

Online Marketing Made Easy ^{w/} Amy Porterfield



Social Media | List Building | Content Marketing

The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast with Amy Porterfield Session #134

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/134>

Amy Porterfield: Well hey there, Amy Porterfield here. Welcome to another episode of The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. I am very excited about our special guest today, Michael Stelzner, the founder of Social Media Marketing World.

Mike's been on my show a few times so if you follow my podcast you've heard me say that Mike has been a huge mentor in my life. I won't go into the whole back story, but when I worked with Tony Robbins Mike wrote a white paper for the Robbins team and Mike and I got to work on that together. We went back and forth in terms of what he was working on, what needed to be changed, the direction we were going.

I was kind of the middle man. I got to know Mike and he kind of took me under his wing. At the time I was ready to take the leap and leave corporate so my first big gig was with Mike Stelzner. He was working on this very unknown thing called Social Media Examiner.

He wanted me to come on and allowed me to work on some of the projects in terms of getting the blogs together and the community and all that good stuff. At the time it wasn't even live yet and now it is wildly successful.

Today, [Social Media Examiner](#) is probably best known for their mega hit live event, Social Media Marketing World. We'll talk a little bit about Social Media Marketing World in this podcast but not necessarily to promote it but to show you how Mike is marketing Social Media Marketing World differently now that social organic reach has greatly declined.

We'll talk about that in this episode because we're going to be really real in this episode. Mike's going to talk about the things that are no longer

working with social media. He's going to talk about the fact that there are consequences if you don't shift the way you market.

The great thing is that it's not all gloom and doom because he's going to give you examples of what you can do to pivot so with all of these changes that are happening online today with algorithms and the decline of social organic traffic and with the decline of people actually opening your emails.

He's going to give you some suggestions and strategies to make sure you are staying above the curve so that the changes won't dramatically affect the traffic to your website and the end game, the actual revenue to your bank account. We're going to address it all.

I just wanted to let you know I'm very, very honored to have Mr. Stelzner on the show today because, as I said, he's always been a mentor of mine and I'm a huge fan of Social Media Examiner and Social Media Marketing World.

I won't make you wait any longer, let's go ahead and bring him on.

Amy: Mike, thanks so much for coming back on the show. I really appreciate it.

Mike: It's my pleasure to be on your awesome show, Amy.

Amy: One thing I love about how you do things is that you prepare and prep. We got on a call before we jumped on here and talked about where this episode could go and why it's so important. It got me really excited and a little bit scared, to be quite honest.

I think you know what I mean by that. We'll get into all of the reality of how things are going in social right now. But I want to start right at the top. I want to ask you...Social/organic traffic, it's declining, I especially notice it most on Facebook but I think it's across the board.

Where do you see this heading from your experience?

Mike: Well, first of all, thank you again for having me on the show. I'm pretty analytical. I like to track and I like to monitor what we're doing and what's happening in the world.

Every week I get the opportunity to really analyze all of the news that's going on in the world of social media and there's a scary trend that's happening right now. Recently, somebody emailed me and asked me to provide a where-do-you-see-the-future-going kind of thing.

I'm going to read to you what I said. It's just two short sentences. "It's scary times for the social media marketer. Slipping away are the days of organic reach. Creeping in are algorithms and right behind them are legions of sales people seeking add dollars with the promise of reach."

This is what I see happening and I'll try to describe this in the most succinct way possible. There are lots and lots of people that are on social media now and there are lots and lots of businesses that are on social media now.

In the olden days when we were all smaller it was very easy to provide lots of great service to the few. For example, if you had 100 customers you could probably provide a really highly customized experience for them and provide yourself to them.

Once you grew to 1,000 customers or even 10,000 customers it would be harder, right? Well, what if you grew to a million customers? What if you grew to a billion customers? That's what we're dealing with right now.

We're dealing with a social network, in this particular case it is Facebook, where there are almost two billion people using this thing. There are probably tens of millions of businesses that are using it. There is just no

way...The olden days of our content being out there because there wasn't a lot of competition are kind of gone.

We are all competing for the limited mindshare of a human being. There are only so many slots inside the newsfeed where Facebook can slot in our content. And Facebook has said it's all about friends and family because they know that's why people are on Facebook.

What does that really mean? That means the only way to really get your business content in front of people inside the newsfeed is to do what I call the fast pass.

