

STEALTHY WEB TRAFFIC TACTICS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Cindy: Randy, it is so cool to have you here on the show. For people who actually haven't heard of you before, why don't you just tell us briefly how you go into this line of work? Who are you and what is your thing?

Randy: Cindy, thank you so much for having me on your show. I really appreciate it. I've known you for a few years anyway, and I've been following you around, so I'm really interested in what you're doing.

Cindy: Thank you.

Randy: Quick history, though, who am I and why should you care. I built one of the first ISPs when the internet first became commercially available in '94, so I've been around for a few years in the whole marketing game. I've built a few multimillion dollar businesses with partners and by myself, and I tell you, it's way easier with partners. What I've been doing for probably the last fifteen years is using those same strategies and typically only working with local business owners on how to grow their businesses. But a lot of those strategies convert right over to online. I have a number of clients who are strictly online, and it's making a huge impact on their business, some of these ideas that I'll share today.

Cindy: Yeah, well, it's a bit exciting having you here because a lot of the other people that I've had on the show for this month's theme have been talking pretty much exclusively about web traffic, which is fantastic, but you are going to be able to show us a way to implement, you know, using web traffic for offline and local businesses, which I'm excited about learning a little bit about. You were talking about, when we were, just before we started this interview, talking a little bit about reputation management and so where do you think is a good place here to start? What shall we share with these people?

Randy: Great place to start. We all started our businesses and our blogs and online, everything, the same place, is on our reputation. Word of mouth, referrals, they got bigger and bigger. The game has changed dramatically in the last twelve to eighteen months where we have to go back to our reputation, because everything is so much more transparent. That's really, if you go back to the basics, that is the place to start, because 97 percent of the people go back to word of mouth or referral, or they hear about you online or SEO, they go, "Oh, who is this Cindy person?" They're going to want to find out what other people are talking about you first before they're going to listen to you.

Cindy: Exactly.

Randy: It's called social proof. The more you can gather that up, the more trustworthy you are, the more people want to do business with you.

Cindy: Social proof is huge, especially for local businesses, because before people are going to go and spend, especially if it's like, you know, you need to get your house painted and it cost you something like four, five thousand dollars. Before you go and throw money at someone, you're going to ask friends who have dealt with someone, or you're going to go on the internet and just do a quick search and see what people are really saying about these guys.

Randy: Exactly. Do you know who Nielsen is?

Cindy: Yeah, yeah.

Randy: It's a big survey company. They did a study where they asked people, how much do they trust different forms of advertising. Ninety percent of people trust word of mouth and recommendations. The second one, 72 percent, online reviews.

Cindy: Right.

Randy: The next closest one was 58 percent at a branded website, TV advertising was like 20 percent, and e-mails was at 40 percent if they're not done the right way. I only ask my clients one question after they know that. Where should you spend your marketing dollar?

Cindy: It makes sense, actually, put it into something that's going to bring actual cash into your company.

Randy: Exactly.

Cindy: Yeah, so where does someone start? When you're talking about reviews and word of mouth and all of that, if you haven't done anything of that actually, like practically, where does someone begin?

Randy: Are you talking about someone who is just starting out in business, or someone who's been in business for a while, either online or offline, but they haven't really focused on that area?

Cindy: Well, for most of our people, it's probably, I'm not sure that they have their, I mean, they might have their own local business, maybe some people, but for the majority, people who are listening in probably are helping clients to build their, find clients to build their online reputation. How do we actually help, how do we help these guys to start... I can see your face, you're going, "What? Where's she going with this?" How do you actually, our listeners, how do they first of all, find clients, and then how do they provide a great service for these guys, for their clients?

Randy: All right. I'll attack that two different ways. One, let's say you have no clients and you're starting up. What I always recommend is, have something that, to build up value or trust, so it's huge value, not a lot of cost to you, and give it away, or for a very low amount of money, in exchange for feedback and referrals. Once you get the feedback, now you're starting to build up your wealth of reviews, but they've also given you referrals of like-minded business owners, so now you can go talk to them. Do the same thing over and over again, until you have, and the magic number is ten, you want ten reviews to be seen as trusted online.

Once you have those ten, now you don't have to focus so much on getting the referrals, but I do that anyway, because it's a really easy way to be introduced to other smart business owners.

Cindy: Okay.

Randy: That kind of takes care of someone who is new. Let's say you already have a business, and you do have some sort of a client base. Well, let's take the last three months of your clients, and let's e-mail them. What we want to do is we want to do an e-mail saying, "Hi, I really appreciated you working with me, this is awesome. Would you mind leaving me some feedback? Here's our mission. Thanks once again." You want them to go to a Capture page, where if they leave a positive review, then you e-mail those people back, say, "Hey, thanks so much for leaving it. Would you mind leaving that in other places?" If it's a negative review, you don't want to send them an e-mail saying, "Leave that negative review in other places."

