

# myweeklymarketing.

**Janice Hostager:** 0:00

Hey, welcome to my Weekly Marketing. Today's episode is all about cracking the code on marketing strategy, especially when it comes to everyone's biggest frustration social media. I'm thrilled to have Victoria Hajar with me, the brilliant mind behind Ugli Marketing Agency. Yep, you heard me right, Ugli Marketing Agency, that's U-G-L-I. She's gonna be giving us insights that are pure gold when it comes to crafting a standout presence online. From where to start with a strategy to what to do at each stage of the buyer's journey, we're going to uncover secrets to marketing success for your business. So here's my talk with Victoria. Well, hey, Victoria, welcome to My Weekly Marketing.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 0:42

Hi Janice. Thank you so much for having me. I'm really excited about being on the show and for our conversation today.

**Janice Hostager:** 0:49

Yeah, so you run a marketing business that helps entrepreneurs grow from six to seven figures? Right. So our listeners are generally a little smaller than that. They're generally, you know, maybe solopreneurs, new startups, etc. Talk to me about your system, first of all, and maybe a little bit about how new startups can use it in anticipation of their growth, and then a little bit about how you got into this and so we're going to just go all over the map.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 1:22

That's great. Yeah, okay, let's start about. We'll start on my journey a little bit, because I think mine has been a little bit unique from others in my space I think there's a lot of folks that come from corporate and then they sort of translate their systems and their knowledge from corporate into helping small businesses and entrepreneurs, and my journey has been a little bit the opposite of that. So I well, the interesting thing about my journey is that I started my career in Shanghai, China, so I went to school in New York City. I grew up in the tri-state area and I, after graduating from college, I had an internship lined up and like a job after that.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 2:08

So the world was for me was a little bit planned ahead and that I completely wanted to revolt against. I was like I felt like you know, this could be the rest of my life, like I could

just be here and kind of be in this place in the world for forever. And I happened to have this calendar inside my cubicle and I was working for a as like an executive assistant at a television network and inside my cubicle I have no idea where it came from was this this calendar of different like tourism spots across China. So it was like the Great Wall, the Peking Opera, you know, dim sum restaurant, all this and so every day... And that job was a little bit challenging because I dealt with some cranky celebrities and producers and things like that. So it was, you know, tough as those first jobs go. And I would just look at this calendar and it just planted the seed in my head of I'm just going to get out of here and go travel the world and move to Asia. So I moved to China teaching English, and I've been thinking about this recently because from teaching English to starting my marketing career, it was, it was really a challenging time because I loved being in China but I didn't know how on earth I was going to stay without teaching English because I just it was not my passion, wasn't what I wanted to do, and I got this really great opportunity to transition from teaching to being a marketing assistant for two entrepreneurs. Okay, and so this really started my journey with marketing and this trend that just is a through line of my life of always working directly with entrepreneurs and with investors. So my first parlay into marketing was in that and every single company I've worked in after has been directly with founders and investors to grow and scale their businesses.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 4:14

But what's unique about that position, which I think a lot of us can relate to, is when you are working directly with an entrepreneur and a lot of the people listening here. Maybe you have a social media manager, maybe you have someone writing blogs for you or doing various things to help assist you. You know we kind of expect a lot from that person. But the problem is is that if that person doesn't come with a lot of experience, their capabilities are really only going to be, as can only develop, as much as the ones above them, their managers right, and that's you right.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 4:54

So a lot of folks get really frustrated because they expect their social media manager or their virtual assistant to be able to create like a profitable sales and marketing program for their business. Let's face it right. But the reality is is just it's it's not oftentimes even possible because those people just don't have enough experience. They don't understand the full picture. So that was me in the beginning of my career, with a lot of pressure from, again, investors are not the most forgiving bunch of folks right when you say things like that.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 5:30

So I really began what I call like a trial by fire education in how to grow a business through marketing and learning about all the pieces of marketing. And so I've been able to you know, beyond that first experience again work consistently with entrepreneurs directly and I've been able to have my hands in a wide variety of businesses and a variety of stages. So I've worked with, you know, early stage startup, pre-revenue companies like just getting those first, you know, first organizing the first bits of it all the way to scale and growth. And I've been able to work with entrepreneurs, very experienced entrepreneurs, because this has been my learning path, just finding more and more advanced entrepreneurs to learn from, to expand my marketing knowledge. But I've been able to, you know, work with entrepreneurs that have built billion dollar unicorn businesses.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 6:25

