begin to apply all of them to it. I think there's another strategy that Alan alluded to is that there's a short term and a long term. The two that we focus on with our clients is place and promotion because, beyond price and beyond product, you need to have a good product. It really comes down to value. And we all have seen potentially where there's an inferior product, that's promoted more, but because of where they've placed it and where they promoted it, it gets more sales.

(04:48): When we start looking at it, I always find that place and promotion for us is really critical because hypothetically I know no one here has a bad service or a bad product, but if you do the right promotion, which includes education, the marketing and you place it in the right places of your marketing channel and get in front of the right people honestly, the price, which honestly we shouldn't be looking just to have the lowest price, we should have the best value. It should obviously serve a need. Where we really started is that place of promotion, because if you can master place and promotion, the other two fall into place from our perspective. And when we looked at implementation for clients.

### Alan Wallner (05:29):

So what I'm hearing you say is a lot of companies out there may really hype up a particular benefit of some kind, but they may not get the quick sale, but maybe they don't have the best outcome in terms of what they're delivering to someone. So what they're having is a quick sale, but not necessarily the retention.

### Ben Theis (05:58):

Another one of the pieces that I was going to throw out there is perception, reality, but that's only going to get you so far. It's great to start with place and promotion because perception is going to be reality, but you obviously need to have a good product or service long term. And that's where we start with place and promotion to begin with, but you need to make sure that your service, your product and your price are going to sustain on a long-term basis. Obviously everybody's business is going to be a little bit different, but we start there, we build that up, but you're going to have to prove yourself and that's where that

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

product and price and how well you maintain that is definitely going to come into play. You can't really fool the marketplace, but you can get everybody in. And that's where they were in my opinion.

### **Alan Wallner (06:44):**

So not only is it a differentiating, but it's proving. Scott, I'd like to hear your perspective on this.

### **Scott Plum (06:58):**

And this is more of a marketing question, but I read the book, "The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing." And they use the example of everybody knows who's the first person to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. And we all know it was Charles Lindbergh and who was second? Well, Bert Hinkle was second and he actually flew straighter. He flew faster, more efficient use and might've been a better pilot than Charles Lindbergh, but Charles Lindbergh is popular, maybe another P is popularity or position. I envision yourself in the marketplace. But like Ben said earlier is that people buy on value. They don't necessarily buy on price. The cheapest price sometimes can cost more and it can create some limitations at the same time.

(07:49): If you're competing on price, you're really racing to the bottom. And you look at the companies that have competed on price and they don't last long. I used to poke fun at Ultimate Electronics. If anybody remembers when they were in the marketplace, they wanted to sell on price. And eventually they went out of business and other companies that compete on price seemed to have a very, very tight margin. And they end up sacrificing a lot of service and not offering the best value. So people want to buy on value, not necessarily price. I use another example of Costco and Sam's Club. There's a mentality of Costco where they say how can we add something to this offering and make it unique and exclusive and offers something that our customers or our members will need. And they follow that mantra.

(08:39): Sam's Club will go the other direction and how can we shave five cents off the cost of this and trying to cut the price in order to win the business. So you look at who's going to be competing and the members are going to tell you, are they buying on value or are they buying on price? So I think we need to keep that in mind. And another thing that we need to keep in mind is that how we sell as entrepreneurs or salespeople is how we buy. So how we buy is how we sell. So how we buy products and services is usually the same criteria that we assume other people follow, which is not true. I mean, it's real, but it's not true. People buy for their reasons and not ours. And the more we find out about that other person, the more we're going to know about, what's going to be most valuable to them. That's going to cause them to buy and take action. And in some cases, people change.

### **Alan Wallner (09:40):**

I liked that, how we buy is how we sell. I didn't realize that. So I got, I guess I better broaden my horizons here on how I'm out there selling

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

**Scott Plum (09:49):**

Or belief system. If we take six months to shop for something that might be \$500 and we're selling something that might be \$10,000, we're going to think just on our own buy cycle, that that's a long sales cycle, but in reality, that may not be for some people, they might see the value quickly. They might make the decision quickly. And it went by quickly, which is a lot shorter than we would assume, but we can be assumptive. That's one thing that turns prospects off and working with salespeople is so people are assumptive. And if you're assumptive, you're probably creating some false perceptions, like Ben said, that are not reality, or the person you have, you created them and they're not real.

**Alan Wallner (10:36):**

Yeah. Even a value; what I value may be different than what someone else's value might be around something. So really understanding different ways to create value. So maybe it's bundling different types of services or products together to create multiple offers. So people can choose one of the offers.

