



# Episode 38: Making Your Company Irresistible to Customers with Gregory Diehl

## E38 MAKING YOUR COMPANY IRRESISTIBLE TO CUSTOMERS WITH GREGORY DIEHL

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

00:16 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: Hey Neon Noise nation, this is the Neon Noise Podcast where we decode marketing and sales topics to help you grow your business. What's going on everybody? This is Justin Johnson, and with me, I have my co-host, Mr. Ken Franzen. What is going on today, Ken?

00:33 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Not too much Justin. How are you?

00:35 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: I'm doing great. I'm excited to chat with our featured guest. Today, we have on Gregory Diehl. He is a best-selling author, coach, and founder of Identity Publications. Gregory is the author of two Amazon best sellers, Brand Identity Breakthrough, and Travel for Transformation. He has lived in 48 countries and continues to use his experiences to help others along the path of self-fulfillment through exploration. I was told in his free time, I don't know about this, Gregory kidnaps felines from streets around the world and baths them in his sink before passing them along to strangers. Not sure about all that, we're gonna have to learn more. Gregory, welcome to Neon Noise!

01:17 Gregory Diehl: Good to be here! And yeah, thank you for specifically bringing up the cat thing. I just want people to know right off the bat I'm a very weird person.

[laughter]

01:24 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: Tell us about your cat-kidnapping.

01:28 Gregory Diehl: What I do, many of the countries I travel in have a huge street cat, not necessarily a problem, but an abundance of cats living on the street. And every now and then, I will form a connection with one I meet, and if I'm in one place long enough, I will take that cat home with me, rehabilitate it, fix it up a



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bit, and flip that cat onto a new owner, you could say, like people flip homes. I'll fix it up a bit, make it pretty and socialize it.

01:56 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Make it pretty, fucking cute.

01:57 Gregory Diehl: And I actually use that as an example in my book of sales tactics. How would you convince a stranger to adopt this cat spontaneously? I use that as a... It's a bit of an unconventional example of how sales conversations are always happening.

02:15 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: So Gregory, aka the cat flipper.

02:19 Gregory Diehl: Sure, I'm okay with that. [chuckle]

02:21 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: I love it! Tell us a little about your background.

02:25 Gregory Diehl: My background is extremely unconventional. I always tell it slightly differently 'cause it's hard to put it in the one-narrative structure. But the point of my second book, the travel book, was sort of to tell that story through *Travel as Transformation*, that I just started traveling as soon as I got out of high school. And I immediately realized this was the single most important thing I could do for my personal development 'cause it forced me to grow and think in radically new ways, every time I went to a completely foreign culture. And so, I just kept doing that obsessively for the last 10 years. So I'm 28 now, been to about 50 countries, and I'm still just always learning new things about the world, and therefore, always learning about myself.

03:04 Gregory Diehl: And through that process, I had a certain natural skillset for things like sales and marketing, and direct communication, education. I learned a lot about how business is done in every possible context you can imagine, and then, more importantly, how people communicate how their business is done. That kind of cultural education is not easy to get. And so then, to try to translate that into how businesses, conventional ones talk about what they do, has been really profound for me because I'm very now good at

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helping people get to the core of what it is they're trying to communicate and doing it in a way that people will want to listen.

03:42 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: That's awesome.

03:44 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: I don't think that I'm gonna be able to visit 50 countries by the time I'm 75, and you've done it before your what? 28 you said?

03:53 Gregory Diehl: Well, like I said, I was really bored, so I figured, "Why not? I don't like where I am so I'm gonna go somewhere else. I'm gonna go try something new because anything else now just seems very mundane in comparison." That's the only problem with travel is your standards get real high real fast.

04:08 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: [chuckle] Right, good stuff. So Gregory, your book, Brand Identity Breakthrough, I wanted to see if we could start off by just identifying what... Let's talk about brand identity, what it is, and kind of set the tone from there.