So I really run the gamut on what are the stages for marketing for each of these businesses and we can go a little bit into that.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 6:34

But that's sort of the foundation of this framework that I built, which I call the scalable marketing machine, which is really like what are the elements that you need to have in place to be able to have your marketing grow and scale your business for you and smart entrepreneurs start this early on, that they start methodically creating their business, their sales and marketing around systems.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 7:02

Right, you don't have to be in growth and scale mode to put systems in place, and so that's what we can talk a little bit about, because I see time and time again you know, I've worked with again a wide variety of businesses, but I've worked with strong leaders, I've worked with weak leaders and I've seen who are the ones that have the success and ultimately, in my opinion, or what I've experienced, is that those that are building things against a proven framework and building them against systems are the ones that are able to grow faster and have success faster, simply because a system allows you to methodically implement, iterate, and improve upon things, whereas what keeps many, many folks stuck for years is this kind of execution, randomly trying a lot of things, throwing spaghetti at the wall, so to speak.

**Janice Hostager:** 7:59

Right, oh, that is so true. And I really resonate with what you're saying about the systems. I mean I started out with a design agency and I found and because I'm really

ADD, so I would find like little notes scribbled on pieces of paper and sticky notes that felt had fallen off the computer and fall into the floor, kind of thing. And you know, I realized really early on that if I didn't have a system for myself, that I was doomed, I mean just keeping track of notes from clients and you know just my hours that I spent on something and everything like that. So I 100% agree with you there. And I also think you're absolutely spot on about people hiring like not even their first hire, maybe it would be a virtual assistant that you want to do social media, and I see that a lot with social media and I know that we were gonna actually talk about social media today.

**Janice Hostager:** 8:51

We just, I just have a lot of things I wanted to cover also. But yeah, I think you're spot on. People expect young, new graduate, new college grads to have this social media experience and they do, just in their own world, you know. But aligning social media with marketing is a whole different ballgame. So I'm really glad that that you spoke to that, for sure,

**Victoria Hajjar:** 9:16

Yeah 100%, 100%.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 9:19

And I think, just to go back to that point. You know I see this over and over and over again and people waste a lot of money. This is going to be a little bit of a plug to hire folks like Janice and I. Right, because no, because it really. You waste an incredible amount of money hiring folks off Fiverr or getting you know a social media manager, for example. That's yeah, they'll turn out your email, they'll do. They'll put the they'll email, they'll put the posts together, they'll schedule them.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 9:47

And what often is lacking from these folks are A sort of the high level, 10,000 foot view of how sales and marketing work in your business. Because if no one in your whole company, your whole business, has that view, it's going to be very difficult to ensure that any of the sales and marketing activities are really working in accordance with each other. Typically, it's easy to find executors, but we're we can't expect our executors to also be our strategists. That's why strategy and execution are often very different. That's why folks like Janice and I are very good. Maybe we're not, you know the ones that will be very good toiling away in an Excel spreadsheet and and, and you know, doing the very small detail oriented things. That's why we carry that 10,000 foot view and we're able to worry about managing the outcomes of each one of these stages of the marketing

strategy. And that's, if you can't afford a marketing director or chief marketing officer and you're the business owner, that's your role, that's your role to step up into that role, because sales and marketing is the lifeblood of your business.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 11:03

So if there's no one in your team that understands how it works and how to get success out of it, then you're going to flounder for a long time.

**Janice Hostager:** 11:11

Yes, yes, yeah. I just had a client a couple weeks ago that had been for years paying somebody to post three times a week on their social media platforms and the really cute little graphics. But it was more like you know, happy Friday and you know it's just like it had, there was no strategy behind it at all and the owner was so frustrated, I mean, and and she really, it took a long time for her to realize that yes, this isn't you know it's it's wasting money.

**Janice Hostager:** 11:44

You know, and nobody wants to feel that way when you started out.

**Janice Hostager:** 11:47

And I get it.

