



SPI 333

Branding Masterclass (and Selling Digital and Physical Products) with the Amazing Seller, Scott Voelker

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Scott Voelker: It's a lot of work if you have to educate and you have to build the market, so I think finding a market that you know is either underserved or one that you think that you can add value to or your spin on. That doesn't mean that you have to be the first, but I think that you have to make sure that there's enough people in that market for you to be able to grow it and scale it.

Pat Flynn: How do you determine if there's enough people?

Scott Voelker: There's a few different ways, and I'm glad you asked that because I like talking about this. A lot of people don't look at . . .

Pat Flynn: That's Scott Voelker, The Amazing Seller, who's with us today to talk about branding, his story, how he got started from a little photography business. He actually even sold bridges and projectors. He was kind of doing a bunch of things and then landed on Amazon and then Amazon FBA. He's going to teach us a lot about physical products and using Amazon white labeling, those sorts of things, but then we do a shift midway through to talk about branding and how to stand out—whether you have a physical product, a digital product, it doesn't matter. Scott's become known and has been widely loved by so many with his style and his teaching, and I love him a lot too because he's just like me, a family guy, really in it to serve others, and kind of started out in a similar way that I did. Make sure you hit subscribe and sit back and listen in. This is going to be a great one. Intro, please.

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host—if he had to choose one platform to create content on for the rest of his life, it'd be a podcast—Pat Flynn.

Pat Flynn: What's up everybody? Thank you so much for joining me today in session 333. We are 33% through 1,000 episodes of the Smart Passive Income podcast. I'm so thankful you're here, taking time out of your day. I'm going to make it worth your while because of Scott, our special guest today. He's known as The Amazing Seller at TheAmazingSeller.com. He also has The Amazing Seller podcast,

and he is amazing because of where he's coming from and why he's here. He's here to serve. That's why he's successful, and that's why you can be successful too, because we're going to talk about branding. We're going to talk about standing out of the crowd and finding your market and how to understand whether or not there's enough people in that market or there's enough demand, and all those sorts of things, things that Scott is an expert at. We're going to talk to him right now. Let's do it.

Scott, what's up, man? Welcome to the podcast. Thanks for being here.

Scott Voelker: I appreciate it, Pat. I'm excited to be here, fired up.

Pat Flynn: This has been a long time coming. We've been friends for a while, and you and I have started work together even more so recently. I love the direction that you're going in your business now too, kind of helping people outside of Amazon, which is what you've become known for at TheAmazingSeller.com. What I love most about you, Scott, is that you are just like me. You're doing this for all the right reasons. There's a lot of people in both the Amazon space and just in general in the internet business world who . . . they're great at what they do, and they're not necessarily somebody I would want to hang out with or really introduce my audience too, where you are somebody who I would love to share with my audience because you have the mission just like I do. What is your mission for what you do, Scott?

Scott Voelker: Really it's to help and to serve and to make a bigger impact. I think as we all start, we start because we want to have that freedom for our families and security and all that stuff. You think once you get to a certain milestone that that will kind of still be there, but it's really more than that. To me, it's more about now how many more people can I help and serve. It's getting past that, "I need to make money because I got to pay the bills." Then once you get past that, that's kind of where I'm at now, it's like, "How do I make a bigger impact? How do I be able to take people that don't believe in themselves or that were like me, and still like me . . ." "You know. We still all face

those challenges, those mental hurdles. Being able to help people through that journey and allow them to do great things in their life.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. Absolutely. What I love about you as well is you are a family man. I see you on Instagram with your family and your kids doing things together. That's just perfectly in alignment with why I do what I do as well. What's really cool is you kind of got started way back in the day with, I think, a business that you created with your wife. Is that right? Is that how you started with building your own business?

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Did you want me to dig into that?

Pat Flynn: Yeah. Tell us about that and how it led to where you're at today.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. That's exactly it. I've been married for 24 years now too, Pat. We just celebrated our 24th anniversary.

Pat Flynn: Congratulations.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Thank you. Still very much in love with her. We've raised three kids. I've got a 10-year-old, I've got a 20-year-old son, and I've got a 22-year-old daughter, who is married by the way. I'm 45, so I got married when I was 21. That's a little bit of the backstory, but when I first got started, I was in the construction business. I was building houses and remodeling and doing all that stuff. I never went to college. I used to be embarrassed of that because all my friends were going to college, and they were having a blast and they were getting an education. I thought successful people went to college. My father was raised in a farming community in a farming family. They had nine brothers and sisters, and a lot of hard work. I was never really introduced to college, to be honest with you. It wasn't really pushed. It was like, "Alright, Scott. What are you going to do when you get older? What kind of physical labor job are you going to do?"

That's basically what I did. I had a few jobs in high school and stuff, restaurant and all that stuff, but when I got out of high school, I was kind of like, "What am I going to do now?" My father had

a construction business with him and his partner. Then I helped them build that business to a pretty sizeable company brick and mortar. I think we had about 16 or 17 employees under me that I was running these crews, which we started with just us. I learned a lot about partnerships, what I didn't want in a partnership. It was like a bad marriage with him and his partner, and then family getting involved and all that stuff. I learned very quickly once I had kids that I didn't want to be gone 60 hours a day, and I didn't want to be busting my body up in the heat and in the cold. I was from upstate New York originally.

My wife and I had this idea that we would start a photography business. You'd be like, "Why did you come up with that idea?" We had kids. At the beginning, we had one kid, and we were bringing her to get her pictures taken. We're like, "We can probably do this. We like photography." We had a little bit of a passion for it. My wife especially, she had a good eye for it, but we had no training or anything. My wife said, "What do you think about me doing this thing on the side, and I'll just see what happens and we'll advertise it in like the Penny Saver or whatever?" I'm like, "Sure."

