

Welcome to The Boomer Business Owner. My guest today is John Dwyer. John is a Baby Boomer and a marketing enigma, unique in the field of advertising. When it comes to creating more sales for businesses, his thinking is refreshingly unconventional. John thinks way outside the square, he cuts to the chase, and shows business owners exactly how to attract new clients to their business. He's also the guy that none other than Jerry Seinfeld trusted his latest advertising campaign to.

Hey, John. Welcome to the show.

Hi, Charlie. My pleasure.

Way outside the square, I'm thinking you're probably not from New Jersey.

With that very great eye, Charlie, you picked it up. I'm Down Under, I'm from Crocodile Dundee territory.

Excellent. It's great to have you. Thanks so much for taking the time. Notwithstanding my introduction, perhaps you could explain in your own words the services you offer.

Yeah, sure. Thanks, Charlie. I have a business which is The Institute of Wow, so the web address is www.TheInstituteofWow.com. What we do is we provide marketing advice, which is a little bit outside the square for business owners. There are so many business owners these days who are starting up a business from their home, and going into business with a lot of technical skills about what their expertise is, but most people go into business without any marketing skills. So we help them attract clients to their business.

Can you give me an example of something that maybe you have used for one of your clients that would exemplify the “wow” concept?

As the name would imply, The Institute of Wow, we're all about wow-factor marketing. I say to people: "Look, if you don't get the reaction of your prospect of 'Wow,' doesn't matter what you're selling, whether you're a lawn mower, whether you're a dentist, whether you're a doctor, whether you're a landscaper, if you don't get the reaction, 'Wow!' to whatever it is you might be marketing, then stop and start thinking about how you can." Most of the time people think they should get a "wow" by dropping price, and that's the first thing that anyone does when they're on a little bit of a dip in the sales curve, they drop price. These days, with Walmart out there, Costco, and a whole lot of these big companies, if you think you're going to win on price then you have to think again.

What I do is teach them the McDonald's marketing principle. Charlie, I've got six children and they're 18+ these days, but at one stage, my wife and myself had six children under 12 and McDonald's because they had a wow factor with that free toy in a Happy Meal box, we spent I think in the space of a few years about 6 billion dollars on Happy Meals. Had nothing at all to do with the product, had everything to do with the free toy. I teach businesses how to create a Happy Meal mentality to their marketing so they actually have a bonus, a wow factor of some sort to take their eyes off the price.

For someone who's in what could be perceived as a commodity business, maybe someone's an accountant, they're a lawn-mowing service – you're going to try to help distinguish or differentiate themselves from the competition?

Absolutely. That's what it's all about. I won't bother you too much with it, but I just have five steps and it's very, very simple.

If anyone is listening to this is just starting up a business or perhaps owns a business and sales flat line, this wow factor formula is all about: Number one, identifying your most profitable customer, and then just looking for more people who look like him. It's pretty simple, but believe it or not, not many people do that. They just say: "Oh, we got men." No, no, if your most profitable customer is men 50+ who have got an income of over \$100,000 and they live in the richer suburbs, then they're the people you want to continue to attract more of. It's a matter of identifying who your most profitable customer is, and then just look for more people who look like them.

Number two is develop that wow factor I just mentioned. Number three is give them a problem, and then give them the solution, which I see a lot of weight loss advertisements on TV that are very, very good at that. Number four is fix your website because I would say that around about 90% of business websites, not just small, but business websites don't have the proper direct response components on them and they wonder why it's not working for them.

Number five is build repetitive trade. The only way you can build repetitive trade, really, is to capture the name and contact details of your customers or prospects. Do you know that 84% of all websites around the world have no data-capture facility on their homepage? Which means they're letting people come on to their website, surf around, and leave without giving them a reason to leave their data, which means they've had a dinner party and they have no clue who came.

I'm listening to this, I'm intrigued. Are you just consulting with me? Am I paying for your consultation, or do you also offer a done-with-you or done-for-you service? For example, you talk about website. Great. You could say: "Charlie, do A, B, C, D, and E," but do you also have a service where you can implement that for me?

Yes we do. Yeah we do. What we've found is our sweet spot these days are businesses that are doing hundreds of thousands of dollars through to probably 20 million. We have businesses that are doing 100 million, too, but the sweet spot for us is that small- to medium-sized business doing half a million through to 20 million. They sometimes are too busy in the business to be able to work on it, and so therefore they will come and invest in a coaching program that we have, and we do that all around the world. I have a female parlor that I spoke to yesterday in Washington, so they're part of our coaching program. It doesn't matter where you are these days because of Skype.