Unfortunately, unlike Disneyland where you get the fast pass for free, you've got to pay for it with Facebook. There are just only so many slots. They are trying to create a user experience that is going to work for people so they don't leave Facebook and jump on over to the next social network like Snapchat or whatever else is coming.

Where this gets really scary, Amy, is that this is not just Facebook. It's also Google. Google search is being altered right now because of this new thing they have called Google A&P, which is all about mobile optimized content living on Google.

Facebook instant articles, Twitter algorithms, Instagram algorithms, there are algorithms everywhere. I've been screaming, "The algorithms are coming! The algorithms are coming!"

You know what? It's true. The fact is that if we look at our traffic...You've seen this haven't you, Amy? It's going down.

Amy: Yes.

Mike: It's been going down for years but it seems to be rapidly declining right now, doesn't it?

Amy: It does. And it's scary.

Mike: So what does a business do when we are in a world where things used to work and they don't work anymore? That's the struggle we're all up against, right? It does call into question everything that we do as a social media marketer or as a small business owner or as a marketer.

Part of our underline of our strategy has always been to provide valuable content on the social networks but if no one sees it it's like the tree falling in the forest. Does it matter? These are scary questions.

I'm curious to what your response is to all of that.

Amy: Well, when I hear all of that, truly because I am a natural worrier, I get worried that, oh my gosh, maybe I'm going to see a decline in sales because, of course, decline in traffic has to eventually equal decline in sales.

I'm a little bit different because I'm a heavy user of Facebook ads. I pay for the traffic. So I haven't been as affected as those people that just refuse to use Facebook ads or feel they don't have the budget to pay for the traffic.

I even use Instagram ads. You're using ads right now, right?

Mike: Yes. But, at the same time...

Amy: What do you say to that?

Mike: You're a publisher, you're a blogger, you're a podcaster, and when you are a business that uses content to attract an audience and that content is getting harder and harder to be seen, because that's one of the core strengths of what we do as marketers, you create a weekly podcast, you create blog posts. We do the same.

The hope is that the content draws a certain audience to us organically. If those things are threatened it makes you wonder whether or not we need to change.

There's nothing like the rules changing to force us to change. It is a super scary proposition and it's particularly scary for anybody that doesn't have a lot of money to spend. Let's be intellectually honest, the advertising platforms are definitely very economical today.

But, for anybody who's been around for any period of time and has done Google ads, I know you have and you know they aren't economically anymore, Google search ads are now the most expensive form of advertising there is for online ads.

Facebook is much more economical. Why do you think that is?

Amy: I just think it's the demand.

Mike: So what do you think is going to happen when businesses wake up and they all rush to Facebook ads? Do you think the prices are going to go down? No. They are going to go up.

The reality here is that it's almost like we're having a come to Jesus moment. Something has got to change. I'm either going to be in a world where I spend a little bit of money now but it's going to be incrementally increasing over time and the cost of acquisition is only going to go up or something has to absolutely change.

We've had it good for a long time, Amy.

Amy: We have. Truly.

Mike: But now things are different and I think that it's still not too late to wake up and realize something has to change.

Amy: True. This feels like a grim reality but the great thing is that you have been very aware of these changes, most likely before most everybody else. That's something I've noticed about you. You've had your eye on this for a while now.

I want you to talk about how Social Media Examiner is preparing for these types of changes and what you've done about them.

Mike: Here is the deal, every business has some sort of objective. One of the objectives we have at Social Media Examiner is email acquisition. The reason why growing our email newsletter list is so important to us is that we know if we can feed our audience multiple times a week with valuable content via email a percentage of them will turn into customers.

We know in our particular case our most valuable marketing asset is our email list. Is that similar to you, Amy?

Amy: 100%, yes.

Mike: Okay. So, if the email list is absolutely essential then the real question is what can we do to make sure we are improving and increasing the rates at which we are getting people to opt in to our email list?

One of the things we have been doubling down on recently is something called conversion rate optimization. It's known as CRO. The idea here is that if you start tracking how much traffic you get to your site and then you track how many emails you get, just do the percentage. Divide the number of emails by the number of unique visitors and you get a percentage.

The goal is to take that percentage, maybe it's 1%, and take it up to 2%. A small incremental gain could be radically huge.