Cindy: Right, no.

Randy: It would be dumb. Gives you a chance to e-mail or call them and say, "Hey, I'm really sorry for what happened, how can I make this better?" Over 70 percent of the time, approaching it that way, you can turn a bad review into a five-star [gold 07:24] review. It's amazing.

Cindy: Right, because it's often, people, if they have complaints, they just really want someone to talk to and help them to fix it. It's not that they're always going to be angry with you, it's that they want someone to help find a solution and fix it.

Randy: Well, we did a survey on that as well. As you can tell, I love surveys. Metrics tell you everything. Over 68 percent of the people will not leave a negative review, even if they've had a bad experience with your company.

Cindy: Yep, okay.

Randy: Give them the opportunity just to say, "Hey, you pissed me off." You go, "Hey, I totally get it. How could we fix it?" You'd be amazed at how all of a sudden, they become a raving fan.

Cindy: Yep. I think people want the chance to be happy, it's not like everyone, I mean, there's a few people that are just always angry and always going to be just complaining, it's going to happen. But for the most part, I think people want to find a good service. When you send people to a ... So you reply back to them, and you say, "Hey, would you mind sharing that here and there?" Do you have a list of places where you suggest that they go and share their good news?

Randy: Well, for local businesses, bricks and mortar, like chiropractors or auto mechanics or panel beaters, as you call them down in Australia, they're autobody shops here, the number one place that people look for a local business online is Google and the group of three. The number two place is Facebook, and then start looking at Yelp and Insider Pages. There's probably for any business, there's between ten and twenty local directories that you should be seen on. What you want to do is focus on one to get, what was the magic number that you needed?

Cindy: Ten.

Randy: Yes, excellent.

Cindy: Ten is the magic number, yes.

Randy: Ten is the magic number, ten on Google, ten on Facebook, ten on Yelp, go back to Google, and always try to be five to ten more than your nearest competitor. For the online people, you don't have to worry so much about Google, but you should also try to build that up if you can because Google, one of Google's algorithms is, if you don't have a good reputation, your SEO efforts suffer. Facebook, Foursquare and Instagram check-ins are also important, acting like social triggers.

Cindy: Okay.

Randy: They should really focus on doing that, but more so now on Facebook, because there's more of a social triggers type thing, to be seen on Foursquare and Instagram. You can put all those reviews in those areas. It works out really well.

Cindy: Yeah, okay. You talk a bit about surveying, and surveying is huge, because once you know your people, then you can actually give them what they want. If you don't know what they want to buy, it's the easiest way to find out what to sell them. Do you have any kind of formula for actually surveying? When you're surveying people, do you have anything that you definitely ask them, stuff that you definitely don't ask them?

Randy: Boy, that's a can of worms right there. We do ask campaigns, and there's just courses out there that can teach you all about it, but essentially is the first question that goes out there is, "This is what you bought. What did you like and not like about it? What could be done differently?" The next question might be, "You answered these type of questions, here's some more options of what we're thinking about going in the future." They're going to come back, and you're going to find that it's really going to skew into people really pushing into this area, and they didn't want that area at all. There's no bad thing to ask.

Cindy: Yeah, okay, well, that's cool. Have you got any other advice that you can share when it comes to helping people to get a better online presence, and really making the most of the word-of-mouth benefits?

Randy: Well, there's something out there called the ten-by-ten formula.

Cindy: Ten is one of your favorite numbers, I'm catching a bit of that.

Randy: Well, my favorite number is three, but on the internet it's ten. I don't know what's going on there. This is what I always suggest to my business clients, that when they've got a handle on their reputation and their referrals are coming in and they have referral systems in place. Then they create a ten-by-ten formula, where they do ten frequently asked questions and ten should-ask questions. What happens is, you keep them under 90 seconds, so now you've got, oh, my god, twenty weeks of content to come out on your blog, and it goes to YouTube and DailyMotion and any of the video places.

Now you're flooding the internet and the real leverage trick here is you take those videos and you transcribe them. Now you've got twenty articles. You take these twenty articles and you post them up there in the world as well. You also take these twenty articles, make it into an e-book, and if you are so disposed to, a real hands-on book. Now you've leveraged one thing multiple times, flooding the internet, you'll be seen as the expert in your area, and it's just an amazing thing that probably only 2 percent of the population does.