**Janice Hostager:** 11:47

I mean, you are running a business, you are so focused on the other things that just getting the doing the things right, so the the trying to do social media on top of that, trying to even execute a plan beyond that in is and that's what I had actually had to do in my business too is once I started realizing that social media was not going to do it, SEO was not going to do it. They all had to fit together somehow some way, and so I developed what you call the flywheel. I call it to Trail to the Sale, but it's the same kind of thing. It's like a whole customer journey map, basically laid out step by step, and what you need to focus on in each of those steps, which makes your managing in marketing so much more manageable to boot.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 12:33

And then you can really you can focus on the tactics, right, it's kind of like so let's talk. I know you want to talk about social media. I think this is a really good parlay into that, because the example that you just gave about, you know, a happy Friday post and just like quotes and things like that Pre 2020, I would say that those sort of things were

working right. Pre COVID, I feel like marketing you know a lot of us in marketing and, right, we've got a lot of marketers also listening to this this idea of like the content train. Right, you just got to keep it going, you got to just keep showing up.

**Janice Hostager:** 13:10

Yeah.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 13:11

But I believe that COVID really marked and TikTok really brought about this, which is like a whole leveling up of the quality of content on social media, and I think that any of us that are functioning in that old paradigm we're just not going to see the results, because what you said reminded me, like there's one marketing agency here in Miami, which will go unnamed, that never send emails, never, ever, ever send emails Only. It's like you know, happy holidays, happy new year. They only will send a newsletter for a holiday to wish that the person a happy holiday, and the idea is like we're just going to stay in front of mind, but they're in my inbox. I'm still subscribed. They're missing a huge opportunity and that is to be really, truly adding value. Right, we can truly be adding value and we see, especially with the Gen Zers who have grown up in front of the screen, the quality of their content they churn out, the quality of their hooks, the pace at which they go on to trends, like we've been able to see some breakout businesses. In fact, I have several founders that I mentor whose businesses absolutely exploded in 2020 simply because they were able to capture that audience on TikTok. They were churning out funny, entertaining content. They were popping on the trends and they were able to grow their followership to you know half a million or a million followers in a very short period of time. And so then they have a business, they have an audience.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 14:57

But what's interesting to go back to the idea of the flywheel is that a lot of those businesses if we look at last year, from 2022 to now, product-based businesses are at a desperate decline because that wave of TikTok, that board a lot of influencers and then they sell products because they didn't have this full journey right the flywheel, or the you know what you call it to the sale, right the Trail to the Sale, as this, you know, as that strategic piece, that high level strategy was not in place. Many of them could not sustain the businesses because they went from organic, then organic stopped working, they went straight to paid ad. They did not have a full flywheel strategy working and so, okay, ads were cheap in 2022, but guess what? End of 2022, 23, 24, ads are not possible anymore and so many, many businesses just shut their doors because they didn't build community, they didn't nurture them, they didn't build a relationship, they didn't bring

them on the sales journey. You know, they didn't do any of those pieces because they didn't have that 10,000 foot view that's so important.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 16:06

So, to touch back on to to social though and a lot of us are expecting that, okay, well, I don't want to dive into that just yet. So let's just put that there, because we can jump from thing to thing, but we can talk a little bit more about social media and what role it plays.

**Janice Hostager:** 16:26

Well, and I agree and actually I was going to talk a little bit about social media in that when you're looking at what a small business does, is they often do that is the first thing that they want to farm out or get somebody else to do is their social media, and the thing and you touch on this to social media is constantly in flux. I think it is the hardest thing to have a strategy behind, because what worked last year isn't working this year, and so I think there are some basics you want people to know, like and trust you. That's one of the things that social media does really well. If you're authentic behind a camera, if you have time to make videos or get in front of the screen, I think social media is great for that.

**Janice Hostager:** 17:10

But it's a crowded playing field right now and you have to be able to stand out with some stellar hooks. You have to develop a following. You have that community, so there's a lot of things that have changed and shifted. And of course, the algorithm keeps, you know, getting changed around a lot. You know TikTok is, I think, a separate thing and right now we're in February 2025.