Amy: Yes, very true.

Mike: How many email subscribers do you typically get in a period of time?

Amy: Thousands every month.

Mike: I'm going to round up for simplicity. Let's say you get 10,000 a month. That's probably a little high. But if that 10,000 is 1% of your traffic and you could increase it to 2% you can see how you could double the number of people, right?

Amy: Yes.

Mike: At Social Media Examiner we get about 1,000 every day. We were getting about 600 or 700 every day. All we began doing was radically testing and split testing and optimizing all the different ways we are converting the traffic that is coming to our site into our email/newsletter list.

You can Google conversion rate optimization. I'm not going to get into it but it's as simple as experimenting with the headline on your opt-in box, the color of the box where they click to opt in, whether you have a graphic or not, all of these different kinds of things.

In our case on Social Media Examiner you cannot miss that box. It appears when you first come up on the site. It appears as you leave the site. It's on the sidebar, it's at the end of the articles, it slides in. It's all over the place because we know that right now is the time to really figure this thing out because we want to grow our email list as fast as possible.

The traffic that's going to be coming to our site is in decline and will continue to be in decline. So that's one thing. The other thing is to also be

thinking about email deliverability and that's something nobody is thinking about in the world of social marketing.

Are our emails actually being delivered in the inbox? This is something we've been working on extensively here at Social Media Examiner for about six months. We started to track and, again, are you tracking? Are you looking at your open rates and comparing them month over month and month over the prior year? Have they been going down?

Here's another scary reality, there's a Gmail algorithm. Most people haven't a clue.

Amy: Talk to me about this because when you and I prepped for this call I was wondering what you were talking about. Talk to me about the Gmail algorithm.

Mike: First of all, what I suggest everybody do is go into their email list and search for @gmail.com and see how many Gmail subscribers they have on their list. It's probably gargantuanly huge. Whatever that number is, you can probably add another 20 to 30% on top of that number because there's a lot of people that have a dedicated domain.

My email address ends in @socialmediaexaminer.com but it is housed by Gmail. Gmail has one of the most sophisticated artificial intelligence kind of algorithms that sniffs out all sorts of variables and tries to determine whether the email that is being sent by you, Mr. Marketer and Ms. Marketer, is actually spam or not.

It's extremely sophisticated just like the Google search algorithm is extremely sophisticated. Those messages are likely not getting through, which might explain why maybe your open rates are down. Or maybe why your click rates are down.

I started noticing this decline and I started freaking out. I started investigating this and that is when I realized there actually really is a Gmail algorithm. Just to kind of explain it a little bit, there's the promotions tab that many people are familiar with, which is kind of like in hockey, it's the time out when you make a mistake.

There is an actual spam, which is like the you're-never-going-to-see-it-again. So there are two different things. There is the promotions tab and then there is spam. You can get stuck into either one.

If you do excessive promotions, which a lot of us marketers do when we're launching products, Google could put your entire domain into the penalty box for a month or two months. That happened to Social Media Examiner.

Our emails dropped like a rocket and we determined through a lot of testing that Gmail was actually punishing us because we were not delivering what they deemed as quality content.

That's no different than what Facebook does. Right Amy?

Amy: Right. Definitely.

Mike: It shouldn't surprise you that the people, the companies, that control distribution of content have algorithms designed to insure that only quality gets through.

Amy: Okay, so I have to ask you then, when you realized that what did you do differently to get out of Gmail jail?

Mike: It's complicated but one of the first things I did, surprisingly, was find a really cool service called G-Lock Apps (<https://glockapps.com>). It's a \$39 per month service and it's worth every penny for any marketer.

They give you ten email addresses (they create custom email addresses for you with Yahoo, Gmail, and all the major email providers). You put those email addresses on your email list. Then they give you a little piece of code that's a string of characters.

You put the code in your email when you send it and then G-Lock Apps will test bazillions of different variables. Is the sending server black listed? What is the reputation of the domain? What did each of the various email providers, like Gmail, do with your email? Did they throw it in the promotions tab, did they flag it as spam? What are the spam filters like Spam Assassin and all of the others think about it? It's unbelievably cool, Amy.

Amy: That is. I'm definitely going to look into that.

