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ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

EPISODE
175

Josh Greene

Show Notes at: <http://www.aesnation.com/175>



Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

We are thrilled that you have joined us here at AES Nation, where we're dedicated to accelerating entrepreneurial success—your success.

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Best of success,



John Bowen
Co-founder, AES Nation

John Bowen: Wow, I have a remarkable entrepreneur for you today, and it's on an area that we all want. How can we be more effective as we're growing our business? We nail our client experience, we know we can really serve our audience exceptionally well, but we don't have enough of them coming in. We hear about all these online marketing gurus that are generating client after client.

Well, I have a remarkable entrepreneur who has 20 years of experience, VP of marketing, online working with some of the largest companies out there, Discovery Channel, Time Warner Cable, and 1-800-PACK-RAT, and he is here today as a fellow entrepreneur to share his hard-learned insights of spending two to five million dollars every year online. What you can do to generate that steady stream of pre-qualified, pre-endorsed clients or customers. You don't want to miss this.

I'm John Bowen. You're at AES Nation, all about accelerating your success, and Josh Greene will be joining us in a second to make sure it happens. Stay tuned.

Josh, I am so excited to have you here. You and I met at Joe Polish's Genius Network Meeting, and you had so many good ideas of how you could help fellow entrepreneurs, and particularly my own enlightened self-interest, how you could help me, that I wanted share with our audience. First, thank you Josh for joining us.

Josh Greene: Thanks for having me, John. It's great to be here.

John: One of the things that's kind of funny, Josh, there seems to be this bifurcation of there are really gurus that have grown up in the online marketing and there's corporate people, and there aren't too many that cross over. A little bit of backstory of how you got to where you are today. One, having the privilege of being really a VP of marketing, in particular, responsible on the online for some of these large companies, and then really starting your own business to serve fellow entrepreneurs. How did this all come to be?

Josh: That's funny. I got drafted into it at the beginning when I was right out of college. I had a technical background. I did a bit of consulting, but there was a limited market for internet marketing in Binghamton, New York in 1996.

John: I've got to stop you. I just was in Binghamton. That's where I grew up. I don't know that we even talked about that.

Josh: Oh, no kidding!

John: So it's a good area to be from.

Josh: Yeah!

John: But Josh, so you're in Binghamton and it's not the ... I don't think of that as the online marketing headquarters of the world.

Josh: No. No, it wasn't, but Time Warner Cable needed a market to test out what they called Roadrunner at the time, their high-speed product, and I wound up working first for the cable system in Binghamton and then moving to their headquarters in Connecticut. Originally, I started out helping launch Roadrunner all around the country in different cable systems, and along the way, I got drafted into being responsible for the website, which continued to grow, and along the way we figured out how to market it. We figured out how to run it. We went through about four different departments until it wound up at Bing, so it was very interesting how it evolved. It went from how do you keep one of these sites up and running, to how do you get people to come to it, and that was really the start of how I got involved in online marketing.

John: Now, tell me how you made the transition, because you've worked with these major companies and now you have your own company. You're a fellow entrepreneur and you're really helping other entrepreneurs take some of those hard-learned lessons that you learned at the big company so that they can really leverage their business and scale up.

Josh: Yeah. It's always been a focus of what I've done professionally is helping the companies I'm at grow. I have a lot of friends in a variety of industries, and it had gotten to sort of a critical mass where it was the right point to take some of that experience and leverage it across a number of companies who could use the help in figuring out where they were online and what they could do to grow. I've heard on some of your previous podcasts the discussions about sometimes the challenge of finding that trusted advisor when there's so many different things that you can spend money on in the online space.

John: Josh, one of the reasons why I wanted to have you on is because what my experience is, you can spend a lot of money and not get results, and this is one of the reasons that we're both here today is we want to help fellow entrepreneurs get results. Let me set the stage a little bit because I'm 61. I grew up in more traditional marketing and in financial services, and one of the reasons I joined Genius Network with Joe Polish was after 2008, 2009, that big downturn, I wanted to have a conversation direct with my clients.

Prior to that, I had really great relationship marketing with the big financial firms, but I wanted to also be able to talk to financial advisors. I'll tell you, it was harder than I thought, but once I started using the online that we're going to be talking about today and some of the things that you've really accelerated tremendously, Josh, it's just amazing what you can do. You nail that client experience and then you can create the systems to really bring a steady stream of

clients, where marketing in my mind is just creating that environment to start the sales conversation and boy, online, it's just so powerful. I mean, I'm really excited about this, Josh.