**Scott Plum (10:55):**

Then it also makes it difficult to compare to. So would we want to compare on price and you see a company like Costco, where they create something that's completely different. It's tough to compare that price now because it's totally unique. I mean, the retail store has had this down when VCRs became so competitive, they would change the model number. It's the same model, but Costco would have it, or Best Buy would have it, or Amazon or Circuit City would have it. And it would all be a different model number or they would be exclusive. That model is only available through that retail market. Now it's difficult to compare it. So you can't do an apples to apples and then you end up just buying on what you think it's worth instead of the price.

**Dave Priddy (11:45):**

When it comes to the product, it's also identifying what's the problem. What are you solving with your product? Whether it be an item or whether a lot of us are doing, services. And so it's identifying, what's the issue that they need to get handled? And how does that lead to the value and a lot of times price more often than not you can't lower your price too much. When I first started out consulting, I talked about pricing and most of the people, who I got feedback, is no you can't, if you charge that no one will buy it because they figured if it's that good a deal, you're not very good at what you do. So it's bringing out that you need to set the price that it's appropriate, but that I'd understand that value.

(12:35): Now you need to make sure that you're meeting that value. But that's sort of the idea that came from me and the promotion you were talking about educating your clients and it's partly identifying who's the right person that you can help solve that problem for. And who is it that you can't help, sometimes the value that I bring is saying, I'm not what you need. Scott's got what you need. Or you're not, it's not a sales pitch, it's a marketing. So I need to send you to Ben or to Alan. So it's identifying what it is that you're really going to provide for them and making sure it matches up with what that need. And Scott sort of

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

teed me up because one of the things is identifying why people make buying decisions. So that's what made me choose the methodology that I use. So it's really important to understand how they make those decisions. And to Scott's point is you need to be ready to ask some questions and be ready to do active listening on that.

**Alan Wallner (13:39):**

I think that's really important just being an active listener. Otherwise you're just forcing someone down a path they may not want to go. And I think a differentiation could be is how well you listen and being truthful and honest and, you know what, I don't have the best solution, but I know someone who does, based on what I've been learning from you, I mean that in and of itself is a differentiation. It's a way to stand out, a way to build trust with people. And they may even say, you know what, I didn't end up going to Dave, but I really liked the way he conducted business. And he would probably gladly refer you to someone else.

**Dave Priddy (14:13):**

Well, the other thing that's also going to lead to is, ideally I want everybody to come to me and ask me questions. Now, maybe 80% of those people, I'm going to send to someone else because it's the right person. But if I'm sending 80% of 10,000, instead of 80% of a hundred, I could probably get a pretty good business out of that. I had some senior reps when I first came up here who had decades with my company and all of their customers came to them to ask questions because they knew how to get them to the right places. So that's why they dominant. That's why they were top of the food chain every single year.

**Alan Wallner (14:47):**

Yes, they become a trusted resource.

**Scott Plum (14:52):**

I'll add something to what Dave said is to educate your customers. And when sometimes you can educate them to a point where they're able to do it themselves, or they're able to shop your proposal and break it down. So we have to be really careful about how we educate our customers and the mantra that I use is educate the influence, not educate the teach. So when you're educating somebody, you're educating them on the cost and consequences of an action, which is the number one competition is people doing nothing. And now you're comparing a current position that they're in. And if they stay in that current position, what would happen if they don't change, they don't evolve or they don't look at other options as they grow. And then they're able to compare your solution to not staying where they are and the costs and consequences could be tremendous versus educating to influence about why they would want to make a change. So keep that in mind.

**Scott Theis (15:58):**

Scott, if I could just jump in there, I think you made a fantastic point, which could be even one of those key takeaways from today is when we talk about competition, I love it because I just had this conversation with another set of group of people is that we're not just always

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

talking about the store being next door that is our “competitor.” You own Ben’s Autobody Shop and then Scott owns Scott’s Autobody Shop. He’s a competitor. But like Scott said is you have to think about the other competitors, the people that do nothing, or even for us, at Skol Marketing, a competitor really is a DIY builder, like a Weebly or a Squarespace. It’s not a directness, we have direct competitors here in the marketplace, but we have to also look at someone doing it themselves, someone not doing anything. And that’s a fantastic point to go at as all these things that we’re applying is, we need to look at our direct competitors, but sometimes we get so tunnel vision with just focusing on them. We forget about what Scott said is the biggest competitor of someone not doing anything and not looking at any of us.

### **Scott Plum (17:01):**

And a great question to ask is besides working with me, what other options are you considering? And to do that soon in the conversation, because they’re going to want to exchange information with you. So you ask them some questions, they ask you some questions, you can give them some answers. They give you some answers. You get to a point where they start getting the information that they want. They’re going to stop giving information to you. So now you’re not going to be able to ask, besides me, what other options are you looking at? They’re going well, we’re going to look around to see what else is out there. Now they’re shutting down and they’re not sharing information with you. So the sooner you ask it the better, because it’s a real chance. And then practice the act of listening to really know where are they at when it comes to making a decision? Are they do it yourself type of person or not.