We went out and bought some equipment, knowing nothing. At that time too, Pat, there was no YouTube. There was YouTube, but it wasn't like it is now. We had to go to the library. We had to go to the photo store, the lab, and actually get our 35mm developed. We had to test our lighting and then go and get them printed and then see how it was. There was no digital LCD screen on the back of your camera at that time. We did that, and we started it part-time. At about 18 months, we actually built it to enough revenue that I could leave my job.

Pat Flynn: That's really cool.

Scott Voelker: That was scary. Yeah. It was scary. We did it. I always had a safety net that I could always go back and swing the hammer, and I never had to go back and swing the hammer, but I had that in the back of my mind. If I had to, I could. We built that into a six-figure business over about five to seven years. It was great. We were taking our

kids to school. We were busy in fourth quarter because obviously people are getting their Christmas pictures taken and stuff. We built it into a nice business, but you were still always . . . You were putting in the time. You're working for yourself, but you're still working for other people because you're having . . . It's clients, client work.

Then I started hearing about this online stuff, selling stuff online, and I started dabbling in eBay. I started selling . . . It was funny. I started selling these little wooden bridges from the Christmas store, Christmas Shop, or whatever it was called. My wife found them, and they were like \$25. We'd seen that they were selling on eBay for like \$140, so we started selling them. That helped pay for my kids' private school. We sent them to a private school.

Pat Flynn: No way. Selling bridges?

Scott Voelker: Yes, little wooden cedar bridges that go in your garden.

Pat Flynn: That's so crazy.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. That got me lit up. I'm like, "Holy crap! You can sell stuff on eBay. That's incredible." It's funny. I look back at this stuff though and it's like . . . Then all of a sudden, competition came in, just like Amazon nowadays. Competition came in. People started finding the bridges and started selling. I'm like, "How do I become different?" What I started doing is I started to offer colors. I would stain mine, I'd repackage them, and I'd put them in. I'd say, "You could get yours in cedar look, you could get yours into the clear coat, or you could get it into whatever, a cherry coat." I'm out in the backyard staining these things and putting them back together so I could still get my \$140. I did it, and it was great, but I was still again trading time for money.

Anyway. I figured this out. I'm like, "Holy crap! This thing is cool." My wife and I were making these templates for our business, Photoshop templates. I was using Photoshop. Self-taught, by the way. I bought the big, thick, six-inch book. By the way, I didn't really like reading back then, but I read that front to back because

I wanted to learn it. I just started learning it, and then I built these templates for our clients. I was building Christmas templates and wedding templates and all kind . . . Engagement. I said, “Maybe I could sell these on eBay.”

I started to sell them, and people were buying them for like \$25. At the time, you could do digital downloads on eBay, and then they stopped that because people were abusing it with the penny books and all that stuff. I went ahead and I said, “Okay. I’ll just ship it on a CD,” so we started shipping them on CDs. Then I started to get people asking me how we started our business as a photographer and all this stuff. I started posting stuff on YouTube asking if people had any questions, just like we’ve done here—you’ve done, I’ve done—and I started to get people to follow me back then. I built a little email list of about 1,000 people. I did my first launch, and the rest is history. It’s just crazy, crazy on how I got from where I was to where I am and even further.

Pat Flynn: You have raving fans, I know. You have even a small group of people who are paying you tens of thousands of dollars to get access to you and each other, which is great. You’ve grown so much since then. You’ve become known as, at least for a while, The Amazon Guy at TheAmazingSeller.com. You help people with their Amazon businesses. Why is Amazon an important thing that we need to look at when it comes to selling? I think that’s an obvious question in terms of, that’s where people buy, but how can that work for us so we don’t have to trade our time for money?

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Here was the big eye-opener for me. Again, here I am, I’m doing my photography business, and then I started to do it digitally and I started selling courses in photography and teaching people. I did that whole launch, which is a whole other story, which was crazy. When I started looking at the Amazon space, I started hearing about people doing RA, retail arbitrage. I’m like, “That’s kind of cool.” You go in and you find stuff and you flip it, in a sense. It was just a lot of work for me. I didn’t need the money really. I was still doing pretty well in the photography space, and I’m like, “I don’t really need it,” but it was interesting. As an entrepreneur, we’re always attracted to

these shiny objects and another revenue stream. Like your passive income, right? It's like, that's what we're looking for. That wasn't going to be passive for me, even close to being passive, because I was going to have to keep refilling and finding the next product.

I started hearing about private label, where you could actually take your brand or create your own brand or your own product and brand it and make it your own in a sense. Kind of like if you go to the store and you see the name brand and then the generic brand. It's the same idea. That's kind of private labeling at the most basic level. I started hearing about this, and I'm like, "So wait a minute here. This FBA thing, fulfilled by Amazon, I could ship something to them and they will fulfill it? I don't have to pack the bridges up anymore. I could literally do that?" I started researching it a little bit. There wasn't really a lot of resources out at the time. There was one big course that we've probably all heard of, but that was about it. There was no podcast talking about it. Little episodes here and there, but nothing dedicated to it.

I'm like, "You know what? I'm going to go ahead and give this thing a shot." I didn't think about making a podcast or anything at that time. "I'm just going to go ahead and just give it a shot. I'll take \$5,000 and I'll invest in some product," which was scary even back then. I had some money, but not . . . \$5,000 is a lot of money to anybody. I'm like, "I'll give it a shot." I did my research and I launched a product. In six months, we had generated \$120,000 in revenue. That's revenue. It's not profit, but it still validated . . . It was an eye-opening thing for me. I'm like, "Holy crap! This is crazy." To sell my bridges, it took me how long? Another story, I was selling these projectors, which I made about \$100,000 on that in about an 18-month span on eBay, but I had to package everything. I was like, "I just made as much in six months, or revenue-wise, as I did in 18 months, and it was less work. Maybe I should look into this a little further."

