



Episode 31: Building  
Marketing Systems & Split  
Testing New Hires with  
David Bradley

## E31: BUILDING MARKETING SYSTEMS & SPLIT TESTING NEW HIRES WITH DAVID BRADLEY

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

00:16 Justin Johnson: Hey. Hey, Neon Noise nation. Welcome to the Neon Noise podcast where we decode marketing and sales topics to help you grow your business. I am Justin and with me I have my co-host, Ken. Mr. Ken, how are you doing today? Is everything well?

00:30 Ken Franzen: Everything is well, Justin. How about yourself?

00:32 Justin Johnson: I am doing good, excited to talk to our featured guest today. We have David Bradley, he's the CEO of BBG, Inc., A Digital Strategy Firm. He's a digital marketing strategy expert, best-selling author, consultant and coach. David has worked with venture-funded startups and nine-figure corporations to help them develop and execute digital strategies. He is the author of "Getting Digital Marketing Right: A Simplified Process for Business Growth, Goal Attainment and Powerful Marketing". David has also worked with several marketing agency owners to help them grow their business into more sophisticated and profitable companies. David, we are excited to have you on today. Welcome to Neon Noise.

01:20 David Bradley: I'm excited to be here. Thank you, guys.

01:22 Justin Johnson: Awesome. Hey, do me a favor and fill in the blanks on anything I may have missed. Just share with us a little bit about your background.

01:30 David Bradley: Sure thing. Well, I published my book, "Getting Digital Marketing Right", a little bit over two years ago now, and it stand fairly well. And my focus in that has really been about getting the right practices in place so that you can implement and execute the best practices on the best channels for your unique business. So what I do and what I'm really all about is getting in front of your customers online and building the best team around you so that you can do that effectively in the best way possible. And that's what the book is about, that's what I speak about. I have a online course as well that recently broke 10,000 students.



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02:13 Ken Franzen: Nice.

02:14 David Bradley: That's been going very well for me. And I just like to educate all the marketers and agency owners, and so on, on how they can really align best practices to their business or to their client's business, whatever the case might be. And I've been at it with my agency for about three years now, just over three years. But I didn't realize until recently, it all started for me back when I was around 12 years old, and I was into graphic design and video games, a little bit of a geek. [chuckle] And I wanted to talk about those things with other people. So I created a couple of websites and message boards way back then, and they were hideous [chuckle] But all the sites were back then, so that's okay.

03:00 Ken Franzen: Right. We can all relate to that.

03:01 David Bradley: Yeah, yeah. Back in the day, that was the standard. So it did okay and it taught me some basic online marketing principles, really about creating communities and building relationships. So it's always been something relevant to me. And now, today, it's part of my profession so that's great and I'm very happy with it.

03:23 Justin Johnson: Very cool story.

03:24 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. David, gathering information is such an important part of the planning process of any marketing strategy. Can you tell us a little bit about how you approach gathering information and some of the things that should be focused on?

03:41 David Bradley: Yeah. Sure thing. So when we're talking about gathering information, it's really data and that is the cornerstone of successful marketing and successful strategy. And this is something that everyone can agree with, it resonates with everyone. Obviously, when we're talking about a digital strategy, this is where we need to begin, the information. Meanwhile, we might know that but it's tough to slow down and not just throw together a marketing campaign, feeling creative, you wanna get some results quick, so you wanna put together a campaign as quick as possible. But before we do that I try to slow down, focus on that

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information piece and it's something I call "Market intelligence," that phase one of the whole strategy process. And there's two elements to that. There's what I call "mining intelligence assets" and "gathering intelligence data."

04:44 David Bradley: So first, that piece I call "intelligence assets," those are elements that are in your business existing today and readily or easily available to you, things that you can examine, interpret, turn into actionable insights. So, for example, to make that more concrete, it could be past market research, any databases, email lists that you might have, past campaigns, their historical performance, and so on. So these are the things that you need to examine to understand the strengths or weaknesses in your market, in your marketing. You also wanna figure out, "Alright. This is all the information that we have. What do we not have? What are we missing?" So that's something that a lot of people tend to overlook, it's the work you've already done. So you wanna leverage that 'cause it's the easy thing to do. And easy is usually the best way to go starting out. So that's the first part of phase one for "gathering information."

05:51 David Bradley: The second part is "intelligence data," and that's the supporting or supplemental information that you add to the assets that you're already able to find. So, typically, this is something that I find to be more collaborative. You're going to bring in other parties whether that's in-house experts, your salespeople, customer service reps, executives and so on or, external partners, customers, prospects, vendors that you've worked with. And here, it's important to do an inventory of your marketing programs, the gaps in what you're actually doing now and what you need to be doing. But the best practice is probably one-on-one sit down interviews with prospects and customers. Really being able to talk to individuals in your marketplace, understand them and get down to the nitty-gritty about what's on their mind, what they're thinking about. So, big data is exciting, it's a hot topic and all of that, but the one on one conversations, that's what I think separates the real successful strategies from the rest.