04:25 Gregory Diehl: Brand identity. Okay, so first of all, what is identity? Who are you, really? Think about that. And think about how other people think of who you are. Because on the most surface level, it's things like, "Oh, where are you from? What do you look like? What do you like to do in your free time?" All these just visible obvious qualities about a person. I could say, "Well, I'm 28 years old," that's one way to know what I am. "I'm American. I'm from California. I like to play the guitar. I like to travel. I like to..." All these just little statements about me that you are forming a picture of me in your head now. But it also goes much deeper than that like my tone of voice if, depending on how I talk, I can be very pleasant and just laid back. Or I could be excited and my personality is now coming through in a completely different way! And you're much more likely to remember the second version of me even though they are both parts of me, and the possible variations upon that are unlimited. All these different ways that people can form an impression of you and how you think of yourself.

05:30 Gregory Diehl: So if you are trying to communicate your identity in a strategic way such as, "I want you to buy my product," or, "I want you to want to work with me," then you need to get more specific and

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tailored in how you display all the various features and facts about you, depending on what I want you to do. And as your company, whether you're a solo professional or you are representing a company of any size, the same identity factors come into play. What do you think about when you think about Walmart versus Target? Or Starbucks versus, what's the donut one?

06:11 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Dunkin' Donuts?

06:12 Gregory Diehl: Dunkin' Donuts, that's it. Sorry, I couldn't even remember the name, I remembered the company. I remembered everything about the company except the name. What does that tell you? I have an impression of this company in my head that goes far beyond their incidental name, the two words that make up their name. I'm thinking of their personality. I was even thinking of their color scheme. I was thinking of the kind of person that goes to Dunkin' Donuts versus the kind of person who goes to Starbucks. All these are images I have in my mind, associations with each of these respective companies, and I'm not even part of the target market of either of these companies. I'm not the kind of person that goes out to a coffee shop everyday. But I have these impressions they have built into my head that are all very subtle, very hard to put into words, parts of their identity as a brand. Just as there are very subtle parts of every single person, including yourself, that contribute to their fundamental sense of self.

07:05 Gregory Diehl: And you need to get really good at displaying those things verbally and in other ways, such as your logo or whatever, if you want to stand out from other people and move beyond, really, generic conceptions of, "Oh, well, I produce this type of widget for this type of person. And I believe customer satisfaction is the most important thing ever. And the customer is always right. And we love our customers." Those are 99% generic propositions that anyone can make, and therefore, they're not memorable and not impactful. All these other things are memorable, and impactful, and effective.

07:44 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: So my question to you then, because I think one of most challenging things that the majority of anyone and probably a lot of business owners/entrepreneurs, it comes when talking about themselves. There's always that people are building their resumes. I always get this from some of the interns that come work here, and they're just, "Your resume sucks. You need to do much better with this." And I was like, "I really can't look and talk about myself. I can't..." How do you go about talking to people in pulling out these unique qualities, these core elements that are going to make them different?

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08:23 Gregory Diehl: Well, a resume, for example, is a socially-standardized narrative structure. A resume is a way we have collectively decided if you're seeking a job. It's not as appropriate for entrepreneurs, but if you're trying to get a job with a company, you're supposed to present the entirety of your existence, your identity, as is relevant for them in this format called a cover letter, and a work history, and references. And that's why things like resume gaps are so lethal to people because now, suddenly, there's a hole in the narrative structure. Like, "Well, why isn't there anything here for these two years? What were you doing? Who knows? It could be anything and therefore, it's dangerous to me. Were you selling drugs? Who knows?"

[laughter]

09:05 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure.

09:07 Gregory Diehl: Suddenly, there's a plot hole. "I don't know how to categorize this person. I don't know if they fit the characterization I'm looking for." Because that's how corporate structures work, is that they have very rigidly-defined lines that everyone is supposed to fall into because it's an effective way for their large-scale operations to work. So a resume is a great example of that. How do you present your identity in a way that is appropriate for that specific audience? If I were trying to impress a corporation into hiring me, I certainly wouldn't be presenting myself the way I am now. I could tailor my identity, I could put on the suit. I could come up with a work history that was appropriate in the sense that they're looking for, even though my work history is completely wild and unconventional, and mostly working for myself. But I could find a way to present myself in a way that would be appropriate for something like a resume.