In our first year, we did about \$300,000. What I ended up doing was I was like, "You know what? I think I'm going to just document my journey." Following you for years, I'm like, "That's really all

that Pat has really done is just documented his journey. He didn't really worry about how he was going to get compensated. He was just going to deliver." And then when the opportunity would show up, then you would maybe take advantage of it or maybe not. It would be your choice. That's really what I did. Then I just started publishing a podcast about . . . I think I did 50 episodes before I made any money, not even a dime, and that was through an affiliate deal that I was basically using the software.

With Amazon, the reason why I feel anyone . . . Even today, like even as crowded as it is, as saturated as it is, it's still a place where you want to launch your product on that platform. If you have a retail store right now and you're not selling your product on Amazon, shame on you. You should be putting that on Amazon. It's like free traffic. Even if you only get a handful of sales a month, it's your product. You're going to have it. You're going to have control of it. You have eyeballs, you have Prime members, all of that stuff.

I just think anybody . . . Like if I was starting over right now from scratch, I would be building my brand, which we'll talk about, but I would be launching my products on there as a launchpad, as a way to get the wheel moving quicker versus worrying about a website that I have to get set up with a merchant account. I've got to get someone to handle support. I've got to be able to fulfill these orders, returns. All that stuff I don't have to worry about if I leverage that platform. That's the big one.

Pat Flynn: You would recommend having both a, for example, Shopify store selling your thing, but absolutely having that available on Amazon as well?

Scott Voelker: Absolutely. The reason why I say I would launch on Amazon is because it's easier to do than setting up all of the stuff for the hosting and all of that stuff, where you have to get everything connected, you have to get . . . If you use Stripe, you got to get that connected in. There's all of those pieces. With Amazon, I just really have to have my product, have a UPC that I own, and then basically just put my product up. Then I just got to get eyeballs. That's what

I mean. That shortcuts that process, but I would not stop there. I would then go over and start to build my own channel. Things that I'm teaching now is really what I would advise doing, and what I'm currently doing myself. I wouldn't just do the Amazon route right now, where we are today.

Pat Flynn:

Right. That's where I wanted to take this conversation because I have a lot of people in my audience who are thinking of starting an Amazon business, or they have already started an Amazon business and essentially doing the arbitrage thing where there is no email list, there is no brand, there's no nothing. They're making money, a little bit of money, or maybe even a lot, but we all know that Amazon is its own beast and can change things up at any time.

I worry for people to build and have all their eggs in one basket essentially, which is why I wanted you to come on and kind of speak to that a little bit and help us understand even if we use whether it's Amazon or another third-party site to build our business on . . . Etsy, for example, is maybe another one . . . how can we build our own brand still using those channels, but having a safety net from those channels as well? Where do we even start?

I know a lot of people, for example, on Amazon . . . Maybe we could use this scenario. I go to Alibaba and I find some product in the fitness world, like a yoga mat or something that is sweat-absorbent and doesn't odorize or whatever, and I put my brand name . . . I just buy those and I sell them for more. That's not a brand yet.

Scott Voelker: No.

Pat Flynn: What is a brand, in your definition, and how do we build one off of these platforms?

Scott Voelker: Here's the problem nowadays. Three years ago, you could probably do that and you'd get away with it for a little while. Now because the space is so crowded, it's only a matter of time that someone's going to come and probably knock you off. Even if you're a major brand, there's going to be a copycat. It's just going to happen. Unless you

have a patent, and if you have a patent, even then you still have to fight the patent. You have to have attorneys that are willing to do that. I always tell people: If you're only going to go there and launch a product on Amazon, you're running the risk of, in three months, you're going to have a ton of competition. By the time your order is going to be replenished, you're going to have 10 other competitors on you.

The way to get around that is, don't think that you're going to launch that product and then only sell on that channel. What you need to be doing, first off, is you need to think to yourself . . . To build a brand, you need to be able to offer more than one product, and also a place where people can then be educated, they can get to know, and trust you or the face of the brand. I think a brand with a face does better. I think that you have to be able to have that communication, that line.

We talk about it. You talk about it all the time, building your email list, building your own outside channels, even having an Instagram channel, having Facebook. Whatever it is, you want these other leverage points, so this way here, when the competition does come in, you're not just using the same leverage points that everyone else is on Amazon. Pay-per-click and basically maybe one little boost that they're going to do with a giveaway site or something like that. What you're going to have is, if you're going to build a brand . . . I say a true brand is, you're going to have content that's going to always be driving people to your products or that's going to be building up for the next sale or maybe just a piece of content that then they spread the word on Facebook because you had a piece of content that started to go viral. Then your product is attached to that because you delivered value.

With all the things that you've preached for years, and I believe in, really it goes back to the back in the day of just building a way or a channel of your own that you control, so this way here you can get people to know, like, and trust you and then the competition doesn't really matter, because they'll buy from you regardless. If you can do that, then when the competition . . . All they're doing is

getting their normal sales. You're going to be able to push sales to Amazon and then you can spike Amazon's algorithm and then you can outrank them. It's all those leverage points that you'll have that they don't have.

I've worked with Fortune 500 companies that have listened to my podcast and they've said, "Scott, I've started a division just on Amazon because of what I've learned. Now, because of that, we're actually . . ." He had to actually go to the board and get this approved, but basically where he's taking some of their organic sales on their website and directing them over to Amazon, just temporarily to spike the algorithm. Then once they do that, then they get ranked. What we mean by spiking the algorithm is, really, we're giving Amazon what they want, and that is sales. Once we give them sales, we're recognized as, "Okay, we should probably pay attention to this." Then they're going to start moving you up the rankings, just like SEO, right? Here's the problem, though. If you have a crappy product, you can rank yourself, but your rank is going to drop very quickly because your product isn't going to sell organically. Does that make sense?