07:03 Ken Franzen: So, putting in the elbow grease will pay off definitely.

07:07 David Bradley: Absolutely. Yeah. And I think that's a practice that I typically recommend you don't just do it once where you interview five, six, seven people and call it a day, but it's something you try to do every month. And it might be one or two, maybe three customers or prospects that you talk to, but you put in the time to figure it out. And it really forces you to understand the market on an ongoing basis and it keeps you very sharp, and it's a worthwhile investment of your time. So it's definitely might go to in terms of

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recommendations. If there's one thing I can say in terms of "gathering information," it's sit down with your customers and actually talk to them.

07:46 Ken Franzen: Sure. No, that makes absolute sense. Now, David some of our listeners are established businesses with marketing plans that are in place and they possess some of these assets that they could evaluate and others are newer businesses, start-ups that might not have a well-defined marketing plan. So when... Then, I guess both of these instances, whether you have the assets or you don't, there's that identifying what you need to create. What would you define as assets that might need to be created, that would be generated from these conversations with customers or prospective customers? Can you put your finger on a couple of those things just to give the listeners an idea of, he's talking about this?

08:40 David Bradley: Sure. Yeah. Well, I think the end result... You can put together this huge report of all the information that you've gathered together and what different things can mean, but the ultimate goal at the end of the day, I would say is to develop something called a buyer persona. And in marketing one of the struggles that I have with the marketing field is that we come up with 100 names for everything. So, a buyer persona is an avatar. It is an ideal customer profile. There's probably 10 other names for it.

[laughter]

09:16 David Bradley: But at the end of the day, it's a representation of who your best buyer is, the people that you wanna reach out to. It could be one person, it could be three, four, five, depends on your type of business and the scope of things. But I think that's the ultimate goal. Define that buyer persona. And I think that's a bit of qualitative and quantitative data pieced together.

09:46 Ken Franzen: Sure. So, how does a buyer persona... We've talked about buyer personas here a little bit but, the one thing that I always run into when speaking with business owners, entrepreneurs, and we talk about avatars, buyer personas, you are so spot on when you say there's a different term for describing that. But one of the things I often run into, is they question, "I have a target market. How is that different from a buyer persona? I already have a target market, I'm targeting male buyers, aged 35 to 55, that make over \$110,000 a year who live in Albuquerque, New Mexico." Is that a buyer persona?

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10:32 David Bradley: Well, you got a skeleton there of a buyer persona maybe. There's a bit more to piece together and that's where... Ideal scenario, you do that qualitative research interviewing individuals, you back it up with more quantitative in terms of surveying to prove the hypothesis that you come up with from those interviews. So, an extra step not really needed. But at the end of the day, that persona isn't just those basic demographics. It's about their online behavior, it's the personal histories, motivations, concerns that are on their mind and that's going to change based on different stages of the buyer's journey which we can talk about in a bit.

11:14 David Bradley: But really, this buyer persona needs to outline a specific individual type of buyer and it's something that you use in every piece of marketing, advertising you do from there. It actually makes your job way easier and makes your marketing way better, because you're not creating a marketing plan for a target market. You're creating it for buyer persona A or buyer persona B which you can name in different creative little ways, homeowner Andy, renter Jane, etcetera. You make it fit your market. But when you're creating a marketing plan for homeowner Andy, it's different than creating a buyer persona for homeowners in the State of Florida. It just makes everything more concrete and a lot more simple at the end of the day. So it's worth investing the extra time to define exactly who your buyer persona is and who your buyer is.

12:16 Ken Franzen: Makes sense. Now, you had mentioned something a second ago about the buyer's journey, which I'm really fascinated with this and I think it's so important to understand this better based on the the big change that we've experienced as consumers, the consumers that we're trying to market to or even us as consumers ourselves, the change that's happened in the last five, 10 years, with how we buy things. And it's changed because of the connectivity or the ability that we have to do research more so than we ever did before. Can you help our listeners understand a little bit more about the buyer's journey and maybe touch on some of the different stages that the consumer goes through?

13:09 David Bradley: Yeah, sure. So, there's a number of different models for the buyer's journey. And again, there's a number of different names, whether that relates to sales processes and funnels, and journeys, and customer experiences and so on. They're all on the same concept maybe with their own unique little twist. But at the end of the day, I think the best answer is the most simple answer, I mentioned that once before, and for that with the buyer's journey, that means there's three stages to it. First awareness, second consideration and third the decision stage. So, I'll describe each of those briefly.

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13:53 David Bradley: First off, in the awareness stage, this is where the buyers are recognizing their pain, yet at the same time they aren't fully aware of the potential solutions to that. So, they're out there in the market trying to research, "This is the issue that I have. What can I do about it?" And as a business, we wanna just have some educational offers out there in the world that are vendor-neutral but very important to individuals at this stage. Commonly, this is free e-books, guides, blog posts, so on and so forth, just those basic fundamental questions that you'll know that you need to answer because, at this point, you've already done your buyer persona work, right? So, if you've done that, you know it's on the mind at the first stage of when someone is a potential buyer.