What we do is we do it with them. We provide them with the recommendations for a marketing plan for their business, and that happens very quickly, within a week or so of talking with them, so they get a complete 12-, 15-, 20-page document. It'll have a layout of what their webpages should look like, it'll tell them what they should be doing in terms of offline advertising, and I provide them with our supplier list and our supplier list of people who build websites or might record TV commercials, or they might be able to actually do PR for them. They've got a supplier list from Heaven because I've been working with most of these people for many years and trust them.

Okay. I just want to make sure I'm clear on this. I engage you for your services and I am a drycleaner. You talk with me, you come up with this document which talks about your recommendations, and some of them are more technical recommendations, like as it relates to the website. Are you then saying: "Charlie, this is what I'd suggest you implement. Here's my list of recommended website people. I've worked with them before. If you show them the document, show what I'm suggesting, they will know exactly what to do for you"?

Exactly, that's it. Therefore it will be like Jerry Lewis introducing you to Dean Martin because he's worked with him for so many

years, and Dean Martin pretty much knows what Jerry Lewis' next line is. These people have been working with us for quite some time. The reason we do it this way is a done-for-you program where I take everything over, and basically physically liaise with all of the suppliers and make sure it happens – that would be a much more expensive program and most of the small businesses don't want to pay that sort of money. So what we've done is we've developed—you nailed it when you said "done with you,"—a done-with-you program so I'm there 24/7, these people can contact me on a Facebook page that we have. This is called the Master Class, and what we do is we have a dedicated Facebook closed user group, and that means if they want to ask me any questions about layouts or they want to show me a flyer and get my critique on it, or they just want to ask me what the sign should look like outside their drug store, they post that on to this closed group Facebook page where they can get me 24/7. Within an hour, two hours, a day or two probably at the most, I'm always back to them to say: "Look, you're a seafood restaurant, you should not be having warm colors on your signage. It should be greens and blues." So they get the contact with me on a one-to-one basis, but it's via Facebook so that obviously if I'm building my database, as I am, I couldn't accept calls all day, I'd go nuts.

Understood. Putting aside the monies that I would implement for this stuff, like putting aside the money that I'm going to pay one of your recommended web developers, just to engage with you to get the high-level strategy and have that relationship, I'm sure there's differing price points, but can you give me a range of what I should budget to work with you to avail myself of your service?

Normally it's just 2 million dollars cash in a brown paper bag...

Is that Australian dollars, or...?

At the back of the Shell shed. Charlie, we think it's a pretty good deal, it's Australian dollars, give or take, around about \$2,000 a month. Therefore, in your money it'd probably be 1,500ish, something like that. If you multiply that by 12, it's a 12-month program, so \$24,000, \$25,000 in our money, which in American money would be about 20,000. What happens with that is that the business, if they really look into what they're paying their receptionist at the moment, it's probably that plus half, if not, double. I often ask them: "Who do you think you'd probably get the best value out of, Suzie who's looking after answering and doing all of the office duties, or do you think an investment in a marketing program like this would probably give you a better ROI?" We know what the answer is.

A lot of businesses are very, very good technically at what they do, but when they came out of college, no one taught them at college when they're a dentist how to actually market their dentistry practice. They're very good dentists, but they don't know how to get customers. What we do because we've been involved in every business, A to Z, we have a Skype call and after that one-hour Skype call we get the business to fill in a questionnaire so that before the Skype call I can hit the ground running, and then after that Skype call within 10 working days (and we stick to that) the company gets a marketing action plan from me which provides layouts of brochures and layouts of websites, and just about anything they need with regards to telling them what they should be doing online and offline.

Then after that program gets to them, we have another Skype call personally with me so that they don't get the 25-year-old apprentice, they get me, and on that second Skype call they get to ask questions about the marketing plan, and say: "Why did you recommend this? Why did you recommend that?"

Then after that we have podcasts, and fortnightly webinars, we have the 24/7 Facebook club, and we have all sorts of digital products. Then we have events throughout the year, which of

course you guys wouldn't be coming down to Australia for events, but we do have events throughout the year in Australia.

Do you have a preference of working with business owners who sell physical products versus digital products or services?

No, not really. I know it sounds cliché, but the same principles apply. Those five steps that I ran through with you, Charlie, a moment ago, pretty much it applies to any business. Yes, of course, the execution needs to change. If I had a very upmarket Hilton or Sheraton Hotel on board, then the demeanor, the brand persona of what we pump out would be very different from the local lawn mower or landscaper. Therefore, where a lot of our expertise is making business understand what look and feel they should be projecting in the marketplace. But essentially, that five-step formula pretty much works for every business, every business.

I know you mentioned your sweet spot of existing businesses, maybe a couple few hundred thousand dollars up to several million dollars. Do you work with or do you have any interest in working with somebody who's newer in the game? So someone is listening to this podcast, they reach out to you and they say: "John, I just really like what you say. I'd love to get started on the right foot here. I'm willing to make an investment in my business. Will you work with me?" Will you work with a startup or newer business?

Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. What we've done, Charlie, is I'm the front of my website, www.TheInstituteofWow.com—he puts in the plug—I practice what I preach. I say to people: "Look, when you have a business that services a number of different demographics, make sure you don't create a website or for that matter any communications that is one-size-fits-all."

I know my own instance, we have six children between 18 and he's just left school through to late 20s who has a mortgage and a little baby. Even though that's only a 10-year gap, the fact is the language and conversation I would have with the late 20s versus the 18-year-old, completely different. One is interested in mortgages and making sure that the front lawn looks nice, the other one hasn't thought about a house in his wildest dreams.

What I've done in my website, and I advise everyone to do this, if they have different demographics across the products and services that they're looking for is have a Macker's menu board, a McDonald's menu board. So when people come on to my website they'll see there's a panel there that says: "Are you a startup?" and if they click that then they'll go to a page where there's a video from me talking to a startup and a whole lot of other information. There's a video on every page, and that's a hint for everybody as well. Then if you're an established business, you'll click that panel on my McDonald's menu board, and you go through to a subpage where I'll talk to you as an existing business, and if you're a franchisee, and so on and so forth.

What I would suggest to an accountancy firm, for example, was that if they had their homepage, their website sitting in front of you and me now, they should say: "Look, are you interested in a self-managed super? Click here. Are you interested in tax minimization? Click here." You might say: "That's up on the menu bar anyway," that's fine, but what you should do is you make sure that it's loud and clear, just like you do when you walk into a McDonald's restaurant, it's very loud and clear that you offer these three, four, five, or seven services – click which one you want to talk about. I certainly would speak to a startup business, but in a different way to how I would speak to someone who's been in business for 10 years.

Got it. I don't know if it was on your LinkedIn profile or perhaps on your website, www.TheInstituteofWow.com,

you mentioned *The Wow Manifesto* giant book. What is that?

Look, what happens is that when you're on the speaking circuit, and I am, it's almost mandatory that you have a book. I think some people just print one very quickly down at their local printer and just make sure that they have a book. I thought: "I'll spend a bit more time on this," and so what I've done is I've created a huge book which is tabloid newspaper size, and it's leather-bound with the gold tip edges, and it's sickening, quite frankly, it's so big and it's so boastful. It's so showy off. It's quite sickening. But it's very, very popular because inside this book, pretty much the last 20 odd years of my best ideas both online and offline. I've called it *The Wow Manifesto* because I believe that if you're going to say that you're okay at everything, so if you actually say: "I'm the expert at whatever," you better back it up, because I'm a bit of a skeptic to be honest with you, with a lot of those speakers who tell you how good they are but they don't back it up with a lot of case studies.

This *Wow Manifesto* book, which is available online, is a book of case histories of businesses using that formula that I mentioned earlier and actually making a lot of money out of it. It's a giant swipe file for anybody that's interested in swiping ideas and using them for their own business.

Can I get that on Amazon, on your website, or both?

Thank you, Charlie. Charlie, this is the best interview I've ever had because you're letting me have plugs here, there, and everywhere, which is fantastic. Yes, mate, it's on my website, so if anyone goes to www.TheInstituteofWow.com, just click on the products' page and you'll go through not just *The Wow Manifesto*, but a whole bunch of other things.

Got it. With respect to your business, is there some kind of overarching mission or vision of what you're trying to

accomplish through your business over the next few years?

Charlie, I'm not going to give you that cliché phrase that a lot of speakers give, and that is: "I'm here to save the world, I just want to give back," and that whole thing. I think a lot of that is a bit corny, to be honest with you. Yes, I'm a Christian and I want to make sure I do the right thing by everybody, but no, I'm not here to tell you that I'm out there to save the world, change lives, and all that other sort of stuff. I think I just have to be down to earth and say that the skills that I have are I think quite unique in terms of they are direct response marketing tactics that I teach. I think that at the end of the day, if you're a small- to medium-sized business, there's a feeling of loneliness because you don't have a marketing team, you don't have a marketing manager. You're very good as a dentist, or you're very good as an accountant or a lawyer, or you're very good as a landscaper, but you don't know how to attract new customers.

I think what we're doing is filling a big void because most of the big advertising agencies wouldn't look at you because you're a small business, and if they did, they would tell you to advertise on the side of a bus or the back of a taxi, or billboards on the freeway, or take out branding advertisements online. I always ask anyone in my seminar room: "Is there anyone in this room today who's ever bought anything off the side of a bus?" The answer is no. "What about the back of a taxi?" No. "Has anybody ever bought anything when they watched the NFL football game on the electronic signage that runs around the side of the field?" No.