Pat Flynn: Yes.

Scott Voelker: Okay. Yeah. I look at it like this, as far as moving forward. We have to think about it as if you are going to . . . Your audience I think is perfect because you have a lot of bloggers, a lot of podcasters, right? People that are selling digital products. You can take your brand right now that you have and you can add a physical component to it. That's a whole 'nother revenue stream. By you having that leverage of building the email list, or your social channels, you have that leverage that you can then push your product and do really well on Amazon. Again, having a physical item to your suite of products is just another stream of income that could come in, and another thing that your audience and your market could use.

Pat Flynn: Right. Because we have brands already, in the digital space.

Scott Voelker: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: That's a huge advantage if we do from there to Amazon, versus the people who are on Amazon already being at a disadvantage, because now they have to create the content, like you were saying, which is an important part of building your brand. It's what you say, it's your style, it's your culture, it's what people know you for. You can't just have a product and expect people to follow you. This was a second question I had. Let's say I was doing the yoga mat thing. It would be very poor choice of me to go, "Okay, well now I have this lipstick that I could do." Then, "Now I have this dog training thing that I could do."

Scott Voelker: Exactly.

Pat Flynn: Because I'm not building . . . What brand is that? Versus what would a good second product be, for example, if I started with a yoga mat and started to create yoga-related content? What would a good second product be, for example, for that?

Scott Voelker: I think it would be a yoga strap, it would be maybe a water bottle or it would be a . . .

Pat Flynn: Yeah, or yoga block or something.

Scott Voelker: Yoga block or any of those things that would help in that. Now, by doing that, you can build out your suite of products in yoga, but then once you get yourself known in the space like that, you can actually start to add other sub-markets to that, right? Look at Beachbody. They've done that beautifully, right? They started off with that one program, but then they go ahead and they create a different one for a different part of the market. You can start to splinter off there eventually, but I think in the beginning too, you have to niche down. But if you've already got a brand, a perfect example, Pat, is the call that we were on the other day in the Mastermind with someone in there. I'm not going to mention the name, just in case.

But basically, she's got major traffic, she's got a big audience, a great email list. What she did, which I advise anyone to do, is

if you're selling affiliate products through Amazon or you're an associate, you're an affiliate for Amazon in a sense, you're making 4% or 8%, whatever your level of commissions are, if you look at that report and you go, "Wait a minute, I'm pushing all this traffic to this one post or these different topics, and people are buying this person's product." You could say to yourself, "Maybe I can make one of my own products like that." That's all she did, by the way, just looked at the reports and said, "Which one is the top products that are selling?" She's actually got an advantage, because she's testing products in a sense without having to spend money on product.

Pat Flynn: There are so many people in the audience right now who are making a lot of money through Amazon associates. Some through books, which is a different thing.

Scott Voelker: Sure.

Pat Flynn: But . . . products for sure. You're saying go in there, use that as validation that people are buying those things, which is obvious, and perhaps think of another solution that is just like that.

Scott Voelker: That's exactly what we're talking about. You know Spencer Hawes, right? From—

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Scott Voelker: Good friend of mine too. He's done this in the past, where he will look at sites that are for sale that you can buy on them on Empire Flippers, wherever. You're buying a site that people are building just to make an affiliate commission on Amazon associates, right? Let's say they're making \$12,000 dollars a month net from that associate. Well, we both know that if I look at that report and I see that most of the sales are coming from certain products, like two or three products, and I buy that brand and now I just turn those into my own products, all I gotta do is switch the links out that are pointing to my listings now. Now I just went from a 8% commission to maybe 38, 40%, right? That's another thing.

- Pat Flynn: Wow, interesting.
- Scott Voelker: Yeah. You could buy that business as a discount in a sense, because they're not monetizing it the way that you could monetize it. Those are things that I look at now as huge opportunities for us to invest in a piece of real estate, in a sense, right? I could take it and I could make it better, and then I already got the traffic coming in so I don't have to worry about that. The one thing I always look at is, are they using private blog networks and all that stuff? There's ways to validate all that stuff. But if they have good numbers coming in and all they're doing is making money on the back end with affiliate commissions from Amazon, bingo. We can just then . . . exactly what the girl in our Mastermind is doing, is basically just looking at the report and going, "Oh yeah, there's three products there. I should probably make those mine," right?
- Pat Flynn: Yeah. She's going to sell out like crazy. It's gonna be insane.
- Scott Voelker: Oh my gosh. Yeah. She's got a great opportunity there, I'm so excited for her.
- Pat Flynn: Now the question I have, this is huge.
- Scott Voelker: Yeah.
- Pat Flynn: I see a product in my Amazon report, and I'm like, "Oh, I could create something like that." Now I'm like, "Okay, can I legally do that? How do I even begin to start that process? I've never created a physical product before. Where do I start with that?"
- Scott Voelker: Well, the first thing is sometimes right away, you know if that's a patented product, right? If it's a name brand. If it was a name brand and we knew that that was driven by the brand, like if you did an unboxing of, I don't know, some type of device . . . I'm trying to think off the top of my head. Some . . .
- Pat Flynn: Yeah. Like a Nintendo Switch.