14:48 David Bradley: So, as these perspective buyers move through this process, they become more aware of what's going on with their problem and what the potential solutions are, and they enter the consideration stage. And at this point, this is where, as the company, you wanna start telling them, "Alright. These are your alternatives. These are the pros and cons of each." That information that you provide to them should lead them towards the best solution for them. And again, the information is just aligned to what's on their mind at this point of the process, very similar to what a sales process would be if you were an individual salesman, but now we're translating it into the online marketing world. So, it's providing information online just like a good salesman would do in person talking to someone about what their options are.

15:47 David Bradley: Finally, we're moving them towards the decision stage here. So, at this decision stage, they've gone beyond awareness, beyond consideration, they're at the point that they have a well-defined problem and they have a pretty clear direction. At this point, the perspective buyers are just looking for the best solution provider. So, if they're still engaged with you in some way, you've basically made the short list and it's time to close the deal. So that's it in three basic stages, awareness, consideration, decision. It's really about aligning your content, your marketing activities to these stages so that there's a flow from start to finish. And that's where you need to really understand your market, define your buyer personas, know what's on their mind at different stages, these different stages of the process. Does that make sense?

16:38 Ken Franzen: It definitely makes sense. Now, the buyer's journey really isn't something that's new. It's a process we went through long before the internet was even invented, even back when consuming first began. But how do you see the introduction of the Internet? The fact that consumers now walk around with information at their fingertips at all points in time, what impact... Or how does that change the buyer's journey or the consumer going through the buyer's journey? What do they do differently now and what should businesses maybe be more aware of or, what practices should they be considering due to this change or shift, in the buyer's journey?

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17:28 David Bradley: Well, I think it's important to know that buyers today are doing up to 80% of their research process before they even reach out to a company. And typically that means they're going online, they're checking out reviews, they're going to websites. They're doing that research before they actually get in touch with someone. So companies can't just rely on their salespeople to do all the work. The salespeople are important, they're still vital, but they need support and the online spaces where people are going. Beyond that, another statistic that was somewhat scary, but real, Americans today, almost 50% of them, are going to Facebook to get their news. That's their news source.

18:14 Ken Franzen: Oh, no.

[laughter]

18:15 Justin Johnson: That's vast.

18:16 David Bradley: It's a changing world.

18:16 Justin Johnson: Oh, my goodness. That's horrible.

[laughter]

18:18 David Bradley: Things are vastly different today. It's just time for businesses to get on board and I don't think that, honestly, many of them are. I know a lot of businesses, small to enterprise, they dabble in online marketing, but they don't invest enough in understanding the best practices. And at this point, it's about, where is the consumer attention. And we're all carrying around these super computers in our pocket, all day, every day. We're attached to them. We need to pay attention to that as businesses and we need to just be available and understand where our market is, and meet them there, instead of trying to force them to meet us in some way.





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19:04 Ken Franzen: Sure. And it's interesting to just see what this entire dynamic that's happening has done to the role of a salesperson. My first job out of college was selling copy machines door-to-door with business cards. And so, that type of selling is almost non-existent. And it still happens, don't get me wrong, but the way that we purchase is completely different. And for businesses not to adopt this change... I mean there's a lot of opportunity. You made a point that I find fascinating. You said that a lot of businesses, from small to enterprise, dabble in online, and I look at that and say, "Wow. The opportunity is gigantic for those that want to adopt and pursue a strong online strategy."

20:00 David Bradley: Yeah, yeah. It certainly is. And across the board, companies are just a bit too slow to adapt. And consumers move a whole lot faster than businesses do. The businesses that do adapt will see much better results. But it's a new medium, to still respect the business world, online marketing is pretty new, online advertising is new. Facebook advertising is an amazing thing, but there's very few people that truly understand it, at the same time. So it's really about just getting up to speed and not worrying about... In my opinion, don't worry about how virtual reality marketing is going to affect us, when we don't have the basics of social media figured out yet. Get the foundation figured out and you'll be in good shape.

20:52 Ken Franzen: Sure, sure. Don't try to get on Pokemon and be the superstar there, right?

[chuckle]

21:00 David Bradley: Right. Right.

21:00 Ken Franzen: Perfect. In a way we're alluded to a couple different options for... You mentioned Facebook and virtual reality, but there is a lot of options available today for businesses to market themselves. We still have the traditional means of TV, radio, direct mail. We have all these new-founded digitalized concepts, strategies, platforms, they seem like there's new ones every day. What would you recommend a business, whether it's small to enterprise, do? What would you recommend that they do to get the biggest impact for the two resources that matter most, time and money?