### **Dave Priddy (17:01):**

It’s even more critical than this time. Because a lot of people that are scared to death about doing anything because of all the things that are going on. And a lot of times we’re in situations like this, it’s the greatest opportunity to take that action and even more critical to your point.

## **Other Business Aspects to Leverage**

### **Alan Wallner (18:05):**

So beyond the four Ps, what other aspects of business can be leveraged to stand out from the competition?

### **Scott Plum (18:25):**

My first reaction is people. So salespeople make a big difference in it. And something to keep in mind is that people hate to be sold, but people love to buy. And if you think about an experience that you had purchasing something that you really enjoyed the experience, most likely there was a person involved. And I know that that’s starting to minimize and technology is starting to replace that and we can go and do a one click on Amazon and we

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

can have something show up at our doorstep sometimes the same day or the next day. And that becomes really easy for us to, to make a purchase. But when we get into more complicated products or services, most likely there is a person involved and they're working with you as a customer or a prospect to solve a problem, to reach a goal and to be able to create a very pleasant experience.

(19:21): Some years ago I was remodeling my bathroom and I went to one of those big box, home departments, home improvement stores. And it was early in the morning and I'm walking through the plumbing department and I'm talking to one of the clerks that work there and I say, excuse me, can you help me? I'm working on remodeling my bathroom, that I need some help. And he was stocking shelves. And he said, sure. So he came down and he spent 20, 30 minutes with me and gave me stuff that I didn't even know that I needed, that I would need. And of course, when I walked out of there, I had everything that I needed. And at the end I said thank you very much. I really appreciate your help. And he said, no problem.

(20:01): And my first reaction was no problem. It's like, Oh, was I showing up? Was I a problem? I was interrupting you on stocking shelves. No problem. So I interrupted you stocking shelves. And my interruption was not a problem. Thank you for that. I really appreciate that. And what they really did is they discounted my gratitude and my appreciation for that experience. So often when we say no problem, we're saying that our customers were not a problem. That's not what they want to hear versus my pleasure, my pleasure. Happy to do it. That's why we're here. Come back. I'm really curious how it goes, come back and let me know how it goes. And if there's anything that I left out I want to make sure we get it to you. And I'm curious how thorough I was, so I'd really be grateful

(20:48): I'd be overjoyed. If it worked well, I'd be so proud to go back and say, Oh, I did it. Everything he gave me was perfect. It was all, thank you very much. And then have that loyalty, but just the same, no problem at the end, really discounted the experience. But that's when you work with people, you don't know what you're going to get, but you have a tremendous opportunity to really have an impact on the experience.

### **Alan Wallner (21:11):**

Words that are so important; being very meticulous about how you choose them and in what situations is very, very important.

### **Ben Theis (21:28):**

It goes another P for a perception. He didn't think that or did think it was in the meeting, but it was perceived that way. And that is a fantastic example. I think it's a great reminder.

### **Scott Plum (21:37):**

Yeah. Just don't say no problems. Just say it's my pleasure. Happy to do it. I mean, you're really appreciating, somebody's gratitude that they're expressing to you. Wow. What a concept. And when we discount that appreciation, we discount them because they're telling

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

us something emotional that they're sharing with us. And it makes a tremendous difference on that experience. I mean, it's all about experiences when you're working with a salesperson; and they love to buy people love to buy, they hate to be sold. We have to keep that in mind.

## **Dave Priddy (22:10):**

"People" was something that I had written down also, but that leads right into relationships; is making sure you create a relationship and it's a symbiotic relationship. And it's a lot of times the focus, I think a lot of people know if they understand that it's important to have relationships, you have relationships with them, with the person who's making the decision, the person who's hiring you, but it's even, I think it's at least as important, if not more important to understand all of the stakeholders. And in sales and in sales training, I need to make sure that I create a strong relationship with the sales reps or with the team, if the sales leaders that I'm going to be working with and helping them get better at, but also up the chain to make sure, because a lot of times the people who own the VP of Sales or the COO or the person who's up at the top of the food chain, they know what they want, but they may have not been in those shoes for a long time.

(23:11): So they don't understand how things have changed. A lot of times sales and marketing, they're critical elements to work together. But a lot of times it's, especially in bigger companies, they're butting heads all the time. Like, Oh, if people don't know what they're doing, and they're both saying the same thing about the others, because there's a lack of communication. So it's creating that relationship and creating the communication. And sometimes what I look to do is I look to be the conduit. So ask the people that I'm working with in the field. So what are your goals? Why are you here? Well, I want a paycheck. Okay. Yeah. But why is it, because you want to send your kid to college?