- Scott Voelker: Yeah. Exactly. If you know that people . . . They're googling that. They're finding your post. That wouldn't be a good one to pick, right? That's an obvious one, we're not going to do that. But if it's something that's generic or something that people are just finding, and then they're buying it because of the blog post that you wrote, and then you're leading them to that product, then that's different. But we also have to do our homework a little bit. Google, you can search for patents pretty easily. That's the first step. You can go to the .gov site, you can look there. Then really, if you're questioning it at all, then you would contact an attorney.
- Pat Flynn: An attorney, yeah.
- Scott Voelker: And say, "Listen, I'm thinking about doing this product. What do you think?" If they're like, "Yeah, there's no patent, utility, anything on it. So yeah, it's free reign. Go do it." You gotta use your head a little bit on that stuff. But you'll know and I always look to if you see patent pending anywhere on the packaging, you maybe want to just buy one and just have it shipped to you. Then you can look at it and see, and see if there's any patent markings on it or anything like that. But yeah, you definitely want to do your homework there for sure.
- Pat Flynn: I can even imagine being a little creative with accessories and things that relate to that main product.
- Scott Voelker: 100%.
- Pat Flynn: The Nintendo Switch . . . Let's say I had a website that everybody was buying a Nintendo Switch from me because I'm a Nintendo nerd, and then I can create a case for it, that can hold your cartridges, or has your stylus in it. Actually, there isn't even a stylus for Nintendo Switch, but creating external things beyond that product. I like to call them up-serves, things that can add value to the thing that they're getting already.
- Scott Voelker: Absolutely. That's a great way to put it as far as you're having an accessory built for the main product, right? Or the main thing. I use that example . . . Vitamix, right? I have a Vitamix, I love it. It's an

expensive blender. But, there's accessories that you can buy for it. Even just the thing that you put inside where you can stir the thing around without chopping your fingers off, right?

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Scott Voelker: You could have a replacement part. The same thing with . . . there's refrigerators that have the filters. There's off-brands. There's things that can fit certain things that you can do. Again, you want to do your homework, make sure that there's no infringing going on there. But that's exactly what I would so, is look at a market and see if there's something that I could build around it. Because we know the search traffic's being done around the product, now you coming up for things around that product that could support it would be a great plan for sure.

Pat Flynn: What if we have a digital product, we sell an online course. We don't really have affiliates or anything on Amazon. Is there still possibilities to create a physical product there and then go on Amazon?

Scott Voelker: Yeah, absolutely. John Lee Dumas, he's done that. He's done that with his journals in a sense. They don't necessarily . . . They're not a direct companion for his training, but it's a physical item that could've been just digital. Then leveraging his audience, he went ahead and launched it, and now he does very well on Amazon from not even people finding him from his podcast.

It basically just gave him a boost, so this way here, he was able to basically get all of the traffic . . . Not all of it, but some of the traffic, going towards Amazon and then spiking the algorithm, and then now that people are buying it, they're buying it and they don't even know of Entrepreneur on Fire. They don't even know it. They're just like, "Oh this is a journal. It looks good, it's got good reviews. Cool, I'm going to buy it." Then they get it, and now they're introduced to his podcast.

Pat Flynn: I'm looking at The Freedom Journal right now on Amazon. It's got 409 reviews, which . . . I'm sure a lot of them are thanks to his audience, obviously.

Scott Voelker: Sure.

Pat Flynn: But you can get that spike in the algorithm, like you said. But also, it is featured as an Amazon's Choice right now, so now it's even highlighted even more. More people are getting into his brand. I am sure this is serving double duty for him as both not just income but lead gen for his other things.

Scott Voelker: Absolutely. It was funny, when he was first launching, I actually reached out to him. A funny story too. A lot of people want to know how do you get in touch with people, how do you get noticed? Especially you, how are you just going to send an email to Pat and have Pat say, "Yeah cool, let's get . . ." There are so many requests that you get. Now that I've got the podcast, I get the same kind of thing. Not at your level, but I get some, John does. I think you might have said this too in the past, this is a little side note for anybody listening, but basically I said, "You know what? He's launching this thing that's kind of in my wheelhouse, let me reach out to him in a video and I'll give him a couple pointers or let him know that I'm available if he needs to talk about it."

That's what I did, I shot him a video, and he messaged me right back and goes, "Yeah, I'd love to get on a call with you and talk about this." We talked about the plan, about his launching, his first launch and then his second launch. Then from there, we've become friends now. It's just weird how things happen. That's basically what we were doing. I was telling him, "We want to make sure that you get some of that traffic, not just going on your channel. We want it to go and push towards Amazon because that will then eventually take a life on of its own."

Pat Flynn: Yeah. It has, and I've talked to John. He and I are great friends. Keeps me updated on the journal. Man, I wish I had that idea, but I love what he's doing. And then he created a second journal, and one leads to the next. The Mastery Journal, which is great. I have both right in front of me right now. They're amazing. Well done John. Kudos to you.

Scott Voelker: Yeah, for sure.

Pat Flynn: Expanding outside the product realm, just brands in general, you have a good eye, having both experience in the digital space and the physical space on what makes a brand work. What are some other important aspects that all of us, no matter what we're doing, as people who are building brands must have in order to succeed?

Scott Voelker: Well, you gotta have a good product, and you gotta have a good market. The market, I think if you want to create your own market that's tough. I know some people have talked about it and they've done it successfully, but it's a lot of work if you have to educate and you have to build the market. I think finding a market that you know is either underserved, or one that you think that you can add value to or your spin on. That doesn't mean that you have to be the first, but I think that you have to make sure that there's enough people in that market for you to be able to grow it and scale it.

Pat Flynn: How do you determine if there's enough people?