**Janice Hostager:** 17:36

We don't know if TikTok is going to stick around or not, but we'll say Instagram, which, again, all the social media, anything meta now has changed because of the lack of monitoring now at this point in time, and so everything is kind of in flux. So I think a strategy is really important, but what do you think is really key to have a strategy behind, or what does that strategy look like for social media if you don't necessarily know where to start?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 18:08

So I want everyone listening to be able to take that lens and pull it back to that 10,000 foot view, because the very first question you need to ask yourself is you know how

much time, energy, effort, investment do I have to put into my business? That's like the first layer we need to really look at, because we need to get honest with ourselves, right, because if we don't have the time but we do have money, that's going to give us some options. If we don't have the money but we do have time, that's going to create a different situation for us. So let's go into the situation that most people have, which is more time than money right? To work on their business. And you're looking like. You're thinking like I want to grow through social media, right? The first, the next question you need to ask yourself is you know how serious am I willing to take this social media platform? And when you're first starting out, I would really highly recommend only focusing on one platform. I think it's again. I think it's totally fine to be pushing content out to other platforms automatically, but I would choose one platform to really be the one where you're focused on growth, okay, and If you're using social media for growth and, by the way, there's many other ways that you can grow so I want everyone to keep that in mind, because I think people think that social media is their only choice, and it becomes a problem when people are like I hate social media, I don't personally like to spend time on it, I don't enjoy making content, it takes me too long. If that's you, I would highly suggest considering a different way to grow, and there's other ways to grow that are equally as free as organic social media. So, okay, we've decided that we're using social media for growth, social media for growth, if this is something that you're serious about, I would immediately follow all of Gary Vee's content. I would read all of his books because he's really good at bringing to reality what it takes to win on social in today's market.

**Victoria Hajjar: 20:13**

And, as I was commenting before about 2020, right, the total paradigm shift and a lot of us has talked about this a lot where the algorithm changed to really being able to serve people content based on their interests rather than who they were following, right. And so in the old paradigm, it's like okay, these are who you follow. Then the algorithm is going to make assumptions about what you like, based on you know who you follow and who's following you and all that stuff. In the new world this for you page, where they're just trying to grab our attention, grab our attention, grab our attention it just shifted everything, because now, whatever you look at, they're just going to feed you more of. And it's just so ridiculous because she's like, oh, you know they must, she must have a dog, let's feed her more dog stuff. Or like, oh, she's interested in under eye cream, let's just feed her under eye cream, right? So this is how the algorithm is working, and so that's why the competitiveness of the content has gone through the roof, because we're just competing to grab, grab, grab, grab, grab attention, because that's ultimately going to get our content pushed out to more audiences.



**Victoria Hajjar:** 21:23

And if you're using social media as a growth strategy, your only metric you should be tracking is impressions. Are we getting our content to go viral, and what does it take to go viral? It takes pushing out a lot of content. So the founders that I mentor and I work with. If they're doing an Instagram strategy to grow their business, you better believe that they're posting, at least three times a day, really good, well thought out content. This is no more of the quotes and passive stuff. This is actively creating content each and every week or each and every day, understanding the sending, the trending sound, the trending graphics, the dances, all of the all of that is important. If you really want to build content that's going to get you results in terms of leads into your business, right.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 22:21

And if you're not able to be doing content and social media at that pace, then I would you have two options. You can either hire it out to help someone, to get someone to help you to create the volume of that content, to really stay on top of it, and that's not just a passive social media person, just anyone you could find on the internet. That's someone that takes their job seriously and it is an investment. You should invest in someone that is experienced as a sidebar when you're creating your you know your whole marketing strategy. We need to think about making those strategic investments. So if you're like, nope, social media is where I'm going to get my leads, then that's a place you need to invest right and doing it well. Now. If that's not the case and you're like, okay, you're cringing a little bit with me saying all this and like maybe social media is not for me. We still need social media.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 23:14

But then it takes a completely different uh turn where we're focused more on value-based content, like no interest, nurture. It becomes a part of our nurture strategy. Doesn't matter if things go viral, we just want people to connect with us as the business owner. We want people to connect with the value we bring them, understand our products, understand our offers, and so the pressure is taken off. It still needs to be good quality, but it doesn't have to be quite as high frequency, it doesn't have to be quite as intense with paying attention to those trends.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 23:54

So I think it's it's really important for us to know what game we're playing when it comes to social media because, again, most people I talked to think they're playing the, the, the. You know, reaching new audiences, getting leads from social media. That's typically the only thing they're doing in the awareness phase, right, that first stage of that client

journey, and then they're asking and wondering why they're not getting any leads. Why are they not getting any results? Because they're not utilizing social media in the way that's going to deliver the results for them. You know.