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21:47 David Bradley: Sure. Well, I think this is the golden age for both Facebook advertising and Instagram marketing, particularly, for B2C companies. Facebook just has a tremendous, unbelievable, almost scary amount of data on their users. They just know everything and they have enough data sources, that you can get extremely precise on who you want to target. And beyond that, like I said, a lot of companies haven't figured it out or at least, they haven't capitalized on it. So while the competition isn't as high as it can be or will be in a couple of years from now, the prices for ads on Facebook are pretty affordable. So it's time to jump on Facebook advertising. It's really the hot topic right now. But again, getting a couple of best practices down for it, will make a tremendous difference.

22:46 David Bradley: And second, I mentioned Instagram there. On the other hand, it isn't so much about advertising to me. It isn't also always about building up your account so that you can have a million followers on Instagram, although that would be nice. Eventually, Instagram is going to become more and more pay to play, just like Facebook changed over time. But, at the moment, there are plenty of people out there who have 100,000, 500,000, a million followers, who have that follower base that also fit your target market. So you can just pay those individuals or businesses to promote you, to influence your marketing, and there's a ton of potential for it.

23:29 David Bradley: And, again, just like with Facebook ads, it's just an undervalued activity right now. So if you can take advantage of it, go for it. And, six months from now, a year from now, my answer there might change. We just don't know. And that's one of the issues with online marketing, it changes so fast and pretty much unpredictably. But get into Facebook advertising, try to figure out how you can leverage influencers on Instagram. I think those things will really help 90% of the businesses out there.

24:03 Ken Franzen: Sure. And then, your point there of, "In six months, it might be different," it very well could be. It wasn't that long ago where I think that Facebook wasn't as attractive of an advertising vehicle and now that's changed, and you're right that the data they have available is very impressive. The one thing about Facebook, the one thing about Instagram, is these platforms... We use them as individuals everyday or most of us do for personal use, and then, they have these very easy to use turn key set up in advertise your business. What's your approach or what would be your recommendation there? Because much like AdWords with Google or Facebook, you can definitely promote posts and do all kinds of advertising. What's your recommendations for how a business that might be brand new to Facebook or Instagram or, any of these platforms, even AdWords, how would you suggest that they approach or, what would you caution them about?

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25:13 David Bradley: Sure. Well, I think it needs to just be something that is not too intimidating that you put out there, that's high value, that's easy for people to consume. So what does that mean? What do I mean by that? Well, Facebook advertising over the last couple of years, everyone jumped on it and figured, "I'll share a guide. I'll share an e-book. I'll share this or that," in the marketing world called lead magnets. And it's a nice sentiment but it's also something where if I'm browsing on Facebook I'm there because I'm checking up with what my family and friends are up to, I don't necessarily wanna read an 81-page e-book at the moment.

25:57 Ken Franzen: Sure.

25:58 David Bradley: It doesn't make sense to me. But beyond that, the market was flooded with that. So people got used to those offers in the market. And I think today if you want something that's a real go-to winner, find a lot of success with giveaways and with calculators and quizzes, and similar stuff like that, and if you want a very simple process for your campaign, those are the things to do. As you get more advanced and complex, you can add in content like blog posts, you can re-target people who view that blog post with a quiz, and then, you can share a video with them and you can do all these intricate things.

26:44 David Bradley: But if you can get basic fundamental down of what's that offer, that people are going to be attracted to in the ad, that's where it all begins. And that's something you really want to test out and figure out what's going to work the best. Not only in terms of format, meaning e-book versus quiz versus giveaway, but also what are you giving away? Test different ideas. What's the e-book about? What's the quiz going to tell them? You have to test those different things and that's really the cornerstone of a successful campaign, the offer that you make.

27:21 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. Now, these different strategies that you're talking about here, the quizzes, the e-books, the... Excuse me, the giveaways. I'm sorry, I'm blanking there a little bit. Those three things in particular, there's lots of awesome, exciting software that you can use. I mean you can custom develop, hire a developer I guess and develop the way to deliver your e-book and collect the information, the e-mail address you'd gather in exchange for that or, have them sign up for a giveaway or, develop a quiz. The software limitations don't just stop with those three items. There's unbelievable tools out there available to use in your marketing strategy. Could you share with our listeners maybe some of the technology that you recommend or some of the different platforms that you might use in conjunction with one another, not just maybe those three that we just talked about, but overall for a marketing strategy?

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28:36 David Bradley: Sure. Yeah. Well it's somewhat of a loaded question, since technology can be so broad, so I'll try to not go too deep or ramble too far on anything. But for the average small business, I guess there's a couple of things that come to mind, top of mind. First of, I'd say analytics are super important. So you need to be able to track behaviour on your website, on any social media channels you use, advertising channels and so on. The basic cornerstone of analytics is Google Analytics, so you want that set up, but you probably want a professional who can make sure that's set up in the best way possible that it can generate reports for you that are based upon your business, what's actually driving your business, the sales at the end of the day. So I think having the right analytic systems, also, a course of different channels that use the dashboards on Facebook ads manager, on the different tools that you might use. Learn to use those analytics tools and you don't need a ton, you just need to know how to get to the core KPIs, the key performance indicators, the core metrics on different channels, so they can pay attention to them.