Scott Voelker: Well, there's a few different ways. I'm glad you asked that, because I like talking about this. A lot of people don't look at the obvious, and that is number one, we have Amazon to tell us there are people buying this stuff. We could look at the BSR, the Best Seller Rank, and we can get an idea. They have a little number at the bottom of all of the listings, and there's tools out there now that help us with this, but we can get a good idea if they're selling product. We know that there's a demand for this product, but more so is there a market that is out there, outside of just Amazon? Because I won't just say, "Oh yeah, it's doing well on Amazon." I gotta look outside of that. That's where I would go to places like Facebook and I would say, "Are there communities about this? Are there communities talk . . ." I recently . . . The Peloton Bike, I was looking—

Pat Flynn: Yeah, we have one.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Awesome right? I was looking into that market, and I see that the Olympics were pushing it pretty heavily and stuff, and I'm

like, “Okay.” I’m like, “Let me look into this.” Well, there’s groups out there right now for just this, just the Peloton. There’s also ones for just spin class or spinning or whatever. It’s the same idea, but you’re sub-niching it down if you go just Peloton, because now it’s a brand-drive type thing. But my point is, you’re looking also at the market outside of just selling the product. We want to make sure that if I want to deliver content, is there a need for it? Is there a want? Are people going to consume it? Are people sharing it? Are people writing stuff about it right now? Are there podcasts about it? Are there YouTube channels about it? I’m really looking at all of this stuff on the outside, in a sense, to let me know that yes, there’s a market there that number one, is consuming content, but then also is buying product.

Pat Flynn: How do you help a person who does this research? They see these groups, they see products being offered to these groups already, even products that might align with products that they had ideas about, or websites that they wanted to create. They see competitors, essentially, and they go, “I guess it’s already tapped into.” How do you . . . Are you done at that point and have to move on, or are there opportunities there?

Scott Voelker: No, there’s always opportunities because depending on . . . I think the question it comes down to, though, are you going to be the face of the brand? Are you going to be able to deliver content to those people, or help to those people? If that’s the case, and I know Chris Ducker, your other buddy there, talks a lot about “no can really be you.” If you feel as though you can stand out by just being you, then I don’t think you have to worry about it. I think you just have to go out there and just be the—you’ve said this before plenty of times—be the number one resource on the internet for that thing.

It’s gonna take time. There’s ways that we can speed that up a little bit, but you have to say to yourself also, is it something that you are going to want to commit to day in and day out? If you’re not gonna be able to keep up with it, if you’re gonna lose steam if you don’t get sales in after the first month, you probably don’t want to go down that road because it is gonna be a longer road, but it’s

well worth it because once you get that know-like-trust element, it's gonna knock it out of the park. There's nothing like it. I've seen it so many times in my own businesses, but also in other peoples' businesses. If you have that know, like, and trust, game over.

Pat Flynn: You have mentioned a few times during this conversation, the importance of having content in your brand. I know that's something that you're really great at. Your podcast is extremely successful, you're diving pretty heavily into YouTube as well, and your videos are great. How do we, as people who are creating brands, understand even what content to create, especially if it's product-based? It's easier when you're training somebody on something, but when it's product-based, it seems forced to me, it might seem. How do you break that down?

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Here's a great example: Have you ever heard of kayak bass fishing?

Pat Flynn: I know what it is. I don't know if that's a specific brand, but I know what that is. Yeah.

Scott Voelker: Okay. I didn't know what it was. We were doing a call on one of my private calls in one of my classes. We were digging into bass fishing, 'cause I was using bass fishing as an example. I'm like, "What's this kayak bass fishing thing. There's actually a thing?" There's actually tournaments out there for basically bass fishing out of a kayak.

My point is this, there's accessories you can build for the kayak bass fishing market. What content would you create for that? Would it be just, "Hey, I want to show you my new paddle. I want to show you my new attachment." No, it's gonna be, "Let me show you how to catch more bass out of the kayak." Or, "Let me show you five tips that I used this last weekend to catch more bass out of my kayak."

Pat Flynn: It casts further.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. All of those things . . . I think people need to be thinking about that, and that will naturally lead people back to your content,

which then will also be talking about products because you had a frustration because your rod kept falling off the side, you created your own attachment that's better than the ones that are out there, and here's a link to it. That's what we're talking about.

Just 'cause you're in a product-based business doesn't mean you have to talk about your product every single day. It's not about that. It could be like . . . You could send an email out and say, "My son and I went fishing last weekend and you will never believe the lure that my son caught this fish on. Check it out. Click here." Boom, they go there and oh, by the way, that lure happens to be mine that we created, and it works really good.

Pat Flynn: That's cool.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. I think people need to understand that . . . You talk about it all the time: Don't always talk about the product. Talk about the things that support the product or that are around the product that could naturally come into that conversation. I talk, you talk, a lot on your own podcast, and then you'll sprinkle in stuff that just naturally comes. You don't have to force it. It just happens because it's part of your conversation, part of the language now. Then people will . . . they won't feel like they're being sold to because you're actually educating or helping, or maybe you're humoring them, maybe you're giving them a laugh for the day, or whatever. Then naturally people will come back, and then when you do have something to offer, they will buy it, or they will be led to it.

The cool thing with Facebook too, is . . . I don't know if you've seen this Pat, but when you have a physical product, you can add a store to your Facebook page. When you add that product there, you create a piece of content. Let's say you do a Facebook Live, and you're talking about the five lures that you've used in the past month that have done really well. Some have done good, some haven't, and they happen to be yours. Or maybe two of them are yours, and three of them aren't. Well if you have those products in your store, you can attach that to that video now. That product will follow that around.

Pat Flynn: Wow.

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Because of that, you're talking about it. You don't even have to say you have a product. Right below it'll be like, "Product basically mentioned in here is this." Then it will basically be a button that you can click, and in Facebook, you can tell it where you want it to point, your website, Amazon, wherever. Yeah, it's pretty cool.

Pat Flynn: That is really cool. Are there any tools out there to help us even more with the content piece of it, in terms of . . . do you use any specific keyword research tools, or tools to understand what questions to answer, and those kinds of things?