**Janice Hostager:** 24:22

So what do you have to say to the individual that just hates being on social media, doesn't do it on a personal basis, they feel like they have to do it for work. Where would you suggest that they invest their time and energy if they don't want to do social, or want to do social like kind of a back burner?

**Janice Hostager:** 24:38

kind of thing,

**Victoria Hajjar:** 25:13

I do think it's really important to have social as a component of your marketing strategy. But, again, you can do, honestly, even if you're the fellow that was doing the quotes, that's fine. If that's part of your brand and it makes sense for you and you just want to churn out quotes or whatever and just stay active. It's just. You know, many people go to social first to just legitimize. Like is this business even still open? Like, do they even exist? Honestly, oftentimes people are going to your LinkedIn, they're going to your Instagram or going to your Facebook, depending on who your target client is, and so I think it's, I think it could work against you if you're, if you're not present, you don't exist. Now, that said, I think you know if you're really not paying a lot of attention to growth, I wouldn't go to all of the channels, because it also doesn't look good to have like zero followers and zero. So you could definitely build a nice respectable amount of following, not do anything too crazy. I would say just invest in making sure you're posting, you know, at least three times a week, for example, things that are relative to your business, things that are relevant to your target client. So that should be going in some way. You can do it yourself or you can have a virtual assistant do that. But let's look at other ways that we can grow, because the one question I want everyone to ask themselves is like what is the purpose of marketing for my business because it could be different for different businesses. If you have like a B2B business, that's very very high ticket. You are a high level consultant and you charge tens of thousands of dollars to work with someone. It's going to be a very different strategy than if you have a product based business and you're just trying to get someone to your landing page to purchase something. Completely different strategy.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 26:51

So level one is understand what's the purpose. Right, once you identify the purpose, then we can start putting some metrics to it. Like, if it's, you know, purely to drive leads, then we need to be measuring how many leads we're getting. It's purely to drive brand awareness, we need to be measuring, you know, impressions things like that. Or you know exposure and audience sizes that we're getting in front of. But once you decide what the purpose of marketing is for you, then we need to really focus in on that first stage of the of the flywheel of the journey, which is that awareness. Right, like we need people to know about our business and if it's not social media that you're using for that, there's a couple other things you can do. There's, I mean, I like to identify, like there's typically only three ways that you can grow your business. It's through ads, which not everyone has the budget for. There's leveraging other people's audiences, which is, you know, partnerships through brand partnerships through influencers right, we could be right, PR, things like that. And the third is really search engine optimization, right, it's like are people finding you?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 28:03

The last and fourth one that I would also say is an important one, but it depends on your business is like a cold outbound strategy which I would put into that awareness bucket. If you're a service-based business, you could invest in getting lists of your target client and just reaching out to them, picking up the phone, opening up conversations, connecting with them on LinkedIn, dming them, sending them emails. You don't have to be this incessant, annoying cold callers, but this is still an extremely effective way to open up opportunities, right? If you're a product-based business, this could look like getting wholesaler lists, getting boutique owner lists, things like that, and really just trying to actively network and leverage relationships to build to get customers and get clients. So there's that outbound. There's SEO, which again could be search engine optimization for search platforms, for AI, or also very relevant, search for social media, right.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 29:07

More and more people use Instagram. You know TikTok. If TikTok is going to be around when everyone's listening to this as a search engine, right, they're looking for recipes, they're looking for hotels, they're looking for products, they're looking for advice and they use those search bars just like a search engine. So that's another way we can connect with people searching for what we need. And then again, leveraging other people's audiences and partnerships is my absolute favorite way to grow for new businesses that don't have a lot of investment, that they're not funded.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 29:39

The easiest way that you can get a bunch of people into your email list at one time is like do a workshop with with another business owner, do an event, right. Leverage each other's audiences so you can introduce your audiences to to your. You know your another business owner, another business, and they'll do the same for you. And if you plug, you know one of those a month into your calendar to be doing these things, you'll find yourself having grown your email list quite significantly by the end of the year.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 30:11

So this is a really, really great way to grow when you're first getting started.