29:55 David Bradley: Second, tech, I guess I would mention be for your website, a CMS content management system. Very briefly here, I always advise my clients who are not on Wordpress but using some kind of website builder or some lesser known, less common platform, you probably wanna jump on Wordpress, there's a ton of websites that use it and none of my prescriptions here are going to be right for 100% of the businesses but for a small business in general. If you're using a free website builder of some sort, you need to get serious and have the right infrastructure ready for your business, Wordpress is the right way to go, relatively easy way to go for that. And the third building block is email, I would say, still alive and well. It can be more advanced than ever too, but it goes beyond email marketing tools to marketing automation.

30:58 David Bradley: Personally, I love active campaign for small business. It's relatively simple but super flexible, super powerful, has a lot of the functionality of tools that cost hundreds of dollars per month but it starts at \$9 a month. So you need analytics to understand behavior. You need a website that's flexible and it can grow with your business. You need some platform, such as Wordpress, that can grow with you and you need a reliable communication channel. So those databases that you have can actually be used well and that's a marketing automation tool. Those are the three building blocks I would mention. There's plenty more that we can talk about, but I don't wanna get too convoluted here in the tech side also.

31:48 Ken Franzen: No, I appreciate you going over the backbone there because I think that's where a lot of business owners get confused is, "Alright. What do I need to have? What should be my strong foundation that I build on?" And the analytics, the CMS, the email, communicating via the email systems, are so important. We could go in a thousand different directions with add-ons and different strategies and tactics

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that would compose those strategies. No, thank you for sharing that with us. That is exactly what else I was hoping for you to share with our audience.

32:32 David Bradley: Yeah, sure. And to add-on that, man, I wanna give you some amazing tech ideas here, but like I mentioned before, you really need the fundamentals down, so you might listen to this and say, " Yeah. I think I know I need a website right now. I think I know about email. But I'm all about just getting the best practices down on each individual activity." So focus on that and then, you can get into some pretty cool, serious, advanced technology. But a lot of the companies, and I honestly have seen it with the nine-figure firms that I've worked with as well, you would be shocked, but they don't have it figured out yet. And I think it's important to just focus on those basics. And it really can have it a massive shift for you if you get them down right.

33:23 Ken Franzen: Sure. Absolutely. 'Cause it's easy to focus on the shiny new marble in the group, the latest and greatest, the one that's in the headlines but missing those fundamentals, that foundations is definitely the big thing to look at here. So...

33:41 David Bradley: Yeah.

33:42 Ken Franzen: Good stuff. Now, we talk a lot about automation, we're talking about putting systems in place and things that will make our lives as business owners easier and we can flip the switch. We have artificial intelligence around the corner, we have virtual reality and everything else, we likely won't have to do much at all here shortly, right? So we're not quite there yet, we're not 100% automated and I really hope that we don't get to that point any time in my foreseeable future. But we still need humans that can create these strategies, that can contribute to these strategies and they're a big component in any successful marketing campaign. How do you go about building a team or how do you go about structuring the people that are going to contribute to this marketing campaign that a business owner would create?

34:44 David Bradley: Yeah. This is a topic that I harp on with a lot of new businesses and established businesses as well actually, because I think the people is probably the most important piece. It's likely the most important piece of my business and I never want a small business or even a solo entrepreneur to try to do everything themselves. So regardless of the size, you do need a team. But I also realize that choosing the right people isn't so easy. And especially when it comes to online marketing, if you don't know online

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marketing, it becomes even more difficult to figure out who knows what they're talking about and who doesn't.

35:24 David Bradley: So there's a couple of things to consider here. First, everyone's going to have a budget to consider and that will dictate someone, if you seek someone in-house or external partners, agencies, freelancers, consultants. I tend to prefer, about 90% of the time, external hires. Every business small or medium is going to be different, but it's good to have someone internally, an internal digital asset who can sit around here and say what's worked and what isn't, and can identify of the external partners, who knows what they're talking about and who's making it up as they go. But nonetheless, overall, you're likely going to have an external digital team.

36:15 David Bradley: Now, when it comes to getting the right people on that team, I look for two main characteristics. One is an independent professional with a growth-oriented, helpful attitude, someone who truly acts as a consultant figuring out your best interest, your best case scenario. And I tend to prefer working with those who have a specific expertise of one practice, meaning they specialize in Facebook advertising, not advertising on Facebook and Google AdWords, and whatever other project you propose to them. I don't want someone who specializes in all of internet marketing, because no one can know it all deeply enough that they can do it all themselves.