09:56 Gregory Diehl: And that's what people don't do, is they're not thinking of, "What is the person I'm talking to expecting me to say? What is the filter they're using when they look at me?" And when you're selling a product as an entrepreneur, your audience is the customer. It's the specific person who's going to find value from what it is I'm selling. What are they looking for? And how nuanced and detailed can you get with that? How is a person who buys a pickup truck different than a person who buys a sports car? They both exist in the same category of automobiles, personal transportation, yet, they are thinking and acting in totally different ways for totally different reasons. It's like somebody goes in to buy a pickup truck and walks out with a sports car; that would never happen. They become categorically distinct. You either want one or the other, you would never mix them up.

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10:49 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Interesting, so it's not so much telling the... Digging deep down but really telling your story based on who you are serving it to.

11:00 Gregory Diehl: Well, you're never telling the whole truth. There's a difference between being selective and being inauthentic because you could never display the whole thing. I, for the last few minutes we've been talking, have told you strategic parts of my life, about me that I think are appropriate for what you want me to say and what your audience wants to hear. But I can't tell you my entire experience of 28 years of living so far, including all the really weird things I've done. A lot of weird things.

11:26 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure.

[chuckle]

11:28 Gregory Diehl: And frankly, some things you might even find offensive that people would stop listening to, or wouldn't wanna listen to. So what will be the point of me saying those things? Instead, I'm gonna select the parts that are valuable for you and your audience. And the same thing is true when you're trying to sell something, or just appeal to people in establishing an identity presence in their mind. What are the people who buy the things that I sell looking for? What is the identity of the person or the business they would want to buy those things from? What is their personality like? Are they fun and friendly? Are they stern and serious? What is it? 'Cause there's no one answer for everything. And the more specific you get, the more specific your answers need to be for those things.

12:08 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure. So tell us a little bit more about your book, *Brand Identity Breakthrough: How to Craft Your Company's Unique Story to Make Your Product Irresistible*. What made you decide to write this book, and who did you write it for?

12:25 Gregory Diehl: What made me decide to write the book is a really stupid story of a woman who approached me as part of an online entrepreneur group I was part of called the Dynamite Circle. They're pretty popular. The digital nomad scene, people who travel around. And she told me that she thought I

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should write a book, and she told me she could help me do it. And then, as soon as we decided what the book was gonna be about, she sort of just took my money and ran.

[laughter]

12:54 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Okay.

12:55 Gregory Diehl: Yeah, so I lost about five grand in that, and had nothing to show for it but an idea for a book. And I said, "Okay, well, I'm not getting that money back, but I still do have an idea for a book. I don't know anything about actually producing and marketing a book, but that sounds like the kind of thing I could learn," because I come from a background of education. For a lot of years when I was traveling, I was teaching. And then, that blended into sales and marketing, which to me, is another form of teaching. It's a very direct form of communication of trying to convince people to do something with the information you're giving them.

13:30 Gregory Diehl: And so, I figured, "Okay, I can learn the details of producing and marketing this book on my own." And I did. And I published it and it became an Amazon bestseller immediately. A year later now, it's still selling quite well and brings a lot of interesting opportunities for me. But as far as why I wrote the book, it's because I knew I had something worth saying. I have a unique way, even though a lot of the things covered in the book like how to impress people and communicate value and unique selling propositions, people talk about these things. It's not like I'm the first person to bring up this subject. It's just I think I have a way of expounding on these topics, elaborating on them that is simultaneously entertaining because I have a unique tone and unique life experiences to compare these things to, such as selling cats in Morocco on the street. [laughter] And because I have a way of going deeper into, I think, than most people, like really think about who you are and why you're doing the things you're doing, beyond just, "Here's how to write good tag line."

14:32 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: What type of audience gets the most... Would get the most value from it? Is it strictly for business owners/entrepreneurs? Is it something that an individual that's in sales could value from... Gain a lot of value from?