**Janice Hostager:** 30:16

Yeah, yeah, and I would agree with those tips. There's one, though, I want to clarify a little bit is that I'd never recommend that that businesses buy an email list, because they can get you flagged as a spammer. So when you're talking about lists, I'm assuming you're talking about like a regular mail list, right?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 30:32

Well, I guess in my experience, like if you buy a list and you do a blast email to everyone, that is absolutely against rules. If you get into a community and they're, for example, really great way to do this is, let's say, you want to be in community with your target client, right? Oftentimes those have directories. You can start with that directory and I really do encourage people to reach out like one-to-one. If you get someone's contact information and you reach out one-to-one, not an email blast, don't put them on your email marketing campaigns. No, it's actually just introducing yourself. That's completely kosher, it's completely fine. And again, a lot of people will just ignore you. That's fine. But you could begin to open these conversations and the key to this is how personable can you get? So, in the idea of going through communities, this is a really, really great strategy.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 31:30

Let's say that you sell to lawyers, right? There's a wonderful group called Ms Esquire and they're all the female lawyers of America and they have a Facebook group and they have like lunches and events, things like that, and you sell to lawyers. Get yourself into that group. There's maybe a small fee to pay, but you can go to the events and you'll get access to the directory and you can reach out to those lawyers one by one and say, hey, we're both in Ms Esquire group, I do this and this. If you ever need help with that. This is where you are doing this outbound. It's cold, quote, unquote, but no, it's warm because you have a connection right. The cold outbound where you're buying lists of 10,000 and

just cold blasting them is absolutely doesn't work. I mean, it does, it does, but it takes a lot of time and a lot of times, a lot of investment to actually see the fruits of a strategy like that.

**Janice Hostager:** 32:26

Yeah yeah. It jumps right from awareness to sale, with missing all the pieces that are in between that. So I'm glad you clarified that, thank you. So have you worked with influencers?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 32:39

Oh yeah, yeah.

**Janice Hostager:** 32:41

So so what tips you have? Do you feel like that's something that newer businesses should maybe avoid at the outset, or do you think because it can be very powerful? Influencers can be very powerful. How do you feel like like a new, newer startup or a solopreneur can work with an influencer?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 32:58

Okay, I think first you have to identify your needs. So I think there definitely is a distinction between influencer and a content creator. So you can, if you need like really good, authentic, like looking like user generated content to be able to share because that's really really important and powerful, you can simply hire people to do that on Fiverr or whatever, and they may have small audiences, but usually not influencer level audiences and because oftentimes when we're getting influencers, when we're just starting and we don't want to pay for their engagement, we just want the content right. We want like the content that feels authentic, because that's the stuff that really that really produces. So if you're like, oh, I've got the content, I got that dialed in. I really want to grow through influencers, there's a couple ways to do it. Can you find influencers to work with for free? Still, yes, it's possible, but again, a lot of this is based on relationships. So you're going to want to be identifying some people to work with like influencers. I would shortlist, you know I love to do things like let's do it like a dream 100 list. Let's say who's like our 100 top influencers that we would like love to work with, and I would be connecting with those individually honestly like try to do you know five or 10, you know every week and little by little you send a personal DM, you open the relationships, you explain, you know what your business is all about and if you get some nice conversations going, you can kind of enter that way. And I think that this is the missing piece that people need to not forget about.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 34:41

Influencer marketing is a lot about relationships, right, if you're at the level where you want to be purely transactional with influencers, then you need to be very careful about who you're working with. They need to have a reputation for being um, you know that they're delivering what they promise, all of that stuff. Because there is a little bit of an economy going there where there are folks that kind of lie about how many followers they have and what their production is, that I've been in situations before where they just like promise to do X, y and Z and they don't. So if you're considering working with influencers, the first thing I would say is relationships first. So make sure that you meet them beforehand, that you guys get a vibe of each other, that you get it get along well, and that there is something in writing about what each side is going to provide, like really organize it right. That's that's like the basics.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 35:46