(23:46): Is it because you want to buy a new Harley? Is it because you want to go to Belize? And then also asking the person who owns the sales team is, what do you want? I want to make sure that I keep things going so I can sell this thing for three times what it's worth now next year, or, I don't want to sell it. I want to keep it growing. And I want to make sure it's identifying what's important to them. And that's part of that relationship so that what's important to people and so you can meet those needs. Or if you can't, find someone who can yeah.

## **Alan Wallner (24:21):**

I remember this coming through in a conversation we had with the client many years ago, but you also know your product so well that you're up here above everyone else and your knowledge and the way you think about it and the way you talk about it. But the general person that's coming to you for business. They're down here. So you need to lower your vocabulary. You don't want to talk down to people, but you need to lower your knowledge. So point out how were you when you first started learning about this and take a look at some of your first-time customers, go back and remember how they were learning about you. Because you don't want to talk over their heads which might make people feel like they're inferior.

MIND. HEART. BRAND.



# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

## **Dave Priddy (25:01):**

Most of the people that I work with, unless they're brand spanking new have never had sales and all that, but they always had sales because they were, if nothing else, they were selling mom and dad on why they could stay out an extra hour at night or something like that. But it's identifying that and then finding those examples to say, I had a situation just like that and finding that commonality. I think that's really important, identifying what are the needs and what are the wants..

## **Scott Plum (25:46):**

I want to add on something that Dave mentioned when he talks about all the stakeholders that are involved in the decision. I think about in my business, I have customers and I have clients. So the salespeople that I work with are my customers. My clients are the business owner and I have to be able to appease both of them. I can't just appear as one and not the other, because it's not fit. This is what I learned, this concept through Jostens who would sell books and class rings to schools. Well, who's their customer? Their customer is a student, but how do they get to the student: through the principal. The principal is the clients. So as the Jostens rep comes into the school, they have to make sure that they provide a service to the customer and the client so that they're following through on everything that they're offering their customers. And they're not making their client, the principal, look bad or causing any problems that the principal then has to deal with it. So there's clients and customers and there's different stakeholders. And your goal is to always make your clients and customers the hero in everything that they do. I mean, people would come up to me after a class, six months later, they tried this at work.

(26:44): They were grateful. Thank you very much. And I said, I appreciate that. I'm glad that you had the guts and courage to apply it. You're the hero because you learned it and you applied it. And there's a lot of people that come into my class that learn a lot, but they don't have the guts and courage to apply it. They're the hero when they apply what they learn and they get a different outcome.

## **Ben Theis (27:09):**

Those are some great points to go off of on both Dave and Scott. I think one thing that Dave was even bringing up and Alan, you were even breaking it down of being able to not talk down to your clients or customers, but also being able to help them educate themselves so they can make an educated decision is one of the big words that we always like to use internally here too, as a resource, being a resource for you to begin the community, being a resource for your clients, being a resource for your customers, being a resource again, for a prospect. And so you can do that in different ways, if that is just obviously providing a great service there, but potentially it's via education and some of the things that Dave was even talking about.

(27:53): And I think that even gets to one of the other things you can do to separate yourselves, especially in today's world. And Scott even touched on this prior is communication. I know we all know, communication gets thrown about. People can have

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

degrees in it, but as even Scott said, it's applying it. That actually is the key. We all can sit here and talk about. And I know we've all had faults with drops in communication, and we probably used, sorry for the miscommunication. But I think that what I've really found out is that one of those going beyond the product, price, place, promotion, and some of the things we talked about is that, communication, and technology has made it easier, but it's also made it harder in a sense because we can almost sometimes get lazy with it. But there's also because of that and because we've seen that again, potentially widespread there's opportunities to stand out by doing some of the things that used to be normal, maybe if it was 15, 20, 30, 40 years ago. So I think that's another one that we can like, look at it. How can you communicate with your clients that would separate you again from your competition?

### **Alan Wallner (29:02):**

And you all are eluding to another P that I think is pretty important. We should just go through the dictionary and certain words, but personalization, I think that could be a differentiator as well. I mean that allows you to leverage some technology to help you make it easier, but also it helps you apply what Scott was saying and really getting at some elements where you can connect with an individual because, Oh my goodness, she listened to me and he's actually responding with an answer to this particular type of question I had or, or issue I was trying to resolve. And even through just regular communications, like sending birthday cards or a bottle of champagne on an anniversary, just throwing some things out there, but it's all these little things. It's those details that personalize your relationship with an individual.

### **Ben Theis (30:00):**

It's that authenticity. I know we used that word at our previous webinar and we really honed in on that. I think this is another prime example of what that personalization does, what that communication does, what taking care of the client and the customer, and implementing that. And all of that stuff that we just got done talking about is that authenticity and we know that we're not perfect, but if we can be authentic, that is another thing that can really separate us. Also, the personalization makes it very difficult to commoditize or compare to because now it's a unique solution that compares to nothing else. So it's customized, it's personalized; the challenge, I think that we may experience is that not everybody wants to pay for the personalization or the customization, but we need to be able to set the value of that in the beginning upfront so that they know that it's worth paying for. And I think people are looking for solutions, are willing to invest money in solutions that are going to be invaluable to them. They just don't know who to spend the money with. And that's what they're really looking for is the right person and the right solution.