Mike: We added this list to our master list and also created a segment on our list. Then what we did, whenever we send a promotion we send it to the segment first so that it goes through our normal servers. Do you understand what I mean by that?

We've got a segment of just ten subscribers and it happens to be those email addresses that they gave us. Then we wait for the data to come in and we look at it and then we tweak our emails.

What we ended up doing with our emails was to strip all of the formatting out of our emails. It's very basic, good, old-fashioned formatting now. We ended up removing certain keywords that it turned out some of the search engines were flagging.

We were able to prove that by using certain kinds of words it actually hurt us. We actually decreased the frequency of our sends. We used to do a daily send and we now do three days a week.

These are the kind of things we did in order to get back in good graces with all of the email providers. Again, our content needs to reach the audience we're trying to reach. We always sing that email is the holy grail but now there are actually ways that our email may, indeed, not get through.

Again, if you can increase your open rates by just a couple of percentage points that's huge. Then they will see your message and hopefully they will click on your message and that's how you will nurture a really loyal audience.

Amy: One of the things I think is so important is that when we're talking about the decline of social organic traffic and I ask you, "What is Social Media Examiner doing to prepare for these things and make sure they are still being seen and heard by the people that matter most," you go to the strength of your email list.

That is something I've been talking about for years and I know you've always seen it as incredibly valuable. But I also want to ask you how would somebody protect themselves moving forward?

All of these things we've been talking about and really, truly, it feels like a grim reality in so many different instances, but there are ways to protect yourself. So I want to talk to you about that as well.

Mike: Okay, first and foremost, stop posting organic promotional stuff on your social platforms.

Amy: This is huge! You kind of just have to repeat it. What are you talking about? Say it again.

Mike: Never promote, ever, on Facebook unless it's got an ad behind it.

Amy: Okay, that is really big. This is something I've been doing.

Mike: We have stopped completely.

Amy: You've stopped altogether?

Mike: We've stopped for almost a year. Look, Facebook is actually watching everything we're doing. Does that surprise anyone?

Amy: No.

Mike: When they see all you do is promote yourself and it's obviously a product you're selling they are going to punish you. We have stopped organically promoting anything. It's always an advertisement now. What's left on Facebook is just our free content.

Amy: That's a big one. I also don't promote directly on social media, or very, very rarely. I noticed you guys had stopped doing it for a while now. So that's a big eye opener. Okay. Keep going.

Mike: Other things that you can do to protect yourself, and some of this is mindset stuff, for those of us that have been doing marketing for any period of time, a lot of us get in this trap of "We're only successful if we're delivering higher quantities of whatever number we care about than we did in a previous period of time."

For example, our page views on our website must go up, not be flat or go down. If they are going down it's our fault, right?

Amy: Yes.

Mike: Or, we need to get more clicks on our organic posts or something is wrong with us.

Amy: Yes.

Mike: They've got to go up. So we have this mentality that good is only up. Anything less than up is bad. I think we need to accept that that is no longer a true reality. Going back to sports again, if I was a pitcher and threw a 120-mile-per-hour fastball and knew I could do it every time but then all of the sudden it was raining.

I could not stop and my fastball went down to 90 miles an hour because something completely beyond my control was slowing down the ball. No matter what I do I will never get back to 120. This is the analogy I think people need to realize.

The game has changed. Because the game has changed you're not going to get back to where you were before. What so many people do is fall into another mistake which is "therefore increase the frequency, pull out the machine guns."

They post 20 or 30,000 times a day because if one isn't getting through then maybe they will throw 30,000 with the hope that two will get through. Don't do that. Stop doing that. That's not going to work either.

I think we just need to accept the fact that there are systems that are working to make sure that does not work. Whatever little tweak that you figure out to game the system, it's only going to work for a little while until the computers figure out a way to work around it.

We need to realize it's not about high quantities. It's about the right quality. This is a fundamental shift in mindset. I've often said I would rather have 1,000 super quality people visiting my website than a million horrible quality people.

In the end, quality people are the ones that convert to what I care about, which is becoming a customer and funding everything that I do. I think it's

about time that people understand it's more about the right traffic and not about the most traffic.

Amy: That's big. In a world of online marketing where people are saying, "My list is 200,000 people" or this or that or "I have this many visitors to my website every month," now I look at those and think, "Who cares if they obviously aren't converting."