37:03 David Bradley: Also, in general, I think there's some very low budget team members you can gather up. There's some very high end individuals. Usually, you'll be very safe in that mid tier category. And I like to find people that are domestic, for me it tends to be America but Canada as well, the UK, Australia. I find my best talent there. And to some degree, time zone plays a role. So Australia's a little bit more difficult to work with. But you get those people with the right attitude and the right specialization that you can work with, I think you're onto something very very strong there. So I can tell you a bit about how I select people. You're going to have a plethora of people that fit those kind of characteristics but you need to actually decide. So I can tell you a bit about that if you'd like.

38:03 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. Because I think that's the one thing where a small business owner or an entrepreneur might get overwhelmed. It's like, "This sound great, David. But how do I go about filtering through the thousands and thousands of individuals that say, 'That's me. I can do that. Here's my digital resume. Here's my profile and it says here that I am a Facebook marketing expert.'" 'Cause this industry that we're talking about, the digital marketing industry, there's certifications but there's no... It's not like you go to



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a doctor's office and you see, "Okay. Great. This is a general family physician or this person is an orthopedic surgeon, because he went to school and he's gone to the training and residencies, and everything else of that nature." There's a lot of grey area out there. So if you could share with our listeners how you go about choosing the right individual for what you're looking for, that would be fantastic.

39:11 David Bradley: Sure. Well, you know what I love doing? Split testing. Now, everyone thinks of split testing as the A versus B of two different ads or landing page A versus landing page B and what works better. It's the right concept but just apply it to HR instead. So you're testing expert A versus expert B, and you're going to have them work on the same project so your costs at the end of the day for that project are going to be higher. You have two people doing the same thing. But you find someone with the right skill set, the right eagerness to work, and the right communication and culture fit for you. And that's incredibly important, because usually you find someone who is very skilled but sucks at communicating or they communicate very well, they're right on top of things, but they're not doing a great job. So you find someone who has that balance. And it's very helpful to split test people and how they perform, how they communicate, because then you have a benchmark to really know who's doing a good job and who isn't. And it's typically pretty clear. There's usually a winner there. That's how I end up with my best people.

40:27 David Bradley: So, not to leave you just on that, I'll give you an idea for the project piece. Typically to start with people, and if we were in the strategy development phase here, you have them run forecast for you. You have them outline the opportunity and what the strategy would be to run a campaign on that specific channel. If they're a Facebook ads expert, AdWords expert, even a web design expert, and you wanna get the right people for that. Don't ask for free work, it's a paid opportunity. But also, you're not going to promise them the world after that. You just wanna focus on, "Hey, help me build the right strategy around this. What can I do and what can't I do on this channel? Is it valid for me, is it not?"

41:10 David Bradley: And this lets you test the expert. You get an unbiased review, because they're focused on what's in your best interest not in a long term relationship. They might assume they might work with you. They might also assume you got in-house staff that will execute and implement. And at the end of the day, you get that split test and you get along with that a very meaningful report created for you on whether that strategy or that channel is going to be a fit for you. And that's something you need to do anyhow. You need to have a strategy. You can't just jump into any channel or any project. So it's very worthwhile work and there's a slight increase as opposed to having just one individual do that for you, but in the back end, you're getting tremendous amount more value out of it.

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42:05 Ken Franzen: Sure. We've all I think hired, or made the wrong choice during a hire and we know how costly that can be. So that's a great method for, I guess, an audition, right? A way to test drive the person or persons to determine which one... Now, would you have them do the same exact tasks or would you have them work together on a project doing different tasks?

42:36 David Bradley: I would have them do the exact same tasks, the same job description upfront and I would have them completely separate. I'm not going to tell them that I have someone else doing the same thing. I'm not going to share any extra information because part of the process is they have to ask me the right questions to get the job done. So if I give the same job description, if someone comes back with, "Alright. I'll get started," and someone else has three really brilliant and needed questions, I'm going to let them follow their process. And I'm gonna see who is making sure the job gets done the right way as opposed to who just wants to get the job done. And you can learn a lot from that. I think it's important to give the same project because you need to see a real comparative result from this.

43:27 Ken Franzen: That first individual that you said that didn't ask the questions, would you allow them to finish and see their process through or would you cut them off and say, "Stop. Time out. This isn't working. You've already threw up a giant red flag in what I'm looking for." How would you approach that?

43:51 David Bradley: I would let it go. There is a chance that it's not something that's going to cause a dead end, but more likely than not I can always take that work and then, head over to the other individual if they are someone that I'm going to move forward with, I can just say "Hey, I had someone else do a similar project or the same project. This is what they came up with, what do you make of it?" I might test two or three people at a time, so I have some perspective there. If someone really doesn't seem like a fit, I'd probably have them complete the job but I might have a third candidate ready to go to add to that.

44:32 David Bradley: And like you mentioned, hiring is costly, firing people is a lot of work and finding replacements. So paying someone to do a project, it doesn't have to be tens of thousands, it could be hundreds, it could be a couple of thousand dollars you spend here. But paying them to do that upfront, really does save you long term. So if you have two or three people, you'll be pretty safe to find someone who's a good fit. And that should be after you've interviewed five to 10 people to get to that short list anyhow.