Josh: Awesome! Yes, there's just a ton of opportunity there.

John: Let's just go big picture first. I've got some notes here and I'm looking at it and I'm saying one of the things, and we're going to have fellow entrepreneurs listening to us today who have a lot of experience online, but I've got to tell you, most of the guys I know, even some of the online people, aren't really ... They're not having the numbers that they'd like to have. Why don't we go big picture?

As somebody starting to think about really scaling up their business and using online strategies, how can they help attract the right clients, those potential clients, prospects, online? How should they be thinking about that, Josh?

Josh: Well, one of the nice things about online is you can sort of view it as a supermarket in that you want to take up the shelf space that the people are going to be looking at. If you're a manufacturing company, you want to make sure you're appearing in that aisle where people who need your information are going to appear, and the nice thing about online and one of the overlooked things, is just the ability to track so much of what you're doing.

That provides just a huge opportunity, and I think corporate marketing has gotten fairly good about figuring out the ROI of their online investments and also tracking it all the way through, so you know when you put something out there, what the results you're getting are. I think that's one of the big opportunities for entrepreneurs is really to either make sure that's there when they're starting out, or if like you, they're trying to understand what happens with their online spend, a lot of times you can be a lot more dialed in to what's happening, which is one of the huge opportunities.

John: What I like, and I think there's two parts what you shared that are just so important, Josh, is one, with online, I mean, I can get in front of the right prospective clients.

Josh: Yep.

John: You know, instead of, so often it was noisy out there, and well, it's noisy online, but I can at least know I'm in front of. Now whether they click or open and all these other things, we can talk about that, but then the second part, I, just before us getting together, I had a meeting with a couple members of my team, and we were going over the data for the last 12 months of our newsletter and looking exactly ... All the statistics, including all the way down to the revenue, it specifically generated that were directly attributed to it and then what subjects really resonated with the right prospective clients that we want, and I have 100,000

advisors going to that newsletter that we were reviewing, and it's just amazing when you start thinking about it, the detail that we can have, Josh, from doing this.

Josh: Yeah. The way that you've got that set up is the way to do it because now you can continue to refine and build off the things that are successful and see which things aren't resonating with your audience, and then at the top of that process, you can get in front of people who should be getting your newsletter with a very specific message so that you know you're going to be getting the right people, and that's one of the things that's maybe sometimes overlooked is in addition to getting in front of people, you can exclude the people you don't want to see that message.

I've seen a number of clients have good results just when they start excluding the word jobs from many of the campaigns they're running. They get rid of job seekers as opposed to potential clients and their ROI improves just from that.

John: One of the things I love about the digital marketing, because I have a good sized marketing team, and I'll ask them ... It used to be we'd get in these great debates of, "I think this will work," or, "That will work," and now, it's like, there's none of that debate anymore. It's a, "Test it." Okay, test it. Put it in front of X number. Get the statistics and we'll see whether it makes sense or not. Everybody really enjoys it more because it's now so much fact-based.

I want to switch gears just for a second because one of the things that every one of us as fellow entrepreneurs, what we're looking to do is we're looking to build our credibility. In today's world, if somebody's considering working with you, I don't care whether you're selling widgets or whether you're a really high-end professional service consulting group, they want to know that you exist, and the first thing they're going to do, there's all kinds of research ... 92, 97, it's well over 90%, whoever's study you want to look at, but they're going to Google you or they're going to Yahoo you, and that.

One of the things, Josh, you and I got talking at the last meeting we were together about Wikipedia, and I've got to tell you, I, like many fellow entrepreneurs, love it for looking up things, but are oftentimes frustrated. I haven't been able to use it to my advantage as much as I'd like. Why don't you talk about how you're seeing entrepreneurs using Wikipedia from a credibility standpoint effectively?

Josh: Yeah, and I think that's one of the opportunities with Wikipedia is people are used to it is a resource but maybe view it as a typical encyclopedia with everything set in stone, but that's not the case. Wikipedia is edited by a collection of tens of thousands of volunteer editors, and there's an opportunity for people who meet Wikipedia's criteria for notability to be included in that. As you've seen yourself, usually Wikipedia ranks in the top three search results for most people's names and it also populates the top right side of Google for those

results, so if you are in Wikipedia, that can be pretty powerful in terms of shaping your Google results when someone's looking you up.