There's so many businesses being conned by so many supposedly advertising icons, it's not funny. I just think it's about time that small- to medium-sized businesses had the opportunity to get into a coaching program where it's common sense on steroids, because that's all I do. I just provide common sense on steroids. Nobody I know has never bought anything on the side of the bus.

By helping all of these small businesses to help their customers, derivatively, you are changing the world, so congratulations.

Thank you. You've just poured cold water on my skepticism.

You help people, so have you ever in the past or do you currently avail yourself of the services of an outside coach, a mentor, or maybe a mastermind group to help grow your business?

Yes, I do. In fact, I'm on a number of them. When I'm doing interviews like this, Charlie, and you probably get the same sort of question, I get asked the question: "If you could talk to your 20-something-year-old self, what would you advise them?" My answer normally is to hang around with people who say: "Why not?" rather than people who say: "Why?" I guess that's a bit corny. It's really just hanging around with entrepreneurs. Not necessarily entrepreneurs, but people with entrepreneurial thinking. Not people who go: "Oh, why would you do that?"

I think the mistake I made in my 20s and 30s... I think I woke up to myself when I got to my 40s, but I did hang around passengers. I hung around people who sucked lots of ideas and energy out of me, but didn't give anything back. I thought: "No, this is not going anywhere. I have to hang around entrepreneurial, positive-thinking people."

So I purposely went out over the years and joined mastermind clubs. I'm a member of one in America at the moment where I go back to Phoenix three times a year, and hang around with a whole bunch of other entrepreneurs. It sets me back around about \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year by the time I go back three times, but I'm hanging around positive people and I have to say that when you hang around positive people, it can only be good that comes out of it.

Got it, agreed. I hate to do this, but let's wrap up with this question. I am your friend, I am your neighbor, and I say: "John, I know you're a very successful entrepreneur, I know you help businesses. I am working for someone else, as you know. I'm looking to do something entrepreneurial myself. I'm in the early stages." Are there any high-level tips or pieces of advice you would give me in these early stages to put me on the right track to help ensure my success going forward as an entrepreneur?

It's funny, my daughter is going through this at the moment, Charlie, and it was only yesterday that I was having a chat with her about it. She's 25 and she just had a little baby a few months ago, so therefore her husband works pretty hard at his job, and she's looking to set up, like a lot of people in that particular circumstance, is looking to set up an online business. She's very much into organic food, healthy eating, and so forth, and she started to go down that path. I said: "Sweetheart, that's fantastic. We all know that organic is the new black, so that's a growing industry. However, have you done Google search volumes? Have you actually pumped in some keywords and found out what people are looking for?" As savvy as these 20-something-year-olds are these days, and my daughter is pretty smart, she had not done that.

So I would say to anybody: Rather than just jump into a career path because you love that subject matter or whatever that business is: "I want to get involved because I love it." No. You can't do that, that's silly, not if you want to put food on the table for your family. We all would love to do stuff that we love. There's a bunch of other stuff that I'd probably prefer to be doing than what I've been doing for the last 20 years, but I have to put food on the table for six children, and myself and my wife. So you do perhaps what you're good at and what's profitable, not necessarily what you love.

I said to her: "Sweetheart, the first thing you need to do is to do a Google keyword search on what people are looking for, and then set up your business." That's the piece of advice I would give to everyone. Just don't think: "Oh, I'm good at so-and-so, so I'm going to go out and do that." No, no, no. You might be the only one in the world that's interested in that. Make sure you find out what people are looking for and what sort of demand there is for it.

Excellent advice. What is the best way for our listeners to reach out, connect with you, and find out more about your products and services?

Thank you very much, Charlie. Two things, number one www.TheInstituteofWow.com, if you go on there, I suggest you could be there for half an hour, an hour going through all of the case studies and free stuff that's on there. Even if you think: "I can't understand a word that he's saying, this Australian accent has just thrown me," at least if you never want to talk to me, you can pinch a whole lot of stuff off that website because I do practice what I preach. I give out a lot of free case studies.

The other website that someone might like to go to is we have a daily webinar that we run twice a day, normally at 11 in the morning and 8 at night, and it's automated. If anyone would like to go on there and watch my webinars, it goes for about 50 something minutes, you'll actually hear that five-step program that I snapshotted in a full presentation, and it's a webinar which is a big like *The Tonight Show*, it's not death by PowerPoint, it's me behind a desk and various slides come in and come out again. I think it's rather entertaining, but I'm biased. If anyone would like to see that, just go to www.PodcastWithWow.com. That's www.PodcastWithWow.com.

Got it. All of the great resources mentioned in today's episode, along with a full transcript of today's episode, will be available on the show notes page at

www.TheBoomerBusinessOwner.com, that's not to be confused with www.TheInstituteofWow.com.

John, thanks so much, on behalf of all of our listeners; we really, really appreciate your help.

My pleasure. Thank you very much, Charlie.