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45:08 Ken Franzen: Sure. Do you prefer to work with individuals remotely or do you... Would that person then... Would they remain remote or would they come join your team at your physical location?

45:26 David Bradley: Personally, I'm essentially entirely remote. And I do that because I really wanna get the best talent and not the best talent that's convenient enough to come into the office. Unfortunately, I don't have a ton of great talent in my area. If anyone happens to be listening from Rhode Island, I'm sorry, there's just few of us around here that have that high skill level. So I do have a couple of people that work with me in Rhode Island, so they're around. But I found my best people that are based in Arizona and California, and traveling all over. And I don't like to keep geography as a reason to work with someone. There're certainly benefits, it's nice to look across the office floor and just say, "Hey, what's going on with this or that?" as opposed to having to send an email. But if you can find the best talent, I think that trumps the need for finding someone local.

46:32 Ken Franzen: Sure. Yah - that definitely changes the dynamic and the tools we have available now that we can actually work with one another. I mean, Justin is my business partner, he's located in Orlando, Florida, and I'm in Toledo, Ohio. So that is something that when Justin moved down to Florida, 'cause he used to live here in Toledo, everyone was like, "Oh, is he leaving the business?" Like, "No. He's still part owner of the business."

47:03 Justin Johnson: I think we actually communicated more, after I left.

[laughter]

47:06 Ken Franzen: Yes. I agree.

47:07 Justin Johnson: To be honest with you.

47:09 Ken Franzen: I agree. So it's an interesting... I too have become fond of the remote work environment and you're spot on when you look at the talent pools that you limit yourself to by requiring a physical

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presence. So I love the split testing with the recruitment though, that's brilliant. And I think that's something that I want to adopt immediately because I think it allows for so many additional doors to be opened and be more confident in the choice because you get a good feeling. I think everyone interviews well, everyone dresses nicely or speaks well on the phone, everyone has a great resume no matter how accurate it may or may not be. But to actually have them do some work and see how they perform before you make that hire is brilliant. You mentioned earlier David, KPIs, Key Performance Indicators, and they're important to measure success. Let's start off the question with this way, how do you measure success? And then, which KPIs do you focus on? And which ones maybe do you not focus so much on, in marketing?

48:36 David Bradley: Okay. Well, I have a couple of principles I follow related to KPIs. So I don't think it's too smart for me to give you, "These are the three specific KPIs that you follow no matter what." But I can give you a couple of principles to follow and you'll find the best case scenario for you, and it won't be too complicated. So first, I think one of the issues and that's with the power of online marketing and Google analytics and so on, we have too many options, too many KPIs that we can follow, so for each channel, you're going to want three to five KPIs. And those are the ones that you're going to track, week by week, month by month and look at the progress. And it'll be different for AdWords versus Facebook versus whatever other channel that you might use, but you don't wanna get lost in the dozens or hundreds of different options of what you can track. You wanna keep it to a high level, "Strategically what's going to keep us moving forward?"

49:44 David Bradley: So, another principle that ties into that is, those KPIs should focus on getting as close to the sale as possible. For example, in advertising, you can track clicks and make that a KPI, that's an option, but that doesn't mean it has anything to do with your business. If someone clicks that doesn't really translate to dollars. So if you can track the leads generated, being people who not only clicked, but also left their name, email for more information, entered the giveaway, got the e-book, whatever it is, then, that's more valuable it's closer to dollars at the end of the day for you.

50:23 David Bradley: Beyond that, if you can track through to the sale, then that's the KPI that matters the most. Figuring out how much it'd cost you to acquire each customer is an excellent KPI to have. A cost per lead is a decent KPI 'cause it doesn't connect to customers exactly, but it's closer. Cost per click, I generally can care less about, it's an indicator, it's something you need to know how to use as an advertising professional, but I need more than that to feel good about my marketing. So, the point again, get that KPIs close to the sale as possible.

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51:04 David Bradley: And I guess the last principle is to have an actual system in place. And I really prefer an anti tech system at the end of day. There's a ton of marketing tools out there that can generate reports for you. And they'll have page after page of details and again, dozens of metrics that you can track, but what I like to do is essentially have an executive summary. And I have my team do this manually in PowerPoint so that we can have a one page overview of three things. One, what was accomplished over the last month, might be two or three items there. Then, the numbers, the KPIs, the three to five that we're tracking. And the final piece of that report is what's coming up the next month ahead? The two or three things that we're going to be working on?

52:01 David Bradley: And doing it in this format, manually creating that report and not having it all just quantitative numbers pulled automatically, it forces accountability for your team. And it forces you to be thoughtful about what you have done and what you're doing going forward. So, as much as there's some amazing report generation systems out there, just pen to paper or write up in PowerPoint. Doing it manually I think is super important and it's a little bit of work, but it's a worthwhile investment of your time or your team's time.