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14:45 Gregory Diehl: Oh absolutely, an individual could, or even just somebody who's considering becoming an entrepreneur, like a perspective entrepreneur. I would even recommend it to teenagers and college students because what it will do is show you that if you're going to operate as an independent agent in the world, a lot of the safety nets that other institutions provide for you, you are going to have to compensate for on your own. If you work a job in a company, you're usually just performing one limited task over and over, and it's the task that they've decided is best for you to do. And you have a whole team, most of whom you never even see, who are performing complementary tasks to what you're doing that make your task valuable. And any one of them on their own would be meaningless for this part of the whole machine, each person contributes their own value to an end result. When you're operating independently, you don't have all those other people performing all these vital functions. And so, you have to figure out how to do most of those things yourself and outsource the things that you can't do yourself. And I think if you only did one thing really well and it was convince people to spend money, get really good at demonstrating value, you would still find a way to make money. You would still find a way to be successful no matter what else you were doing.

16:02 Gregory Diehl: There are some parts of marketing I'm horrible at. I don't get social media. I don't wanna get social media. I don't wanna go anywhere near that. Yet, that's the first thing people think of when you say something like "Internet marketing." That's what people assume I do sometimes when I tell them I'm a digital nomad and I travel around the world working from a laptop. They assume it has something to do with Facebook Ads, and pay-per-click campaigns, and Instagram. And I know what those things are, I know how they work. I work with some people who are really good at those things, but I don't wanna touch those. That's not where I do best. Where I do best is explaining how things work to people and why they should spend their money on something.

16:37 Gregory Diehl: So I would say the best value somebody would get from my book is if you have something that you don't know how to explain the value of. And the more complex what you produce is, the service you offer maybe, and the kinds of things that you would be able to charge a high hourly rate for, if you're a consultant or a teacher or a trainer or an artist of some kind, you need to be able to explain to me why you charge twice as much as what the industry standard is. And you have to do that in really fine detail that really appeals to me or why would I pay your prices? So it's definitely not just for people who run businesses, it's for anybody who wants to be able to talk better about who they are and what they do in any context.

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17:22 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Where do most business owners and entrepreneurs fall short when it comes to developing their brand identity or creating or expressing this value that you talk about in your book?

17:33 Gregory Diehl: So many ways. God! Most people are terrible at this. Where they fall short, specifically, I think, is they don't really describe... Either they don't describe the outcome of what they're doing in a very specific way, or they don't describe the way in which they achieve that outcome. If you think of every product or service ever bought as somebody trying to solve a problem of some kind, and literally, can be conveyed that way, no matter how specially you think what you're doing is, or how uncategorizable it might be; in some way, it comes down to people are giving you money 'cause they have a problem in their life, and you are trying to solve that problem for them. They either want more of something good, or less of something bad. Everything a person ever does can be modeled in this very simplistic binary black and white way: You want more of something you like, or less of something you don't like. So what is it that you are doing for people that provides that for them? When you call a plumber 'cause your pipes are leaking, you want less water flooding your basement. That's not a good thing, that is un-preferable for you, right?

18:36 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure.

18:36 Gregory Diehl: When you hire a music teacher, you want more of the ability to play the ukulele. That's something that you've decided is favorable, and you're willing to put your time and your money into doing that. And yet, many entrepreneurs and service providers cannot articulate what is the good they are producing, or the bad that they are eliminating in those very simplistic binary terms. And then, even if they can do that, they can't describe how exactly they do that in the manner in which they do it that is different than any of the other ways a person could accomplish that same function. There is always more than one way to skin a cat, to use a crash...

[laughter]

19:17 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Poor cat.

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19:18 Gregory Diehl: Okay, let's use the car example again.

[laughter]

19:22 Gregory Diehl: What do a pick-up truck and a sports car have in common? Well, they can both get you to work. They both provide forward momentum at a rate faster than walking. So in that sense, they are categorically the same, they can accomplish the same function. Yet, there are also a lot of ways they're not the same. If I have to haul 100 pounds of manure, I don't wanna do that in my sports car for very good reasons. If I want to impress the ladies, I don't wanna do that in a pickup truck, necessarily. Maybe I do, I don't know, but it depends on the ladies. [chuckle]

19:54 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure! [chuckle]

19:56 Gregory Diehl: So there are ways that they're the same, and there are ways that they're totally categorically unique. What is the specific way that what your selling accomplishes what it accomplishes? And then, if you just stuck to one [20:07] \_\_\_\_ among sports cars, there's a lot of variety. Why do you want this sport car versus that sport car? What is distinct about them? How do they accomplish their function in ways that are not the same?