And then I would say you know, if you're considering investing right in the working with influencer, just like a job interview, I would say, could you give me some references of who people you've worked with before, just to ensure that the experience is going to be a positive one? Because if you're a smaller business just just starting out and you're going to invest a couple thousand dollars to work with an influencer, you want to make sure you're going to get your return on investment for that and that it is going to be a good experience for you. And then the other thing is is that if you're still, if you're in the earlier stage, to don't discount folks that have small, like these micro influencers can be extremely, extremely effective.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 36:28

10,000 and you and listen, we often forget this, but like start within our own network, I'm sure we all have like friends or cousins or like nieces of aunts, of the no, I don't know who we have an actual immediate connection with. Let's start with our own network first and again. Even if, like you know, cousin Sarah has like 10,000, you know she's really on top of Instagram and had 10,000. She's a great, if it makes sense for your brand right, she would be a great ad.

**Janice Hostager:** 36:58

Yeah, and locally. If you have a local business too, it's a lot, although I think they can, if they're good and they're local. It can be a little more expensive, depending on what, who you're after. But you know, don't like, like you said, don't overlook your community. I love that. Yeah, so are there. Do you feel like there's some overlooked strategies for

increasing the customer lifetime value using Instagram that you've worked with, or what are your thoughts on that?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 37:30

Using Instagram. Well, I think again yes.

**Janice Hostager:** 37:37

Or social media in general.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 37:39

I think we want to really get a good handle on how we're going, how you're going to utilize the user generated content, how you're going to shout out your customers and your clients like this, and I guess, if you're really looking to increase lifetime value, the first thing I would say is you know, how are you really building community around your brand? And ways we can do that is really, again, getting our community involved in our marketing is the best way that you can increase not only LTV but also enhance the word of mouth. Right, people are going to feel better about your brand. They're going to recommend you, and that's a very, very powerful thing. So, um, you know, asking for users to be, uh, giving honest reviews and doing videos and then saying that they'll be featured on your Instagram, like these, are incredible things that let me tell you, especially for the newer folks that dream of being influencers which, let's face it, are like a lot of kids out there a lot of people out there that dream of that.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 38:41

That's a really great opportunity for them to have that reciprocity where you're going to feature them Right. I've had brands that I've worked with that do regular. It's a regular spot where they're always doing customer features or, you know, it's not just testimonials, it's like anything that they post, like repost it, give them a shout out. I've had those businesses also utilize that content for their newsletters as well. I've also, you know, again, if we're looking at influencers, you know, look at your own customers, look within your own community. Has anyone bought from you in the past 90 days that have like over 5,000 followers? And again, micro influencers are fine. We just have to see is there anyone of our customers or clients that are taking this seriously right, that are producing high quality content? We can start there. So it's all about how do you kind of bring it back to community building and building the relationship with your current customers. That's going to foster kind of good vibes inside them to keep coming back and also to recommend you.

**Janice Hostager:** 39:44

Good stuff. This is all good stuff.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 39:46

Right,

**Janice Hostager:** 39:48

It's hard, it's all a lot, and I you know anybody that runs a business understands that that you're dealing with so many terms you don't know and you're trying to just run your business day to day and you're dealing with all this, this marketing stuff and it just comes at you so fast and you feel like that feeling in your pit of your stomach and you're like what if I should be doing that instead? Or you know, so it really does pay off to have a strategy in place, either with someone like Victoria, who works with a little larger businesses is, or actually myself too. But you know, just having that structure down and you know, in a lot of this you can get a free download and kind of work on it yourself until you get to the point where you are ready to invest a little more into it, or able to, for sure.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 40:36

One thing that I always like to remind people in this journey, like we, I think we expect things to go really fast. We also read these articles of these really well-funded companies that have this massive growth in a short period of time, but the reality is, for most of us it's going to be a slow burn, and I always like to say you don't have to go fast, you just have to keep going and you're going to learn little by little, right, and you can get started with a lot of free resources. But I think, Janice, you'd agree with me the key to building out like an effective client journey is first, just doing one thing at a time. So, for the marketing flywheel, for the client journey, however, whatever you call it right, the Trail to the Sale, you've got various steps right that are going to bring people from first knowing about you to converting into paying customers and then raving fans right. That's the general gist of the client journey, and so if you want to be able to methodically, you know, plug away and learn, and improve.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 41:42

It's like listen, we got it. We have to work first to doing one activity for each one of these stages. So that means awareness phase okay, 2025, I'm just going to do a partnership strategy. I'm going to give myself a target of doing one joint partnership event or workshop or something per month. At the end of the year, I will have 12.