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

## Refocusing on Your Target Audience

### Alan Wallner (31:11):

There's personalization in the product or the solution that you're delivering, but there's also personalization in the marketing and the sales approach that you're taking. So there's varying degrees of this personalization. Let's take a look at this from a different perspective, a different way, rather than product or service attributes and benefits. Can a business stand out by refocusing who their target audience is, and really getting to know that customer and better articulate the benefits of working with you that aligns with that type of customer. So in other words, can you stand out or differentiate by who you believe your ideal customer is versus the product or features or benefits and focusing on owning that audience in a particular market segment?

### Dave Priddy (32:19):

The term that comes to mind, something that I've heard in some coaching that I just received as a coaching trainer was it was talking about who's your avatar, who's your customer avatar? Really identifying what is the ideal person for you to work with? And what's their age range, what's their gender, does that make a difference. Where are they located? What's the industry, what market are there in all those different things? And when I first started out, I could coach anybody. Well, I can. But that makes it very difficult for me to identify where to do my marketing, but also for someone to refer to me, who do you need help with? Anybody? You just send anybody. If you're asking for everybody, you get nothing. I've done a lot of counseling and people who were in job transition, and you got to say, who are your two or three companies that you're looking for? Because if you say, Oh, I can sell anything. Well, then you're not going to get any help back at all.

(33:20): So it's really the more specific you are. It focuses in, it helps people to identify your specific specificity and then easy for me to say, specificity on what you're looking for, but also what you solve, what you do. And by being that specific, there's going to be some people say, I'm not that, but I still have that issue. Would you still work with me? Maybe so, but a lot of times getting more specific, get more people who are interested in, it's easier for you to describe when you know who your ideal customer is. It's also easier to describe what problem you solve, what thing you add on what, how you build that up. And you can then pull out throughout my career. I've worked with a lot of different kinds of people in, different markets, but I can pull specific examples that apply to that specific avatar.

### Ben Theis (34:17):

I don't know if anyone's watched it, but there is a documentary on Netflix called High Score. It's a six-part series about the history of video games. I really see the correlation here is how they picked the word "avatar" and why that name has actually gone into lexicon. There was a game developer at the early role-playing games where you could decide if you wanted to be the good guy or the bad guy, when you can burglarize the shops and stuff like that. There were no consequences. So the game developers needed to figure out something that would make you feel and know that there were consequences. Really what

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

it came down to was they picked this word and they created this whole thing called an avatar, so that it actually, it wasn't you when people were perceiving it almost like a brand, if you will, our brand can be looked at as an avatar, but it makes us feel and want to do better through that avatar, through that brand, it adds a little bit of personalization, it adds a human component and adds a right and wrong component to it.

(35:29): Your brand as avatar to really look at that you want to put behind it. You're going to be the one fulfilling it. You're behind the computer screen, doing it, even if your business or company isn't behind a computer screen, but for this purpose of looking at that, but you're trying to instill the values and everything of your company through this avatar to have it worth something and to have it mean something.

(36:04): To answer your question, Alan, is yes, we can definitely do so much more with personalizing it, being authentic and really talking to that person as Dave is talking about with examples. And I always talk to our clients sometimes about this. It's the "coulds"; we always get clients that come to me and say, well I could market to this person or I could market to this person, you're going to start to spread yourself too thin and you really need to be focused. And I think a lot of us have obviously heard that if you've done marketing or even sales training or anything like that, but I just think it's so important. And it's the reason it's mentioned so many times is because if you do take your eye off the ball, if you sometimes even pick a demographic to focus, it's a Jack of all trades, master of none type of thing.

(36:59): And so you're trying to please everybody. And so absolutely, I think this question is spot on, something you absolutely want to do now. Can you grow your demographic over time? Absolutely. But again, establish your stuff to really establish a rapport, picking a demographic is going to be critical, especially if you're starting a business.

### **Dave Priddy (37:25):**

To that point knowing by identifying that avatar, it helps you identify what you solve and then it can also help you describe how you solve it.

### **Scott Plum (37:44):**

I looked at this question and looked at it as more of a marketing question, of course, but it's also a sales question in starting a conversation. And sometimes salespeople offer stuff for free that they want to use to start a relationship. And the challenge sometimes when they offer something for free, if it's a competitive marketplace and they don't compete well with a particular item, they end up losing money because we're offering something for free that doesn't get the business. So it didn't work out really well. I had a client in the storm restoration business and they would offer a free assessment on a roof, when a storm went through and there was potential hail damage. They would call out insurance agents and say, why don't you let us come out?