John: One of the things that both Wikipedia, LinkedIn, and there's a couple of other sites, but those are the two big, powerful sites, that if you've got a presence there, that you're going to show up. It's a great opportunity, but so many of the entrepreneurs, including myself, I one time hired a consultant, Josh, to go ahead and put me on Wikipedia, and felt that ... I've written 17 books, I've had some success going full cycle on businesses, and I think I'm an interesting guy.

Josh: Right!

John: It's always the old line, our favorite person is me type thing, but I really ... It wasn't the ego to get it out, but I wanted it for search engine, for the marketing we're doing, for the credibility of some of the books we're releasing. Josh, how do my fellow entrepreneurs kind of overcome that challenge of you put something out there and then there's all these other "editors" from Wikipedia and they don't think that it's ... It's too commercial, let's say, and they take it down. How do they overcome that?

Josh: A large part of it is understanding the rules that Wikipedia tends to be governed by, and the couple of things that tend to trip up entrepreneurs if they're working with a consultant, the two things that come to mind immediately are Wikipedia is designed to be an encyclopedia, so it's important to have that kind of tone or a neutral tone. My general advice is to take the adjectives out. Unless you can prove you're definitively the best, that's going to get deleted.

There is a certain criteria for notability in terms of being covered in different media or having articles written about you, which is manageable for just about anyone who's going to have had the level of success most of your listeners will have had, but the other key thing that I think gets overlooked is just you have to monitor that page. One of the most frustrating things about Wikipedia is any page can be nominated for deletion at any time, which business people pages tend to have less attention paid to them, so that's usually a week period, one week long, where people who are editors can comment on that page in terms of whether it should be deleted or not, and what I saw with a few people at Joe's gathering is just no one had responded positively when that happens.

It's not unusual that it happens, but the key is making sure that someone's paying attention, and so a critical thing is if you engage someone to set up a page for you, you would want to make sure you're monitoring it and keeping an eye on it, or they are really, because if you don't defend a page, it'll often get taken down. That's maybe the second thing that is worth

keeping an eye out for is it tends to be an ongoing process. So if it gets treated as a one-off, that's where it can sometimes get problematic.

John: I think that was the mistake that I made, and that's one of the reasons when you and I were talking and I go, "Geez, Josh, this is kind of a duh moment." You go ahead and you put some work in and you create what you think will be some great content for Wikipedia for all the right reasons, but then you go off, most of us as business ... Okay, we check that off and it's done, and the reality is, it's an ongoing value. It's an asset and it's very likely just because of the structure of how it's created that somebody's going to say, "Hey, put it up. Nominate it for deletion," and it's really important to have that ongoing, so I mean, that was a big takeaway in our conversation and us working together.

Let me go big picture again because I mean, you spend a lot of money on marketing, online marketing. What are some of the top... I don't know if I want to call them strategies, tactics, or tricks that our fellow entrepreneurs should be looking at, Josh.

Josh: Yeah. I'm just jotting down a couple of things that I want to make sure that I cover, and I've got three that if you have a substantial marketing spend, you really want to make sure you're locked in and have those dialed in to make sure things are as effective as possible. One is the analytics. It's surprising to me how many people will set up a pay-per-click campaign and not really be able to track the results they're getting. At that point, you've sort of recreated the old newspaper paradigm. You're spending a bunch of money and you're trying to figure out if you're getting any results, which is not ideal if there are tools to track things.

John: Let me stop you there because I think this is one of the most important ones. What I like, Josh, that has just been so powerful for me, and I know for so many of my fellow entrepreneurs that you consult with too, is just you don't have to spend a lot of money. I mean, this is one nice thing about online. You can test things and then if you have the analytics, the marketplace will tell you quickly whether it's working or not.

Josh: Absolutely, and why not take advantage of that? If you don't have to spend \$5,000, but can spend 50, why not do that and find out if you've got a winner?

John: And then when you have that winner, scale up!

Josh: Yep.

John: What's number two? You said you had three.