**Victoria Hajjar:** 42:05

The next is an engage right, a lead magnet. Let's just we're going to iterate and approve upon one lead magnet. We've got one lead magnet. We can play around with what we call it. We can play around with the, you know describing what it is, but we're not going to create any more right and then nurture. We're only going to work on this social platform. We're going to do the best that we can on one social platform. And so, piece by piece, you're building this journey one step at a time, and you're going to make a tremendous amount of progress, even though it's going to feel like a snail's pace while you're at it, but little by little, you're going to be building kind of the bricks upon the house that you will build, this strong, with a strong foundation, this marketing and sales engine for yourself. So it's like we want it all and we want it all right now, but if we can have the discipline to just go bit by bit, I promise at the end of the year you'll be light years away from others in your industry.

**Janice Hostager:** 43:00

Great, great advice, and that is absolutely true. But I honestly think too, if we had it all right away, we wouldn't know what to do with it, we didn't know how to handle it. So it's, you know, in some ways a real blessing that we have to learn everything as we go, because, as my coach likes to say, what got you here won't get you there. So you know, like you figure out one thing and at one level, and then to grow your business to the next level, you're going to have to learn some new things. So it's all a journey, right? So that's what makes it fun.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 43:28

Honestly, I've seen this time and time again, that I've seen businesses that have those fast rises, but guess what? Things start to absolutely break just in different ways. Right, you have a fast rise. Then oftentimes there's a lot of things breaking behind the scenes because you haven't learned the lessons. So, again, that slow burn is often the recipe for something that's sustainable. That's why a lot of especially in the smaller businesses, you see people that are in business for 20, 30, 40 years. It's not that it all came to them in one year or in two years.

**Janice Hostager:** 44:05

Absolutely. Victoria. How can people learn more about you?

**Victoria Hajjar:** 44:09

Oh well I this has been such a pleasure. Thank you so much. So my business is called Ugli Ventures with an I, so it's U G L I V E N T U R E S.

**Janice Hostager:** 44:21

Yes, okay, I have to ask how you got that name.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 44:23

Yes, because this all came to the around the concept of business being really ugly sometimes.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 44:29

So when I was really struggling in the beginning of my career, I just thought, like this is the worst part of business, the sales and marketing. It is the hardest, is the most pressure right, and so I dedicated my life essentially to really putting in the systems and frameworks to turn this most ugly part of business into something that we can feel is beautiful and manageable and under control. So Ugli Ventures is the business, and if you go to [ugliventures.com/resources](http://ugliventures.com/resources) there's a ton of free guides on how you can in fact start this climb journey that we're speaking of. Right, a guide on how you can go step by step and to get started, that is all you need. You just have to start learning and, again, building it piece by piece, and when you're ready and you start seeing some traction, then you'll be able to hire folks to help you and maybe even higher level folks to help run the things. But again, if it's you in the beginning, you just got to roll up your sleeves and you got to learn it yourself.

**Janice Hostager:** 45:25

That is such great advice. Thank you so much for being here today, Victoria. I appreciate your time and for sharing all your wisdom.

**Victoria Hajjar:** 45:33

Thank you. Thank you so much.

**Janice Hostager:** 45:35

Thanks so much for tuning in today. If you found value in today's discussion to learn more about Victoria and anything we talked about on the episode today, visit [myweeklymarketing.com/96](http://myweeklymarketing.com/96). And don't forget to subscribe to My Weekly Marketing for more insights into growing your small business. Remember, marketing isn't just about what you do. It's about the stories you tell and the connections you make. So keep

hustling and keep innovating and watch your business grow. See you next time. Bye for now.