20:18 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: And so, what you're saying you find is that so many entrepreneurs/business owners are settling on describing their vehicle as one with wheels that will propel you forward, rather than beginning into the fine detail of what makes them different.

20:38 Gregory Diehl: Yeah, they'll say something like, "Oh, it's fast, it's tough, it's strong, yeah!" And this is the voice you use when you advertise cars built for the tough. I'm a man.

[laughter]

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20:50 Gregory Diehl: What are you telling me with that... "Okay, this is for tough, manly men. Got it, okay. But why? How? What am I doing?" Yet, more... See, people are afraid to do that, they're afraid to get really specific. And I think it's a question of scale too because if you're advertising to millions of people, you can't get super specific. So you do generic things like, "Yeah, built Ford tough. Buy my fucking truck."

21:12 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure.

[laughter]

21:12 Gregory Diehl: But if you're talking to an individual or to a small defined group of people, then you can get really specific and really educational when you explain what you do and why it matters. And people are afraid to do that because the more specific you get, potentially, you're turning off certain people just as you're turning on others. And that's only useful if you know who you're trying to turn on.

21:34 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: And so, that kinda leads me into the next question, and it's about unique selling propositions, which is a very closely related, if not... And it was right on what you're heading towards here, but the unique selling proposition. And my question is... The importance of that being part of and where that plays in the marketing campaigns for a business owner/entrepreneur. What you just described there, how much different is that? Is that, in your definition, the unique selling proposition? Or is there a variance of what you just described there that takes the unique selling proposition to another level?

22:17 Gregory Diehl: Well, it can be very simple or very dynamic. It could be as simple as, "Our product is cheaper." But the problem with that is it's very easy to compete on. Anybody can just come up with the next cheapest widget. You could say, "Oh, it lasts longer." Okay, that's great, but again, that's really easy to compete on. Somebody can come up with something that's more durable. So you need to, eventually, depending on how competitive your market is, get really dynamic in the ways that yours is unique like the way it makes someone feel. The more artistic you are, the less competition there's going to be because no two artists are going to paint in exactly the same way or design their, whatever, to look a certain way, and feel a certain way, and appeal to a specific person's sensibilities. You get more and more complex, more and more dynamic. And that doesn't just apply to the aesthetics, that applies to the functionality, like how many varieties of laptops are there on the market? Why? Well, because everybody in the world, practically, uses a

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laptop now. And there are as many minute specific preferences as you can imagine, and how and why, and in what manner, in what environment people use a laptop.

23:27 Gregory Diehl: I've owned a lot of computers as I've travelled around the world. Sometimes, I want one with a 15-inch screen. Sometimes, I want one with a 13-inch screen. Sometimes, I want one with lots of RAM and a great video card so I could play video games on it. Sometimes, I just want a bare minimum basic word processor and email checker. And yeah, now, we have thousands of variations on this product category called a laptop computer, and they continue to innovate every fucking day as the technology progresses, and the needs of the market progress too. That's why nobody can predict what a laptop will look like in five years because our needs and our abilities will have evolved very rapidly.

24:04 Gregory Diehl: So people need to really think, "What is the lifestyle of the person that I'm producing this thing for? And to what degree can I make it match their exact specific preferences for how they use this thing?" And if it's a service you're offering, then same thing. It's, "What are they looking for in a service?" If you're a life coach, for example, this is a great one. I deal with a lot of life coaches, and 99% of them can't tell me what they do beyond really generic elevator speeches of, "I help people achieve their goals and live life to the fullest." What the fuck does that mean? What does that mean? And these people charge \$200 an hour to sit and talk to them about what? What do you help people do? How do you help them do that? How are you qualified to do that specific thing and why is it worth \$200 an hour? They can't tell me! Just, "Live life to the fullest! Life is amazing!" What the fuck does that mean?

[laughter]

25:01 Gregory Diehl: Sorry, I got a lot of grief with life coaches.

25:05 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: No problem.

25:05 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: Definitely, you had a bad experience.

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25:08 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: So with all that though, the unique selling proposition, it's so challenging and tying back. So you're basically stating in there, "You keep coming back full circle to first understanding who that audience is you're after." And then, in this instance, you're basically stating to perhaps even create the service or product that fulfills their need.