I love what you said about stop comparing your numbers to what they used to be and I know one of your solutions is to start doing things differently. One of the things you differently now is that you have a live show.

Mike: Yeah, let's talk about that.

Amy: Well, on Facebook and something else that I always forget the name of...What is it? Break it down for me.

Mike: Huzza.io.

Amy: That's such a weird word.

Mike: Trust me, it is. I get it. We need to accept the fact that it's going to be harder to break through to the masses. If we accept the fact that it's harder to break through to the masses then we need to ask ourselves how I can connect with the smaller subgroups that are the most valuable to me.

One of the things we discovered quite by accident is that producing a live show on social was actually super powerful for us. We started on Blab a year ago, almost exactly a year ago.

Blab has gone out of business and we're on a different platform called Huzza.io. We get maybe 100 to 160 people live coming on every week listening to our show. Our show is called The Morning Social Media Marketing Talk Show.

We only talk about what happened in the last week in the news of social media. The people that come to the show are marketers that need to keep up on this stuff.

But guess what we found, Amy? This 100 to 150 people were very influential people. These were people that had audiences of their own. These were people that actually would take what they learned from our show and they would go produce their own show.

It turned out these were the exact kind of customers we wanted to be in front of. These were the people that bought tickets and came to our conference. We realized very quickly that even though we have a monstrously big audience, millions, serving this small little sub-audience every week with super value was so instrumental to our business. It was so powerful for us.

By the way, doing a live show every week also helped our business too because we could make everything we were doing behind the scenes better because we interpreted what was happening in the news.

Amy: Yeah, I bet.

Mike: It has just made us better all around. Most people might look at this and ask why a business as big as this serve such a tiny little audience every week. Guess what? They are the most important audience we can get in front of. For us that's why.

Amy: That's big. So we need to stop here for a moment and really reiterate the importance here. You could have let ego get in the way. Many of us entrepreneurs have done this. You might have said, "Less than 200 showing up live, this isn't worth it to us" considering you have a humongous email list and a huge audience on social media.

Instead, you looked at those numbers and thought that these people are those that are the most interested, most engaged, and are probably sharing your content like crazy, using your content, talking about you other places. You saw the value.

Mike: They are our customers, by the way, too.

Amy: Customers. That makes a huge difference right there. I feel like I know. This show's not about mindset, but there is a mindset shift to be had here and not let your ego get in the place of looking for big numbers so 200 people on a live show isn't going to be worth it to you.

It's incredibly worth it to you.

Mike: Let me explain a little bit more about what we do. I think people might find it interesting. What's cool about Huzza is they allow one button click to go live to Facebook. I don't know how many hundreds of thousands of fans we have on our Facebook page but it is a lot.

On Huzza we actually simulcast it on Facebook. We get thousands watching on Facebook. But here's the deal. Facebook gives us analytics. So does Huzza. At the end of a show we will have about 4,000 or 5,000 people that watched on Facebook and a couple of hundred that watched it on Huzza.

Here's the key. The people that watched it on Huzza stay for 39 minutes. The people that watch on Facebook stay for less than a minute.

Amy: What's that about? What the heck?

Mike: Well, first of all, it's a morning show. It's 8 a.m. Pacific. A lot of people are on Facebook on their mobile device. We are interrupting their normal patterns by bringing a live show to them. They may not have time to sit down for a full hour and watch a show on their mobile device.

Our goal is to use Facebook as a way to evangelize Huzza. The hope is that they will get on over to Huzza and then we tell people to please put us on their Google calendar. We have a link for <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/live> where they can add us to their Google calendar. We actually have about 1,000 people on an email list in Huzza that get emailed every week and are reminded half an hour before we go live.

We have a lot of people that have it on their Google calendar. People are making this a regular part of their weekly living, if you will. We look at Facebook as just simply the way we get the word out that we happen to have a show on Huzza. Does that make sense?

Amy: It does, definitely.

Mike: We're growing that viewership every single week. We don't care that it's so small because it's so important to what we do.

Amy: Incredibly important. I feel like at Social Media Examiner you've done a lot of things to change the way you put your message out there and also how you market and sell your different products.

One of your biggest products is Social Media Marketing World. I've noticed, and you've told me, you are promoting this much differently than you have in years past because of all of the changes we're talking about here.