Scott Voelker: A very simple one, and it's free, and you know this too: YouTube. "How to," and let it auto-fill. Like "how to catch more bass." I did that the other day as an example, and it was like, "in a pond, in a lake, in cold water." I would . . .

Pat Flynn: You could just create content about that, and make it better.

Scott Voelker: Exactly. Just find out what people are already searching for, and then put your own spin on it, and make it better, or maybe find other things that weren't talked about. I think that's the low-hanging fruit. Instead of guessing, go and find what people are already searching for, and then create better content. Better doesn't mean it has to be higher quality. It just means that instead of them rambling for five minutes, you get right to the point. Yours is gonna deliver the one, two, three punch. It's like boom, there it is.

I think that Google, again . . . I think BuzzSumo also allows you to look and see the top posts, and the ones that have been shared the most, and all of those things. But yeah, I think that's a good one. I don't think you have to overthink that. I think you have to go and see what people are searching for, and then that's your starting point. Then from there, once you start getting questions from people, 'cause you're gonna ask them to ask you questions, you start creating content around what people are asking, and then you deliver it.

Pat Flynn: Nice.

Scott Voelker: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: Love that. I want to finish off talking about . . . Let's go back to physical product, whether it's a person who has a brand online already, and then puts a physical product on it, which I think I can almost hear the gears turn in a lot of peoples' ears right now. Or you start with a physical product, and you start to build a brand off of that. I think one important question that I have is, and I know this through experience selling books on Amazon, is that I don't get the emails of my customers. That, to me, is tough to deal with 'cause I want give them value. I want to have a customer and then send them my blog post that is going to also help them, but I know I don't get access to their email. How do we follow up with them? What are some things that we can do after purchase, to build that brand, if we can't even connect with them?

Scott Voelker: It's a great point, and it is a frustration. It stinks because we don't get that information. There's a couple things you can do though. Number one is, you are able to put an insert card into your product. If you have an insert card there that says, "Hey, go get the five recipes to make better whatever," you can get people to go over to your web property, and then from there you would capture the email address there.

Pat Flynn: You mean in the actual packaging?

Scott Voelker: Yeah. Yeah, just put it right in the packaging. Then I think what I would do, and what I do all the time is then, on that landing page, I would install a Facebook Pixel so I could start creating a custom audience there as well.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, that's smart. How do I include that card if Amazon is fulfilling it?

Scott Voelker: Because all of my stuff is packaged before Amazon receives it.

Pat Flynn: Oh, okay. They're just getting it after it's packaged.

Scott Voelker: Exactly.

Pat Flynn: But you don't have to deal with going to the post office, shipping it out, even customer conversations. It's all in the Amazon.

Scott Voelker: No. Everything is . . . Yeah, everything is printed, everything is packaged together as if you went to the store and bought it. If you've ever bought things from the store, you open it up, the cellophane inside, and then you have a warranty card, and you have . . . Those are the things that are inside the packaging.

Yeah, I would just put an insert card in there. They're gonna cost you about 10 cents, 15 cents, printed, full color, depending on where you get them done. Then just have it be very eye-catching, in a sense, to where you're gonna get their attention, but then give them value. Don't say, "Go buy more of my stuff." It's more of either, "Go register this for a warranty and get on our VIP list," or something like, "Go get your free download of X, Y and Z." Whatever it is. Give them a reason to go there.

Now, your percentage is gonna be less on that because people actually have to physically type stuff in. We know that that's less of a conversion point, which is fine, but it's still something that I would just do. I would also probably put it on the back of my packaging, just some type, like xyz.com/training, or something like that, or VIP, or whatever. Just give them a little call to action on any piece that you can, that's on the packaging or inside the packaging. That's step number one.

Number two is we can send them emails through our Amazon account. This is different than an autoresponder. It's like an autoresponder, but it works through your Sellers account. You know Chris Guthrie well, as I do. He's built a tool that allows you to basically—and it's totally legit, you can totally do this because we're not sending emails outside of Amazon through Amazon. What we're doing is we're connecting through their API, and it's like we have a VA that's typing up an email, and sending it once we get an order. Okay.

Basically, think about it this way, I can set it up that once you buy something, the day that it's delivered, it will notify my account that it's been delivered, and it will send an email on my behalf. It'll say, "Hey, Pat. Thanks so much for buying your garlic press. Hopefully everything arrived as it should have. If you have any questions, let know. And oh, here's a PDF that you can grab 10 recipes that you can make for your family to enjoy with your new garlic press. Have an awesome day."

Pat Flynn: Yeah, here's some breath mints too.

Scott Voelker: Yeah, exactly.

Pat Flynn: You don't get the email address but you. . .

Scott Voelker: Nope.

Pat Flynn: . . . use this tool to still send an email to those customers, and you can have triggers set up. That's really cool. What's the name of that tool?

Scott Voelker: That is Salesbacker. Salesbacker.

Pat Flynn: Salesbacker. Cool. Nice work Chris.

Scott Voelker: That's Chris Guthrie.

Yeah, it's a really nice tool. I've been using it now for about two and a half years. It's a great tool.

Pat Flynn: But you can't broadcast email to everybody.

Scott Voelker: Nope. Nope. But here's the thing: What I just said . . . I want people to understand what I just said. By me putting a PDF in there, I can attach a PDF, and it's totally okay to do that. I'm not attaching a PDF that they would go and buy something. I'm delivering something on the backend of "go get my recipes." Inside that PDF, guess what's there. A link that you can go over and grab 10 more recipes, or sign up for something else, and then that would get the email address.