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

(38:36): And we'll find out if we've got any hail damage. And if you should file a claim or not. Well, they send out the technicians and it ended up costing about \$250 to \$300 of labor and time and gas and everything to walk a rough. And then when the claim came in, the insurance company, didn't go with the restoration company because they ended up finding somebody to do it cheaper, but the insurance company didn't have to pay anybody to go out and walk to see if there was a claim needed or not. So we ended up offering something, but not being able to sell it. Now, if we had a relationship with a storm restoration company with certain insurance agents that gave us a lot of business when there was a sump pump that failed or water in the basement or a tree fell on the garage or something like that, where you can end up working in that you have a higher chance of getting that business.

(39:33): And then once you have that relationship established, then you offer those clients the free services that ended up costing, saving them money. So they don't have to pay out to have it done, but you get the relationship and you get the loyalty. So salespeople offering something for free that doesn't have an increased chance of turning into a sale, ends up costing the salesperson and the salesperson's company money, which is defeating the whole purpose. So we need to find out what we're offering, what motivated somebody to call us. And that is really going to tell us the pure audiences, I think everybody's searching for a pure audience to sell to. And I think a great question to always ask is, so I'm curious what made you decide to call us today? What happened before you picked up the phone and called us? That's the motivation, that's the problem that we solve and why didn't you wait? Or why didn't you wait until next month to call us; what happened to create this urgency? And then what's going to cause people to take action. So it's really a combination of what are you offering for free. And then how are you closing somebody to the next step? Not necessarily the sale, but the next step after you have a conversation with them.

(40:56): I think one thing that salespeople need to really concentrate on, and I think this is a problem with some product development companies that develop products, they come up with a great idea. They develop a product, but we don't know what problem it solves. So what would motivate somebody to buy it? That's a great idea, but what problem does it solve? And it doesn't really, so we end up pushing this product out and salespeople are great at being problem solvers, but they don't know how to find a problem. So they need to be a problem finder, be a problem finder first, then apply your solution. Now you've got a perfect match and the solutions to a problem. Now we're creating value, but if we're going out there peddling solutions and nobody's interested in that, we're not going to be making any sales or we come up the product or solve a problem. We're going to be wasting a lot of time and money and energy.

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

## Examples of Successful Businesses

### Alan Wallner (42:01):

It's creating differentiation without devaluing. If were to look up the ladder and observe a more mature business, a business that might be more mature than a smaller business that has something special that they do that are standing out from the competition. What company would you research and why, or what company would you look up and learn from and why?

### Ben Theis (42:39):

I would first start with a bigger company, because I think that's sometimes easier. It's more well known, but I also think that sometimes even for starting a business or a small business, sometimes it gets a little tricky breaking that down. We can learn some stuff from the big guys, but sometimes it's hard to relate to them. But one that I've always liked is Macy's. And going back to the movie "Miracle on 34th Street," where if they didn't have the toy, they would tell you where the toy was. And I think Scott or Dave alluded to this previously. It's not that it's great to come full circle, but really begin with that type of model to be like, Hey, I want to be a resource.

(43:17): I want to be authentic and help you if I can. If I can't, let's not just try and sell you something as a replacement. Let's find what you need to solve the problem. And if that's me, awesome, if not, let me help you find that. So I've always loved that. And that's something we've really tried to do internally within Skol Marketing, and then for a smaller company, locally is Dean's Plumbing and Heating. I'm sure you have seen the billboards, the ads and stuff like that. It's a company that's been around a long time, but what I really love what they did is they recently rebranded instead of just having just him on the face, Dean himself on the billboards, they've digitize it and they've gone modern.

(44:01): So they've really still trying to keep that personalization of Dean there. But now they've tried to modernize it a little bit more and I would say even elevate their brand. And so I think the important thing is some of you may not even know who that is, but I think that's sometimes the important piece is look within your industry, look within your city, look within your community and find those companies that have been there for 10, 15, 20, 25 plus years, because they're obviously basically doing something correct.

(44:32): We don't always need to look at the Apples, the Googles, all the Macy's events. We can get some, but if you really want to know and compare yourself and see, look at some of the local ones, because they're doing something right to get through all the things that we've been through as a society over the past 15, 20, 25, 30 years.

### Scott Plum (45:00):

I mentioned this earlier. I love Costco. It's almost like a certain type of church or religion to me, but they treat their customers as members. If you bought a tent there and you used it three times, three years ago, you can take it back and they'll take it. That's how they end up

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

treating their members. And I'm really impressed with that right now, I'm in the process of looking for tires, I'm shopping for tires and people don't go into Discount Tire unless they're in need of tires. It's not something where you browse and just see what some of the latest models are when it comes to tires and Discount Tire does a great job of closing people, but I'm looking at Discount Tire and Costco, and I'm comparing these two businesses on buying tires.