I thought it would be really cool to make this incredibly detailed and actionable if you could break down a little bit what you're doing differently because of all of the changes you're seeing.

You probably should start out with telling people a little bit about what Social Media Marketing World is and then we'll talk about how you market it differently.

Mike: Thanks. First of all, everybody that's listening probably has something they are selling. I'll explain what we're selling but think about what you're selling and just ask yourself, if it's true that the algorithms are changing and that we cannot get as much exposure and there is all this craziness going on, then something has to change in the way we do promote because we all need to promote.

If we don't promote we don't sell so I'm going to share what we do. Social Media Marketing World is our physical conference in San Diego. Four-thousand marketers, next March, kind of our crème-de-la-crème premium product that people are pretty fanatical about, to be honest with you.

That's what the product is. It's just a conference. But it's not just any conference. But it's not easy to sell this product because it is not an inexpensive product and when you decide to invest in something like this it's more expensive than the cost of the ticket. You have to travel, you have to buy the hotel. This is something that is a complex sale.

One of the things we decided to do and we are always doing is to ask how we need to play ball now that the rules have changed. One of the things we did very early on, which is kind of fun...actually, I want to start with the podcast.

We learned that a lot of people listen to podcasts that show up at the conference. A lot of people listen to your podcast, Amy. I'm going to say that I think podcasts are the last frontier where there is no barrier between you, the host, and the audience.

There is no algorithm on iTunes. There's no algorithm in these players that everybody has. It's the one medium where on YouTube you know not all of your stuff is going to be seen. On email it's not all going to be seen. On social it's not all going to be seen. But on podcasts, everyone who subscribed is going to get it whether they listen to the whole thing or not is a different question.

First and foremost, I strongly advocate for being involved in podcasting in some capacity. In our case, we're going to begin this year with me being more of a guest on other peoples' shows not to talk about Social Media Marketing World, but to talk about whatever value I can bring to that audience.

The hope was that if I do that strategically on enough shows I will be able to convince some people to check out more about me. That's one of the strategies we're implementing.

But another thing we did, Amy, which is something that's pretty innovative, as of the week of this recording we have an email going out to all of our 520,000 email subscribers promoting our podcast and why they ought to listen to the podcast.

We have a cool testimonial in that email about someone who listened to the podcast and got a job at a major brand. It's a really cool email. We are sending this email out the week before we actually launch the promotion for Social Media Marketing World.

Why? Because we know if we can get people to subscribe to the podcast they will end up discovering more about us and may likely want to check out Social Media Marketing World.

Amy: I like it.

Mike: In that podcast I say, "You want to subscribe and you want to hold on because I've got two awesome guests coming." One of them is Amy Porterfield.

Amy: I like it even more.

Mike: The other one is [Robert Cialdini](#), who wrote the book, [Influence](#), and coined the word “social proof.” I am providing a totally free incentive for people to want to get on the podcast with the hope they will become new subscribers knowing that down the road I will have a chance to mention the conference to them.

That’s the first thing I’m doing. The second thing I’m doing is something we decided to do almost a year ago. It is what we’re doing on our Instagram account. On www.instagram.com/SMExaminer we have lots of pictures because we’re a conference.

We decided to start taking the pictures and putting quotes on those pictures. Because we’re an event we have all of the recordings from all of the sessions so we’re scrubbing through the recordings of the sessions and listening for cool tweetable points.

We’re also scrubbing the tweets that happened from the conference and looking for the most retweeted tweets for the different speakers. We’re taking those words and putting those on top of a picture of the speaker. We are then animating them.

We’re kind of creating mini movies where the words are animated on. That’s exclusively what we do on our Instagram account. Every day we publish these kinds of things. We’ve grown to tens of thousands of followers on Instagram from very few exclusively by doing this.

Where it gets really exciting, Amy, is we don’t just stop there. We take some of the best of the ones on Instagram and publish them over on a small Facebook page we’ve got for our event.

This is an interesting thing. We have a special page on Facebook for our product, which is something that’s unusual. Not everybody does that. I don’t know if you’ve heard that before or not. Have you?

Amy: You have a Social Media Marketing World Facebook page?

Mike: Correct. <http://www.facebook.com/socialmediamarketingworld> literally. On that page we republish the stuff that we published on Instagram. We've grown that page from almost nothing to a little over 2,000. But that's awesome because it's exclusively about Social Media Marketing World.