52:36 Ken Franzen: Great advice. You definitely can get lost and... Let's just take Google Analytics for instance, there's more data inside that singular platform than most people should ever even consider looking at. And I love the idea of just focusing on some high level items instead of drowning yourselves or getting focused on something that is not as important as you might make it. It's like looking at your investment portfolio and getting fixated on one stock that's in one mutual fund that's tanking when everything else is doing great.

53:18 David Bradley: Mm-hmm. True.

53:20 Ken Franzen: So once the campaigns are live... We talked about Key Performance Indicators and things along those, and measuring. Are there any other things that you recommend doing outside of tracking the KPIs? What if the campaign's running? You mentioned split testing, do you do a lot of that? What are some other things that you do after this? We planned our marketing strategy, we've identified our buyer persona, we've created the assets we need, we have the campaign implemented, it's up and live and running. And the team that we've constructed is optimal. And we have the KPIs, we're gonna measure in place. What happens next? What do we do on a continuance basis?

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54:07 David Bradley: Sure. Well, depending on what that campaign is, there's going to be ongoing reporting, which we just touched on a bit. Depending on the size of the business, I think quarterly leadership committees makes a lot of sense, where for those mid-size businesses, where leadership is somewhat detached, getting the executive team involved, getting marketing sales, customer service directors involved and so on, to track the progress and make digital a core component of the entire business, I think is important. But, for everyone, whether it's a small business with one employee or just the owner to those nine-figure businesses, the practice that matters when your campaign is live and running, is taking a scientific approach to testing, it's really vital. And I mentioned split testing in the HR sense, but it is a core component of marketing. So, that means split testing ads, split testing landing pages, the website and so on. It means, also, tracking blog posts and testing what's performing well, what's not, being aware of what people are interested in.

55:29 David Bradley: But, most of all, it's about acting as a scientist when you do this. Meaning you have a ton of options of all these different things to test, but if you go a little crazy with it and you test dozens of different ads with dozens of different landing pages, with dozens of different email auto-responders, there's too many variables to identify what's working and what isn't. So, you have a very complex campaign. You're doing a lot of testing, but you can't really say what's working.

55:56 David Bradley: After a campaign is live, we focus on one variable at a time. And, we test dozens of different elements of one type. So, it might be messages. And we might have two or three different types of messages that we test out and a lot of them will suck, they'll tank, they'll perform very poorly. But, it's worthwhile to do that, to figure out what those messages are that just don't work because we have to essentially sift through the dirt to find the gold, as they say. So, you find that gold, you find that golden message. And you move forward to the next test, where you test the imagery, the graphics that you use and that's the one variable. So, ongoing testing on ongoing basis, where you're just continue to test until you find a statistical, significant winner in that category. That's the thing that I think is most important.

56:57 Justin Johnson: Great stuff. Alright guys, I think we're getting pretty close to time. David, you've shared a lot of great, helpful information for our audience today. What is the best way for our listeners to get in touch with you?

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57:11 David Bradley: Sure. Well, you can head over to [davidjbradley.com](http://davidjbradley.com). There's information there about my book and my course about working with marketing agency owners, etcetera. You can go to [thebbg.com](http://thebbg.com), which stands for The Bradley Business Group, that's my firm, digital strategy firm. We do a lot of Facebook advertising work. And, if you'd like, you can go try to find my book on Amazon, "Getting Digital Marketing Right". I'll share some links for the show notes as well. You can get that as paperback or Kindle.

57:46 Ken Franzen: Perfect.

57:47 Justin Johnson: Beautiful. If you had one last piece of parting advice for the listening audience, what would that be?

57:55 David Bradley: Well, I think it's build that right team around you. Take some time to research professionals in whatever category you need. If it's an AdWords professional, an SEO professional, whatever. Look around LinkedIn, look around with your network, getting referrals, use different websites to find people online. Get a short list of five to 10 candidates, sit down, talk to them. And then, do that small test project where you split test two or three people. Because you need that right group. And it could be testing an agency, versus a consultant, versus a local freelancer, and that's okay. You just gotta find the right fit for you and your business. And I think building that digital dream team around you, that will really help move your business forward.

58:51 Ken Franzen: Beautiful. "Build the digital dream team." Alright David, hey thanks so much for being on our show today. Neon Noise Nation, we hoped you enjoyed the conversation with David. Be sure to go out and check out his website at [davidjbradley.com](http://davidjbradley.com). As always, the show notes will be available today at [neongoldfish.com/podcast](http://neongoldfish.com/podcast). Until next time, this is Justin, Ken and David, signing off Neon Noise Nation. We will see you again next week.

[music]

59:27 Speaker 1: Thank you for listening to this episode of the Neon Noise Podcast. Did you enjoy the podcast? If so, please subscribe, share with a friend, or write a review. We wanna cover the topics you wanna



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