Josh: Yeah. The second one is retargeting, which for those of your listeners who aren't familiar, so if you, John, go to Amazon, you look at a nice pair of shoes that you might want to get and then you're going to see those shoes everywhere you go on the internet. That's retargeting, and you can do that for your business, no matter how big or small you are. If you've got a website, you can put some code on your site and then you can start showing your message to people all those same places as they browse the internet. You can set it up using Google's network and Facebook's network, and gosh, I've got some B to B clients where you can spend five to 10 dollars a day and you'd just be stunned by the reaction you get in terms of people who are saying, "Hey, I see you everywhere!" Which is really what you want to have happen.

John: I remember the first time I noticed it was a guy, Frank Kern, who's a big internet marketer, did this retargeting, and I looked and I go, "My God! How big a budget does he have?" Because it was showing up all of the time in CNN and New York Times and he's participating in some of the display networks as well as Facebook, and I know Frank, and I just asked him, and it's like, wow!

I began experimenting with it, Josh, about a year ago, and I don't know why I waited that long because what's so powerful is, if somebody's checking out a certain part of your website or a message or a download, you can really use retargeting and put ads in front of them to complete the task that they started, so they were at least thinking about it. You know, like you were thinking about the shoes on Amazon. In our case, they might be thinking about the complimentary meeting that we offer, and we know they're qualified. Well, I'm going to follow them around for a while.

I'm so excited about retargeting, as I was saying, the return on investment's been so great. Why don't you give us a little bit of how you see your fellow entrepreneurs really using this well, Josh?

Josh: Yeah. So I'd say the first level is just setting up retargeting so that anyone who comes to your site gets that pixel dropped and then you're running ads through either Google, Facebook, or one of the other networks that are out there. Most people start with Google or Facebook for retargeting.

Then you have several levels that can really improve those results even more. The first is testing, trying out different images, different messaging to see what results you're going to get. You can oftentimes have a high frequency, so there's room for a couple different creatives to change it up a little bit in terms of the messaging potential customers and clients are getting, so that's maybe the first level.

John: I want to just stop you for a second, Josh, because I mean, I think this is important. So often we get caught up in images, whether it's I'm promoting, in essence, myself or some specific thing, and we think that image is going to work, and this is where the testing as you're talking about just makes a huge difference because so many times the image I picked wasn't the right one.

Josh: Right. Yeah, and the nice thing is you're no longer constrained by what the person with the biggest title in the room thinks. You can test a variety of things and it's just math-based, and you can see what's resonating actually with your customers, and that's really powerful, if nothing else, for team morale, and then also you get the results along with it.

Then you can retarget based on specific parts of your site. So you may offer, say, a mastermind group. You might offer transportation. You might have jobs available, and you can retarget people based on what section of the site they're on.

I have some clients who are in the logistics business. They really want to target those people looking for jobs. You know, truck drivers are almost impossible to find, but then I also have B to B clients who only want to retarget people who are reading about the product they're offering, so that kind of focus can also be powerful.

Then the ultimate level is when you start pulling people from some other sites like LinkedIn onto your site where you can retarget them, or using your email list to retarget them so people get your message sometimes even if they've never been to your website. There are all sorts of new and different technologies that are coming out to help enable that now.

John: That was one of the things I didn't know that you could do, Josh, and I'm doing it in some of my emails now, where I can be very target because I'll know exactly the ideal client that I can best serve. I mean, this is one of the things that I love about retargeting because it's really serving the end user.

Sometimes we think marketing, there's no privacy, and the answer is there is no privacy, but what we can do is we can put offers in front of you. You can, for your particular clients or customers, that are really valuable to them and that ... One of the reasons why there's such a high return on investment is because we can match up so well using this technology.

Josh: Right, and after a while you've got the right message for the right person that moves out of the intrusive into the useful, which is your ideal outcome.

John: No, great. Now Josh, we said there were three, so we went over analytics. Collecting the data becomes invaluable over time because we're constantly learning lessons. Retargeting, it's not that they come and they're gone. We can follow them along and have a

campaign beyond just simply an email campaign or a direct mail campaign. We can follow them along using the display networks or Facebook and retarget and put, in essence, ads in front of them. What was the third thing that you saw as you were spending all this money that was really working for the large firms?