Cindy: I was speaking, I can't remember who it was the other day, but they were talking about exactly a similar thing, where you take, he was talking about Disney, and how when you go into Disneyland and they say, [who knows 13:03] where is the castle? Everyone comes and asks that question. He was saying, if you can just find out these frequently asked questions, put them down, everyone is going to come and they're going to want that information anyway, so you might as well give it to them, right?

Randy: Well, exactly. They're going to ask the question anyway, so why not be out there on a video telling people, hey, if you really want to get traction in your business, the one thing I do is I talk to movers and shakers like Cindy and on her podcast and share the wealth, share the word out there. All of a sudden, someone will see that, they'll go, "Oh, who's this Cindy person?" And off it goes.

Cindy: Right, well, thank you. Yeah, getting as much stuff out there as you can. Also, because I've done a lot of product sales and you know, product creations and that kind of thing. Now probably the last twelve months or so, it's been a really big thing at the bottom of digital products, to have a frequently asked questions section. Because it allows you to basically not just get more content up there and just hear yourself talk, but to actually address any of these things that are going, like ideas that might stop someone from buying.

Anything that's actually going to stop someone from making that "yes" decision, you want to try and answer that question, even if they, they might not actually know to verbalize that question. But once you've said it, and you address it, it just brings closure to that, and then it helps them move towards the sale a little bit better.

Randy: You're removing all the barriers for them to purchase.

Cindy: Yeah, exactly.

Randy: The question there, they may not even have thought about, they go, "Wow, thank you so much from bringing that up to me." Also, [inaudible 14:52] your product, for any of your e-mails that you're sending out, you put testimonials.

Cindy: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Randy: Because now instead of you saying, "Hey, look how great I am. Don't listen to me, Cindy said this great stuff about me." Even if you pay someone to say it, they're still more believable than you saying it about yourself.

Cindy: Yeah, exactly. You can do this for local business as well, can't you, and get ... Do you, have you had much experience with actually getting a lot of testimonials from clients? Because you were mentioning reviews as very, very powerful, I mean, reviews linked into testimonials very tightly, I guess.

Randy: They're, I use them interchangeably. My latest chiropractor client, we went from zero to sixty-two reviews on Google in eight months, and his business is booming. He's passed over the half million dollar mark.

Cindy: Okay, is there, I mean, besides sending out a survey or just a question, are there any, because you want, a lot of people aren't going to just give you a testimonial. You have to give some sort of incentive or some sort of reason for them to take their time and give you a review or a feedback or something like that. Have you got anything to nudge them towards actually giving you that?

Randy: I love this question, absolutely love it. Both Yelp and Google state that you're not supposed to ask anyone for reviews, but Google runs a contest saying, if you leave reviews, you'll be entered into a contest. This is what I tell people to do, is you incentivize people to leave a review, good or bad, and you say, in this month, all the latest reviews, you're going to be entered into a contest for a iPad or for whatever it happens to be. For a chiropractor it was great, because one patient is worth so much money for them. They can offer something quite valuable to it.

That is the the best way, contest, we're only going to be looking at this month, we're going to randomly draw, that person will get it. The real trick there is, you get everybody something anyway. Something small, everyone is a winner.

Cindy: Yep. Okay. That is fantastic. All right, we're probably going to wrap it up pretty soon. Do you have any last-minute advice or tips that you'd like to share with our listeners?

Randy: Not a lot. I think we covered a whole lot of ground here. There's a lot of information there for people to absorb, and me to throw more stuff out there, it's just going to be like getting punched in the face. [crosstalk 17:28]

Cindy: We're not about punching people in the faces.

Randy: Listen to this a few times, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me, and I know Cindy is going to give you my contact information.

Cindy: Sure.

Randy: I'd be more than happy to either e-mail with you or we can do a Skype conversation. Because your choice is always one of three things. One, do nothing, which is dumb. Two, do it yourself, which if you have no money, then that's what you should do. Or three, hire people who know what they're doing in that specific expertise, and you'll get much further add. That's where I can help you.

Cindy: Absolutely. If you are listening, if you're a 7 Figure Furnace listener from your phone or any other way via the podcast and you haven't actually shown up on the 7figurefurnace.com blog, come on over, find Randy's discussion here, and look below the podcast and you'll see a whole bunch of links, and basically me being silly, as usual [inaudible 18:30]. Yeah, grab some links, some details. It's been fantastic having you here on the show, Randy. Let's hope you get ...

Randy: Thanks for having me, Cindy, I appreciate it. You're amazing, what can I say?

Cindy: Thanks so much. Talk to you soon, then. Bye-bye.

Randy: You betcha.

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