Amy: Right, when you get more specific about what the page is, it doesn't matter that you have 100s of thousands of people there because there is a very specific reason you want them to be there.

Mike: You know what? We're growing and nurturing that page year round and we're going to advertise to that page. We know the people that are following that page were likely either attendees of Social Media Marketing World or people that are interested in Social Media Marketing World.

This is where it gets kind of exciting. We go from Instagram to this small Facebook page and then once a week we pick one of the best ones from the small Facebook page and share it to our big Facebook page, which is Social Media Examiner. That allows all of the sudden these videos to get a lot more views and a lot more shares.

Then people that like these videos end up coming back and liking the smaller page. It's a kind of crazy strategy to go from a bunch of still photos to a cool little animation on Instagram and then over to a small Facebook page and then to a big Facebook page. But we do this all the time.

The only branding there really is there is a little logo on the bottom right-hand corner of these images that says, "Social Media Marketing World." We're really creating quote graphics with cool quotes that people love to share.

When people share that stuff they are sharing Social Media Marketing World.

Amy: Just to be really clear, I know you said this but I want to make sure people really understand, these posts that you're doing that you are animating are not saying, "Come buy a ticket to Social Media Marketing world," they are sharing content of former speakers and people that will likely be speaking there again. You are sharing content but it all ties back to Social Media Marketing World.

Mike: I'm sure we've done this for you, Amy.

Amy: I've seen one.

Mike: We probably had a picture of you up on the stage, excited, and then we had a cool quote which were actually your words over the top of that picture. They were slightly animated. The idea is to showcase someone to our audience and they will likely know who that person is.

Something they said had an impact on the audience and that's getting shared all over the place and liked all over the place. We are using those quotes, if you will, to grow up our following with a very specific objective. Our Instagram page and our very small Facebook page are now targetable audiences that we can target with advertising for our conference.

Amy: So many good strategies. I love that you are thinking of new ways to market based on all of these changes you've been seeing but you are also always still putting out amazing, free, valuable content, which is so incredibly important. I think so many of us want to rush to the promotion but that's exactly not what you're doing.

Mike: It's subliminal really. When people see and hear people talking about our conference that's the best kind of marketing there is. It's almost

subliminal. That's what you want. You want that little piece of branding to go along with that quote graphic so that it gets shared all over the place.

Amy: When we talk about all of the changes that you are seeing and the experiences you had with making tweaks and pivots in your marketing to make sure you are adapting to these changes, if someone's listening and a lot of my listeners are small businesses, entrepreneurs doing business online, usually with online training courses, programs, or products, or services, and they are asking where they start.

What do they do? What is something they can take action on right away to make sure they are paying attention to what's changing and actually adapting to it in their own business? We gave them a lot of ideas but what would you say to somebody that came to you and asked those questions?

Mike: I would say to start doing live Q&As. If you have a course, do live Q&As on Facebook with your iPhone. Just start taking questions. At the beginning of the live Q&A, remember it turns into a video when it's all done, say something like, "Today's Q&A is brought to us by the Amy Porterfield Best Course In The World" or whatever you call it.

Throughout the Q&A you say, "Before I get to the next question, and there are a lot of them, I just want to remind you we have a sale going on. If you love what you're hearing here you might want to consider the course."

There's nothing like coming live to your audience and actually sharing with them some value from your brain and the hope is that they will share that. You can ask for that share when you're live as well.

Another thing you can do is take quotes from your course and make quote graphics. Some people have courses where it's just them. Other people have courses where it's other people that are teaching.

Regardless, you can still create quote graphics and animate them using cool little tools like [Ripl](#) and create all sorts of cool little things people might be willing to share.

The things we're doing at Social Media Examiner could be exactly the same things you're doing. Are you over promoting on your social channels organically? Maybe you should stop. Maybe you should just take a small amount of money and only promote on your Facebook page if you're going to put a little bit of money behind it.

I think the most important thing is, do you have an email acquisition strategy? If you don't you need to get on there. If you do you need to get it better. Trust me. No matter how good you think it is, it can be improved.

I thought we had the best. I really did, until I started working with a guy called Chris Daley, who I'm going to be interviewing on my podcast. If you listen to the Social Media Marketing podcast when this comes out you might be able to find the actual podcast on conversion rate optimization and you should listen to that.