(45:52): And I'm leaning towards Discount Tire because they'll fix flats for free and they'll offer you a rotation and they've got more locations than Costco so they're easier to find if you're ever out traveling around town and you need to have a tire fixed. There's probably more of those. And so those are my primary reasons, and they may come in cheaper on tires too. My primary reason for buying isn't on price. It's buying on all of the other services that go along with the experience and a company that is able to can convert an inquiry into income. So you're going into Discount Tires, because if you're walking into Discount Tires, you need tires. And they know that, and they can be assertive to a point because they know that they've got a good chance of making a sale. If they end up demonstrating all of the value that they're offering anybody in the market for tires. I mean, you just don't browse, but that concept is this a real simple concept for me when it comes to am I going to go to buy tires?

Dave Priddy (47:14):

To Ben's point about looking big and little. I've been a Disney fanatic forever. We go almost every, we're going down in December. And it's to the point where they don't have employees, they have cast members. And their cast members are required to be happy. I've got some friends who've worked for them and it's not very hard to do that. Their expectation is no matter who you are, if you're sweeping the streets or you're the CEO, if someone comes up to you and sees your little name tag and asks you a question, you don't tell them, Oh, go down there, you solve the problem for them. We talked about being a resource, it's be the resource, in big capital letters, bold underline that you solve those problems. And you can learn from the big companies because one of the things that makes it so that every cast member of Disney is a very small entity that they take the responsibility to take care of their customers.

(48:27): Another example of smaller is Trader Joe's. They will take anything back anytime, anywhere. If you come in and tell them, Hey, I bought that steak and it just didn't taste right. Do you remember the price or do you have your receipt? Nope? I mean, it's no questions asked, so you have to be careful with that, obviously, depending on what you do and what job you do, but it's understanding how to take care of your client, how to take care of your customer. And Scott made the point that you don't want to give too much away. But you can give some value to say, Hey, here's a little taste of what you get. If you hire me, here's what you really are going to see when you hire me.

(49:09): And you're my client. I made some other comments about this, looking at this you also want to avoid comparisons. You don't want to say, Oh, well, I've got to do it. I can't be a Disney, but I can take some of those pieces that fit me. Scott is an example of who I've

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

looked at; he's been doing this for a long time. When I first started doing this, I reached out to him and I've reached out to other sales coaches to say, how'd you do this? What are the things that you feel you've done, right? What are the things that you say, Hey, make sure you don't do this. In that comparison shopping, looking for sometimes, what if Scott does something really well, it might not fit me, but there might be something that he doesn't do that might fit me perfectly.

(49:56): So it's finding those, not only looking at, at, at what other companies do, small, medium, or large, but also how it applies to me. And to back to that, the ideal customer who back to my avatar, is it something that relates to that? And is it important to make sure that I'm either doing it or not doing it? So that's the way I look at that identify and maybe avoid pitfalls.

**ATTENDEE QUESTION:** *Can you talk about the difference in motivation between a buyer who wants to buy versus a buyer who has to buy?*

**Alan Wallner (51:18):**

There are a lot of good examples out there for people to take a look at, but it's dissecting it, taking a look at it. And is this something that applies to me? We don't have to do it exactly, but it should be inspirational and give you some ideas. It looks like we have some ABQs out there. We have another burning question. So one of them is let's talk about the difference between the motivation of a buyer for something they want The motivation for something they resent having to buy. That's an interesting way of taking a look at this because there are some people looking to buy and they may want to buy, but others have to buy. And so how do you differentiate when you come into that, because you have to buy maybe looking at a lower price.

**Scott Plum (51:18):**

That's the difference between salespeople selling what people want and what people need. I think of insurance is something that people need, but they don't want, so how are they going to shop for insurance? And obviously that one becomes very heavily commoditized when it just comes to the premium. Unfortunately, a lot of people don't read the insurance policy when they buy it. And they don't know what the experience is like when a claim comes in and when you end up buying on price, there may be some things that are not covered in your policy that you didn't know of. And you've never experienced anything going bad before all of a sudden your neighbor's tree falls on your house. And then you find out that your insurance company doesn't cover that for one reason or another. And now you quickly realize that you maybe should have looked at the overall policy or the company, the rep that you talked to about certain scenarios that may impact you. So it's looking at the emotional connection with both the want and the need. So when they're looking at selling something that people need, but they don't want, what's the emotional connection, what's the cost and consequences, if something ends up going bad on it?

MIND. HEART. BRAND.



# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

**Alan Wallner (52:38):**

So basically what you're saying is without dissing your competition too much, but just boiling that stuff to the surface. So you can help them see the difference between you and someone else. And here are the things you need to take a look at when you're buying this. See that's, that goes back to education again.

**Scott Plum:**

And I think some of the experience that salespeople have is very helpful in creating scenarios that they've heard of in the past where the customers that we've dealt with in the past, or some of the frustrations that their customers had before they came in and worked with them and bought a policy from them. And so a lot of customers come over to us because they experienced this, this and this. And I don't know if that's ever happened to you, but if it does it, it's probably something that you may not like the way it ends. You may not like how the story ends with that, but it's completely up to you on what do you want to do?

(53:26): If you want to look at what we do versus that, and then you can compare, and then you can decide, I'm going to give you some options. You're going to know more about the purchase. And then at the end, you're going to know what you want to do and what fits best for you. And then you can decide which one you want to do. You're also educating to influence, you were very helpful with them and you gave them a lot of information and it wasn't just reading some fact card off, it was giving them information that's most important to them than making a decision.

**Ben Theis (54:13):**

Scott really nailed that; I want to touch on a couple of points, but I think making one of the main things is going off of that is identifying your product or service and being realistic about it. I think that a lot of times when an insurance agent doesn't realize that people don't want it, they need it, or vice versa, whereas like Discount Tires, I feel like from Scott's example realizes that it's something that you need maybe don't want, or it's an immediate need. I'm not going shopping. So I think that's one of the things there before we even get into some of the stuff that Scott nailed that out of the park with some of the stuff he was talking about. But I think it's even taking a step back and really identifying and being realistic with yourself and with your customers and with your brand and your avatar of where we were repositioning ourselves and then how to attack that with a lot of things that has to be taught in this webinar.

**Dave Priddy (55:10):**

I think a lot of what Scott said, I totally agree. I mean focusing on past experience, but I think they're still a very large degree of the sameness when it comes to what someone wants something versus what someone has to get; is the why, what is it, what is it that you're looking to do? They feel, I have to go get insurance. I have to go get the whatever, the piece of something to fix something. But stepping back saying, what's the motivation.

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

## BRANDING

Why do you do this? What is the outcome? I got to buy tires, why you want to keep your yourself or your family safe.

(55:58): You don't want your car to wreck, or you want to be able to go faster, or you want to be able to not hear the rotors, what is it that is the key elements that's going to make that decision? Sometimes it's price and sometimes upfront, I would say if you're trying to choose, and that's more from a want, so you're like Hey, I'm not going to, I'm not the cheapest. I am not going to be the low cost choice here. But it's looking at, what's important to you. And you can buy your insurance, your car insurance off the internet. But when you have a question, don't expect to make a phone call, you're going to have to type it in and they'll get back to you sometime in the next three to seven months.

(56:41):

Back to asking questions. And we've all three of us, I've talked about this, that, well, have you ever had to with insurance, have you ever had to make a claim? How did that go? And if they're looking to change, it probably didn't go well. I mean, we had a house fire with my family seven, eight years ago, and there were two insurance agents, we'll buy our insurance from one of them because the experience was unbelievable. The other one I will never, ever, ever. And I tell everybody don't buy from this company because they were horrendous and they were the primary.

(57:29): So it's going back to that reaction to, Hey, what is it? What is it, what are the needs that you have? And somebody said Hey, I'm figuring I'm probably not going to use my insurance. This is just because I got to have the card when the police stopped me and go for price, just remember that you get what you pay for it type of thing. So it's still back to identifying what is it, what are the key elements of getting that relationship? And if it's not now, if you've just got to point, if you create that, Hey, this is a really good relationship. I didn't buy from him this time, but boy, I'm going to make sure that I go back to him and ask him some more in the future. Because I always want him to be an option because when it is, I know I'm going to get the Cadillac service.

### Closing Remarks

**Alan Wallner (58:13):**

What it boils down to is creating an additional value. We're at the bottom of the hour, so I want to thank you for being here today. Thanks to our panelists for sharing their insights and wisdom, and I'd like to thank all the attendees who were here for this Thrive!cast episode. And I hope you enjoyed the conversation today, even though we all wore white shirts. If anyone has any additional questions, please feel free to send them to [info@consciousbranding.com](mailto:info@consciousbranding.com) and we'll see what we can do about getting those answered for you. We'll also be sending you a link to this episode with some bonus materials. So if you know of someone who may benefit from this information, by all means, please feel free

MIND. HEART. BRAND.

# CONSCIOUS

BRANDING

to forward it to them. And if you have any ideas for any future topics you'd like to see covered, please let us know at [info@consciousbranding.com](mailto:info@consciousbranding.com). I look forward to seeing you back. And remember, you create your world. So believe in your vision, drive it with purpose, and then above all take action. So until next time, be remarkable.

MIND. HEART. BRAND.