25:31 Gregory Diehl: Yeah. Well, it's like reverse engineering. But you don't wanna be inauthentic again. You don't wanna produce something just because you think it's what will sell. You can do that and you can make money with that especially if you're operating on a really large scale. Yeah, you want your widget to be bought by as many people as possible, so you need to understand the needs of the large-scale market. But for most people who are operating on a smaller, more personal level, you wanna do what is fulfilling and feels right to you, but just tailor it, and not even necessarily change the product or the service. Product design is one thing; but it's more about presenting it in just the right way. You don't even necessarily need to change anything about what you do. You might already have the best thing ever. But if you don't know how to talk about it and present it in all these subtle ways, it just doesn't matter. No one will see it, the right people won't be attracted to it, and you'll hardly sell anything. So just making these tiny changes in how you present what you do makes a world of a difference without you necessarily needing to be totally inauthentic in who you are and what you do.

26:32 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure. So let's shift gears for a quick second here and talk a little bit about storytelling. Why is storytelling so powerful? And what advantages does storytelling hold from a marketing perspective?

26:46 Gregory Diehl: So you'll see this a lot in these online explainer videos. "Bob was having a problem with his credit card balance. Then he discovered that this company will help him..." It's just this very cheesy background music, voice over, simplistic... It's for children, it's like a story for babies. And stories work because it's how the human brain categorizes information. Most people are not very good at just reading through a list of facts and features about something, and independently arriving at the conclusion, "Okay, yes, this meets all my needs to a satisfactory degree. I will commence with purchasing this product." I can do that, but I'm a bit like a robot. And some people can do that. But to the general audience, it's much easier for their brain to form an intuitive assumption about something and to categorize a lot of unspoken information if you present it in the form of a narrative.

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27:42 Gregory Diehl: So if I were trying to convince you to adopt a cat, and you saw me standing on the street holding this cat in my arms, which is what I usually do with these people and these cats, I wouldn't try to convince you on all the merits of owning a cat, first of all, 'cause I assume you know what a cat is. And whether you like them or you don't, and if you don't like them, I'm wasting my time. And you understand, more or less, what it would be like to have a cat in your life. So I'm not gonna sit there and list all the facts and features of how great cats are. I'm gonna tell you this story of why I'm sitting out here holding this cat in my arms. And how I came to this country, and I found it starving in the street, and I took it home, and I cleaned it, and I fed it, and I loved it. And it loved me, and it formed this great bond with me, and it would just absolutely break my heart and the cat's heart to have to put it back on the street before I leave the country. It just needs somebody who will love it like I do. Who will give it the home that it has grown accustomed to so it continues to be this loving pet instead of a mangy street animal.

28:48 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: I've never had a cat and I would take it from you.

28:50 Gregory Diehl: Absolutely, you fucking would, yeah!

[laughter]

28:52 Gregory Diehl: Or at least, you'd consider it. Even if you've never owned a cat in your entire life, you might consider it. You might say, "Wow! I've never thought of it that way. Wow! I just thought of a cat as a pet like an accessory in my life. But now, you're telling me this story that's getting me to completely change the way I categorize all this information I already have." That's what a story does for you, it activates new emotions you didn't even know you had, and it changes the way you think about something that is already familiar to you. Now, if you didn't know what a cat was, then I might have to take a different approach and explain, "Okay, a cat is a mammal with a lot of hair on its body. It meows and it gets really annoying when it's hungry, and sometimes, bites you while you're sleeping." All of these things are true. I'm not lying about anything. I'm not making up information; that would be immoral. I am simply selecting what I'm telling you to get the response I want from you. And that all depends on where you're coming from too. So in a live setting like that, I have to... It's sort of intuit and pick up on the information you're giving me, but what the most appropriate thing to tell you would be. That's why the most important part of any sales conversation is listening. It's letting the other person talk so you can figure out what you need to say, not just listing facts and features.