There are all sorts of little cool experiments you can run, split tests. It's not something you have to be an expert to figure out how to do this kind of stuff. But small increases in the growth of your email list could be gargantuan, Amy. I think a lot of people don't even think about that because they are so focused on creating content and sharing it on social.

Amy: I totally agree and I have to say I am really looking forward to speaking again at Social Media Marketing World. What are the dates? I know it's in San Diego but what are the dates for 2017?

Mike: March 22, 23, and 24. I will just say that on the first day we have...by the way, with your ticket you get all of this, we have free workshops. At most conferences you pay for the workshops. You get them included.

We're going to have a workshop on conversion rate optimization and all of this other kind of stuff.

Amy: Nice.

Mike: Then we have a party on an aircraft carrier which is kind of fun.

Amy: It is a lot of fun.

Mike: The next two days are all of the sessions and keynotes and everything. It's pretty much a three-day event now. If you get your ticket early you can get a pretty good smoking deal. It's an incredible conference. We had 3,000 there in 2016 and we expect to have 4,000 there in 2017.

We are stoked. We're working it right now and have an amazing lineup. You are obviously one of them so we're super blessed to have you Amy.

Amy: I can't wait. Here's what I will say, I tell everybody that Social Media Marketing World is THE best networking event out there. People will ask me if they could only attend one even this year and they want to make sure they network and stay current as to what's going on online and with social media, I always say, "Hands down, Social Media Marketing World is the event you want to go to."

Plus, it's incredibly fun and here's one thing I will say about this event, Mike and his team pay close attention to the quality of their speakers. I have been to many events where I show up and think, "How did this person get invited to speak here? This is not valuable whatsoever."

That is never going to happen at Social Media Marketing World because he definitely has his speakers put in the time, energy, and effort to be prepared before we get on stage so you will get top notch speakers, for sure.

There are tons of different tracks depending on what you're most interested in.

Mike: And you get all of the recordings, which is kind of cool.

Amy: That is very cool. Because there are so many tracks and so many things you will want to go to, when you can't go to one you will get the recording of it and that makes it incredibly valuable. That's just worth it right there alone.

If you want to learn more about Social Media Marketing World all you need to do is go to <http://www.amyporterfield.com/world> and you will get all the details and learn about the speakers, location, dates, workshops, and all that good stuff.

If you sign up early you get the best pricing. There's no doubt about that so definitely, if you're interested, take action right away. Mike, thank you so much. It's always truly a pleasure and a major education when you come on the show. Thanks for being here.

Mike: Amy, it's my pleasure. I just want to say to those that are freaking out right now, it's okay. We're going to work our way through this.

Amy: Exactly.

Mike: I know it's scary but the good news is you are getting this message early and hopefully you will make these changes and hopefully talk to a lot of others and network with others who are trying to figure this whole thing out because there are huge communities out there. We will get through this.

Things are changing and it's time to wake up and really get a grip on this stuff. I'm super blessed that I was able to come on your show, Amy, and share my thoughts on this.

Amy: Always happy to have you. Thanks, again.

There you have it. I hope you found this interview with Mike very valuable. I know at times it felt a little overwhelming, a little bit of doom and gloom. But at the same time I never want to come at you with just the bright, shiny good stuff and never be honest about how things are changing and how they truly could affect our businesses if we don't pay attention.

What I loved about this interview is that Mike went into detail about email marketing and the fact that if you want to make some changes right now and you want to really start paying attention to what's happening, do more live sessions.

Do Facebook live or InstaStories. It's a great way to put yourself out there to let your audience see you and hear you, but it's also a really easy way to promote without being overly salesy.

As we've learned, those posts that tell people to click and go to your sales page do not work on social media. I've kind of been saying that they never really work. But if they worked just a little back then, they are really not working now.

So if you want to promote you definitely want to look into advertising, of course, but I also think live video that then becomes replays on Facebook, for sure, is a really good way to mix free, valuable content as well as promotion. It is something I would love for you to look into.

Once again, I am a huge fan of Social Media Marketing World. I would love to see you there in March, 2017. Go to <http://www.amyporterfield.com/world> to learn all about it.

Thanks for being here. I cannot wait to connect with you again next week. Bye for now.

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