Josh: That was just one of the basics, their email campaigns. It's sometimes easy to overlook the care and feeding of your list or making sure that your website is optimized to get new people onto the list, but almost in every case, it's the lowest cost channel for acquisitions, so that's something that's sometimes easy to overlook or assume that people are going to make their way onto your list, but really putting time into that can pay off in a big way, just because it gives you the opportunity to reach out and talk to people on a weekly or a monthly basis. So that's one that you don't want to overlook, and before you start spending much money in terms of driving traffic, you want to make sure that you're going to capture as many people onto that list as you can.

John: I love email marketing and the campaigns because once you have someone and you've got to deliver value, and ideally, results in advance, and people aren't looking for ... You can't start the conversation sending them a 500-page book. You've got to really kind of piecemeal it out, but boy, when you build that relationship and you're helping them be successful, all this comes together and you can create that steady stream of new clients coming to you. It's just the lifetime value in so many of our businesses is so high, but the biggest cost is oftentimes client acquisition, and this is where we can nurture them and when they're ready for us, they're there.

Josh: Yeah, and that's just huge, so anything you can do to knock down that cost of a new customer and also build that relationship, it also helps just keep that relationship strong is really important.

John: Well, Josh, let me go to resources, and I'm going to pull up your website here, and you've got this picture of you a little younger with the helmet on taking off, and I think you're helping scaling up businesses. Why don't you mention a little bit about the resources you have there with the blog and the complimentary strategy session you have?

Josh: Sure. As people can see, the website is TheMatherGroupLLC.com, and we have a couple things. We have, taking my own advice, a weekly newsletter that goes out with some of the more interesting stories that people can sign up for. We have a strategy session that you can sign up for talking through what you're doing online for a half hour, and we have a couple other things that if people want to contact us on the Contact Us form, we're happy to offer advice and point people in the right direction if they have a question or need a trusted resource, so yeah! That's our goal is to help people make sense of all of the choices that they have out there.

John: I know, Josh, when we're together, Genius Network, Joe's group, there are a lot of people seeking you out and that's one of the reasons why I'm working with you too, is that you've got all this experience and knowledge. Let me kind of do the key takeaways here that really came out for me. I'm looking at my notes.

The one thing ... There's never been a better time to be an entrepreneur. I've got to just say, this is so phenomenal. You want to look and get clear who your ideal clients are, and then we want to get that shelf space. I mean, we want to own that shelf space and be in there so that we can really start these conversations that we're looking to have.

A part of that shelf space I think, and you think, is having that credibility, those resources, and Wikipedia is a really good one, but don't think it's one-and-done type. This is constant, and that monitoring is so important.

Then when we talked about some of the real big lessons, number one was analytics. The amount of data you get, I mean, this is why it's so important to get really clear ahead of time what it is you're looking to do, and at each step of the way you can go through the marketing sales funnel and really see the statistics, and it's pretty amazing.

We have for different ... Every week we're getting together with our team. Global headquarters, everybody knows is my pool house. I don't have any employees, but I've got about 50 people working with me on different project basis and we get together weekly, the different teams, and we're going over all the analytics. You said, Josh, that it fostered really working together in a team and collaborative because it's no longer I write the checks and I'm CEO, it's my business, but I don't get to call all the shots, and nor do you want to because the market tells you, you let people test and you can give them just a little bit of money and boy, huge!

Retargeting, retargeting, retargeting. This is something that most of us as entrepreneurs aren't yet using. It's one of the least costly ways of getting your message out to people that have already shown interest in you, and you can ... Working with the right people, they can help you with that.

Then never forget, as Josh was saying, the email campaign. Bringing people in, providing them enough value so that they want to trust you with their email address and then putting the right campaign together. Remembering the volume of emails that we all get. I mean, I get over ... Even with great filters, I get over 500 emails a day now, so you've really got to be thoughtful on how you're going to make it work.

Josh, this has been phenomenal. At our website, I'm pointing to AESNation.com. You can go, you can get the show notes, you can get the link to Josh's website, you can set up the

complimentary meeting. I encourage, if you're not doing these or you need to raise your game, Josh is a great resource there. Not only are current clients counting on you, but all those future clients are counting on you. Don't let them down. Take action. Wish you the best of success.

A Second Opinion on Your Finances

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John Bowen
Founder and CEO
Financial Advisor Select