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30:03 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: So you bring up the sales conversation, which I had noted. I wanted to have you bring that full circle with the cat flipping, and I think you just did that, thank you. But with sales conversations... We're from the marketing side of things of getting their attention, and now, we're trying to sell to them and get them to become our customer. Let's talk a little bit about that and where these core values in these selling propositions... You just did a fantastic job of selling a cat on a street. Justin wasn't wrong when he said... But you elicited some emotion, and you told that story, but with a... How do you convey that into the sales side of things? What other additional steps or measures can you take or what you need to touch on with regards to sales?

30:55 Gregory Diehl: A sale, fundamentally, is convincing someone to do something they didn't know they wanted to do. It's not tricking someone. It's not forcing someone to do something. It's helping them make a decision that is in their own best interest that they didn't know was in their best interest. Or it's either intellectual or it's emotional. It could be that they didn't have the necessary information. They didn't know that this product could help them in a certain way, and that it would actually solve their problems better than whatever they're currently doing. Or it could be more emotional, which is they just don't have the confidence, or they don't have the bravery. They're afraid to spend the money because of the risk involved. Like, "What if it doesn't work? Oh that's a lot of money to pay for this. What if it breaks?"

31:37 Gregory Diehl: So there are all these things you can do to appeal to both of those, the intellectual and the emotional side, which... They're all very basic sales tactics like risk reversal, saying, "Okay, it comes with a lifetime warranty. You can return it within 30 days, no questions asked," and, "Oh, it's built out of titanium so it'll never break." All these things that dissipate these doubts, all these reasons a person might have to not going through with this decision in an organic, authentic way. Again, it's still them coming to the conclusion, "Okay, yes, this is the wisest way I can spend \$200. You have spoken to every possible concern I have."

32:13 Gregory Diehl: And the larger the cost involved, not just monetarily, but some purchases, they don't cost a lot of money, end up taking up a lot of other parts of your life. They take a lot of time to use, you have to learn how to use them. They take up a lot of space in your garage or your attic or your living room. All of these things are costs that are presented with making this decision beyond just spending the money. Depending on what you're selling, you're asking people to change their entire lifestyle to now accommodate this new choice they've made. If you used to own a sports car and now, you own a pick-up truck or vice versa, the way you use that thing that you probably use every day of your life is going to be completely different. You're making an entire lifestyle change, which goes far beyond the amount of money you spent on the



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vehicle. So how do you factor all of that in into the way you present your product, and how it will affect someone's life? What's the opportunity cost with everything they do?

33:08 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure, alright, perfect. Now, I see in your website that you have an online course. Does that accompany your book?

33:16 Gregory Diehl: So the course is designed to... It's lead by me so you get my very charming personality and voice showing you all this information. And going into a little bit more personal detail and elaboration on the same concepts that are presented in the book. So I would suggest if you've read the book or skimmed through it, and you like what I'm taking about, the course will go more in-depth into those things and make it easier for you to integrate these concepts if you're not the kind of person who can just read a book and say, "Okay, I've memorized all this. Total integration."

33:50 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Okay, perfect. Now, is the course always open, or... It looked like there might be a... Do you do it in waves or versions?

33:56 Gregory Diehl: It's always open. It's 100 bucks on my site, so you can go to [gregorydiehl.net](http://gregorydiehl.net). Diehl is spelled, D-I-E-H-L, or you can go to [brandidentitybreakthrough.com](http://brandidentitybreakthrough.com) and find the course on either of those. I can't remember how many hours it is, but it's sufficiently lengthy. That's what she said.

[laughter]

34:20 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Nice. [laughter]

34:20 Gregory Diehl: It's the kind of thing you can take in really small bits and come back to it. It's designed to be working into small lessons that illustrate a point and are very sequential. Because my background's in education, so I'm really good at presenting information in a logically sequential way where, "Okay, the fundamental premises of what you need to know come first, and then, the specific ways to implement those premises."

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34:44 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: What are you working on now? What do you have that's going on that's got you really excited at the moment?