Now, I could put a landing page in place of that and put a page up, and says, “Thank you valued customer, or whatever. Download your free recipe guide here.” Then they can enter their email address. That’s okay too. You can do that. There’s ways that you can do it to try to get the email after the fact, but you’re still hoping that they open the email from Amazon that has been sent on your behalf. Okay. You don’t have control of that, but we are trying to get them on our page so we can Pixel them, and then we can also follow up with them on our own email. That’s really what we’re doing there.

But outside of that is we do have . . . and there’s ways you can do that and some people would say, “Well, is it really legal?” Isn’t it? I’m gonna let you guys decide this but you can technically take the customer data. Let’s just say that you have . . . They were giving phone numbers, they don’t give phone numbers anymore, but let’s just say it’s an address. You could take those addresses and upload those into Facebook, and they’ll match them. Then you’re not gonna basically solicit those people, but you can run ads to those people. Meaning, you could put an ad in front of them that says, “Hey, you want 10 recipes of how to make better meals with your garlic press, or with a garlic press, or with garlic?” Then they can opt-in to say yes or no. It’s really where you’re able to target those people without actually emailing those people.

Pat Flynn: Wow. But through the physical address, and its connection to their address that is on Facebook.

Scott Voelker: Yeah, it’ll match. Yup. Yeah, it’ll basically match it. A lot of times we’ve been seeing about a 70% match. If you have 1,000, you’re gonna get about 700 people that are in your custom audience. If you didn’t even want to target those people, just do a look-alike audience then.

Pat Flynn: Right. Right.

Scott Voelker: Then you just do a look-alike audience of those people. That’s another way you could do it and get that. Another way, last way that I would say is when you’re doing promotions to spike your sales,

maybe run Facebook ads to a landing page, and offer a discount on your product. Maybe you offer 25% off 'cause you're launching your new product. Well, you're gonna capture that email address in that process, now that person would take that code, and they would go over to Amazon and buy it. Now we know that those people that went through there, they're on our list, but they also bought. We sent them there, but we've actually done our job as far as targeting, and then we're sending them over there. Then we Pixel that landing page as well. That's another way you can do it.

Now you're not getting it if someone organically buys, but you're getting people that are interested by getting them to raise their hand because they're interested in that discount, and then you would send them to a landing page, capture the email address, Pixel, and then you could have fun with all of that stuff.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. Man there's so many things going through my head right now, even without a physical product on Amazon, that I can utilize a lot of these strategies for. This is really cool. It's so many things. All the things are great and I know that people can go and get more from you in various places on the web. Where should they go to get more great information from you?

Scott Voelker: Yeah, I would just say the podcast, iTunes, The Amazing Seller, or just TheAmazingSeller.com. I do a workshop where I basically break down the five steps to getting yourself going and getting yourself launched. That's TheAmazingSeller.com/Workshop. That's it.

Pat Flynn: Scott, thank you so much for your time today. We appreciate you. All great stuff. I look forward to connecting with you soon.

Scott Voelker: I appreciate you, Pat. One last thing I will say is, and I didn't really mention this, and I should have, I've been following you since you had your first kid. I've been with you a long time. I really appreciate everything that you've done and really, I look at you as a mentor, and someone that has helped me get to where I am. I appreciate you and everything that you do for the community, so I just want to say that.

Pat Flynn: Okay, thank you, Scott. I appreciate that. I know there are huge things coming your way, and I'm excited to hopefully have you back on the show at some point to tell us about all those things and more.

Scott Voelker: Awesome. Thanks, Pat.

Pat Flynn: Cheers.

All right. I hope you enjoyed that episode with Scott Voelker from TheAmazingSeller.com, and The Amazing Seller Podcast. Scott, you're amazing. I appreciate you so much, buddy. Cannot wait to see you again soon.

For those of you listening, if you want to check out the show notes, and all the links, and things we mentioned in this episode, you can go to the show notes page at SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session333. Again, SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session333.

By the way, if you want to check out some of my upcoming live trainings to help you with things related to affiliate marketing, or podcasting, or even starting your own brand, all you have to do is go to SmartPassiveIncome.com/live, and you'll see next upcoming trainings that you can register for, for free. Once again, SmartPassiveIncome.com/live, and you'll get those for free. You just got to reserve your seat, and I'll see you on the call.

Hey and really quick before you go, if you are an entrepreneur who sells anything that has a recurring monthly payment or recurring annual payment sort of a subscription model, whether that's a membership website or a software program or perhaps a coaching offering that you have—whatever the case may be, I want to remind you about a tool that I use for my online courses that have the payment plans installed in them and that is AllGravy.io. Gravy is this amazing program service that you can use that is run by a guy named Casey Graham. He was a former guest on the show here in [Session 312](#), talking about the number one hole that entrepreneurs don't even know exists and that's this world of failed payments. Because failed payments can happen for several reasons, and yes

there are some automation tools in our shopping carts that can help recover some of that, but actually most of the time they don't. I've been able to recover 76.5 percent of my failed payments, which is tens of thousands of dollars since using this service, and I want you to check it out. If you go to AllGravy.io/pat you can actually see more information there, you can book a call with Casey and his team and they're gonna help you out.

And what I love most about Gravy, is that the business that Casey has built there serves us entrepreneurs who have these recurring payments like I said, but also he employs stay-at-home moms who've been looking for some additional income as well. And that's what I love too, because these are real human beings that will call, on your behalf, the people whose payments have failed. And they do it in a very friendly way, not like a collection agency sort of style, but "Hey, I'm a member of Pat's team and we see that your payment has failed. Would you like to update your credit card number or the expiration date or can we work with you to make this happen?" And they actually have a real life call with your customers which is so call, so it's just like hiring your own team member. If you want to check it out, AllGravy.io/pat. You can book a call there. Again, one more time, AllGravy.io/pat.

Thanks so much. I appreciate you.

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