34:50 Gregory Diehl: Well, my passion is and always has been helping people communicate valuable ideas, which is branding, in a nutshell, and sales and marketing. And recently, the most interesting medium I found to do that is books. So I've written two of my own, helped a few other people write and produce and market theirs to success. I'm working on my third now, which is about unconventional life advice for exceptional young people, like people who are somehow, really smart or really passionate, but they're growing up in an environment that isn't really catering to these unique qualities about them. And so, I'm creating a series of timeless principles that they will need that they're probably not going to find in most of their social influences around them. And it's a really hard book to write. And that's what I like about it is because I'm forming this really in-depth, integrated philosophical approach. And having it in the form of this book both helps me cement that philosophy and is providing clarity to people who would not find all this information in one place before. So now, I'm doing that for myself and making pretty good money just from book sales on that and the other business opportunities it creates for me. But also, helping other people do that through my company, Identity Publications, where we take people...

36:10 Gregory Diehl: There are a lot of people who can help you publish a book, but we're more about taking people with really complex valuable philosophical ideas. And doing what I'm doing with my books and presenting it in sort of this tailored ideal structural way that is really difficult to do if you don't have a background in education and sales. A lot of people have great amazing ideas, but if you cannot structure them in just the right way and tailor them over and over meticulously, they're not going to be communicated very effectively. It's really just an expansion of what I already do with sales and marketing, except taken to a much more almost scientific philosophical level with how the ideas are shared instead of just widgets.

36:52 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Very exciting.

36:52 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: Awesome.

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36:54 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: Good, good, good stuff. Hey, what is the best way for our listeners to get in touch with you? Should they go to on the websites that you mentioned? Or tell us how they can connect with you.

37:02 Gregory Diehl: Yeah, I got a few websites. The easiest way would be to just send me an email [contact@gregorydiehl.net](mailto:contact@gregorydiehl.net) or [contact@identitypublications.com](mailto:contact@identitypublications.com). Check out my Facebook. Check out my podcast, actually. I've got a podcast going on now called Uncomfortable Conversations with Gregory. And that's getting to the heart of what makes an authentic person, an authentic identity, where I'm bringing on guests who come from unconventional places in life, and challenging them to talk about something that's usually either difficult for them or difficult for most people listening to talk about in a philosophically rich way. Which could be anything from suicide, to polyamorous marriage, to the career path you take in life, to spiritual enlightenment, everything you could possibly think of that people are not living or thinking about in an authentic way. And it's a very confrontational show and it's constantly evolving. I would say if you wanna get to know me better, that's one of the best ways, besides reading my books, of course.

38:05 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Love it, We'll have to check that out. Hey Gregory, before we say goodbye today, if you had one piece of parting advice for our listening audience, what would that be, aside from locking up your cats?

[chuckle]

38:18 Gregory Diehl: Talk to your audience. It astounds me, the number of entrepreneurs who do not spend real time communicating candidly with the very people they're trying to sell to. Just talk to them. Ask them everything you can possibly think of. Why they like what you do, why they don't like it, what they would like, everything they're feeling when they visit your website, when they talk to you, whatever. Get that raw unfiltered feedback, which is surprisingly hard to do because everyone's biased and most people don't share everything they're thinking. But you gotta find a way to really really probe people and take whatever information they give you without getting offended by it. And then making the necessary adjustments, interpreting that data, asking, "Well why do they feel this way? What am I doing wrong? Or do I even care that they feel this way? Maybe they're the wrong people to be buying from me." If you listen to me and you think I sound like an abrasive asshole, you're probably not the right person for me to be trying to sell to. If you think I sound interesting, okay, then we can keep talking.

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39:16 Ken Franzen / Interviewer: Sure.

39:17 Justin Johnson / Interviewer: Good stuff, know your audience, great value there. Neon Noise nation, we hope you enjoyed our conversation today with Greg. Be sure to go over and check him out at his website, [www.gregorydiehl.com](http://www.gregorydiehl.com), D-I-E-H-L, dot net. Gregory, thanks again for being on the show today. The show notes from today will be available at [neongoldfish.com/podcast](http://neongoldfish.com/podcast). Until next time, this is Justin, Ken, and Gregory signing off. Neon Noise nation, we will see you again next week.

[music]

39:51 Automated Voice: 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 hear. If you have an idea for a topic you'd like Justin and Ken to cover, connect with us on Twitter [@neongoldfish](https://twitter.com/neongoldfish), or through our website at [neongoldfish.com](http://neongoldfish.com).

