

Verizon - 180461  
Future of Retail Podcast - (Transcript Only)  
June 5, 2018

>> WELCOME BACK TO UP TO SPEED.

A VERIZON PODCAST.

TODAY'S EPISODE IS ALL ABOUT RETAIL AND THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.

FOR A SPECIAL, LIVE STREAM CHAT, KATIE SAT DOWN WITH TAMI ERWIN, CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER FOR VERIZON WIRELESS AND SHELLY PALMER, AUTHOR, STRATEGIC ADVISOR AND LINKEDIN'S NUMBER ONE VOICE IN TECHNOLOGY FOR 2017.

THEY DISCUSSED HOW THE KEY TO SUCCESS AND THE RETAIL SPACE TODAY LIES IN TRUST, CUSTOMER CARE, AND REALLY UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR.

LET'S LISTEN IN.

>> SO, I'M EXCITED TODAY TO HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT RETAIL, CURRENT TRENDS, THE FUTURE OF RETAIL AND I'M EXCITED ABOUT THIS, NOT ONLY BECAUSE I'M SURE, LIKE A LOT OF YOU, I LOVE TO SHOP.

IT'S COOL, AS CONSUMERS, WE GET A FRONT SEAT VIEW TO THIS INDUSTRY AS IT CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AND CHANGE.

SO... LET'S START WITH SOME INTRODUCTIONS, SO... TAMI, I KNOW YOU STARTED YOUR CAREER IN A CUSTOMER SERVICE ROLE, TALK TO US ABOUT HOW THAT'S INFLUENCED YOU TODAY?

>> YEAH... I DID, I STARTED MY CAREER AS A CUSTOMER SERVICE REP AND ONE OF THE THINGS I LOVE ABOUT THAT IS I THINK THAT IT ENGRAINED IN ME THE INCREDIBLE PASSION FOR CUSTOMERS AND HOW WE SERVE CUSTOMERS.

IT ALSO ENGRAINED IN ME HOW CHALLENGING THE ROLE OF THE FRONT LINE EMPLOYEE IS AND WE ASKED THEM TO CARRY THE BRAND AND MAKE THAT BRAND REAL EACH AND EVERY DAY.

AND THEY DO AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB OF IT.

THAT CUSTOMER PASSION IS STUCK WITH ME FROM THE DAY I STARTED.

>> ALL RIGHT... SHELLY, HOW ABOUT YOU?

TELL US HOW YOU GOT INVOLVED IN THIS INDUSTRY?

>> WELL, WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT.

I STARTED OFF IN THE ADVERTISING BUSINESS WITH A PRETTY MAJOR CONCENTRATION ON RADIO AND TELEVISION AND... IT HAS EVOLVED THROUGH THE TECHNOLOGY OF ADVERTISING AND RIGHT NOW, WE RUN A FIRM THAT IS ALMOST 100% CONCENTRATED ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND GETTING PEOPLE FROM WHERE THEY ARE TO WHERE THEY NEED TO BE, WITH AN INCREDIBLE FOCUS ON, ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND CONSUMERS THEMSELVES.

WE'RE, I THINK, A LOT OF WHAT'S GOING ON TODAY, FEELS LIKE IT'S A TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEM OR THERE'S A TECH TRANSITION HAPPENING, BUT IN PRACTICE, PEOPLE'S BEHAVIORS ARE CHANGING.

AND SO... YOU HAVE TO BE 100% CONSUMER-FIRST, ALL THE TIME AND EVERYTHING ELSE FOLLOWS FROM THAT.

OUR COMPANY, WE MIGHT HAVE A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGICAL CONSULTING OR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THAT WE'RE 100% CONSUMER FIRST.

AND THEN EVERYTHING COMES FROM THERE.

>> SHELLY, STICKING WITH YOU, HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE STATE OF RETAIL TODAY?

>> WELL... DEPENDS WHO YOU ASK.

[LAUGHTER]

>> IF YOU ASK AMAZON, IT'S PRETTY GREAT.

JUST A WONDERFUL DAY AT THE OFFICE.

IF YOU ASK PEOPLE WHO ARE COMPETING WITH AMAZON, IT'S CHALLENGING.

WHAT MAKES IT CHALLENGING, THOUGH, ISN'T AMAZON, THOUGH A LOT OF PEOPLE LIKE TO BLAME IT ON AMAZON OR WAL-MART WHEN THEY CAME TO TOWN.

EVERYBODY LIKED TO BLAME WAL-MART ON TOWN DESTRUCTION.

I THINK A LOT OF MISMANAGEMENT AND A LOT OF NOT PAYING ATTENTION HAS CAUSED THE STATE OF THE RETAIL INDUSTRY AND NOW PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO, TO SOLVE FOR THE PROBLEM THAT THE BIGGER COMPANIES AND THE YOUNGER COMPANIES HAVE 100% SOLVED FOR, HOW DELIGHTED YOUR CUSTOMER IS.

THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN HAVING THE BEST PRODUCT.

IN ALMOST EVERY CASE IT MEANS HAVING THE BEST EXPERIENCE AND THE BEST VALUE, WHICH IS SOME COMBINATION IN EACH PERSON'S MIND BETWEEN COST AND CONVENIENCE AND ALL THE THINGS THAT GO INTO MAKING SOMETHING VALUABLE TO A CUSTOMER.

AND... IF YOU CAN'T PUT THOSE TWO THINGS TOGETHER, RETAIL GETS TOUGH.

>> SO... TAMI, WHERE WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE WHERE VERIZON STANDS?

COMPARED TO SHELLY'S TAKE?

>> YEAH... SO... I APPRECIATE, SHELLY, YOUR FRAMING OF RETAIL AND MOST-SPECIFICALLY, HOW DO WE THINK ABOUT THE CUSTOMER.

I FEEL VERY BULLISH ABOUT WHERE WE, VERIZON, ARE FROM A RETAIL STANDPOINT.

FIRST OF ALL, I'D BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T JUST DO A SHOUTOUT TO THE 21,000 RETAIL EMPLOYEES THAT WE HAVE AT VERIZON, WHO DO AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB, DAY IN, DAY OUT OF SERVING OUR CUSTOMERS.

BUT, WHEN I THINK ABOUT RETAIL, I THINK IT'S LESS ABOUT RETAIL AND MORE ABOUT HOW DO WE EFFECTIVELY, AS VERIZON, FACE THE CUSTOMER IN A CUSTOMER-CENTRIC WAY, AS OPPOSED TO A CHANNEL-CENTRIC WAY?

IF I THINK ABOUT RETAIL, AND SAY RETAIL IS A SELF-CONTAINED UNIT, IT DOESN'T WORK.

IF I THINK ABOUT RETAIL AS A CONNECTED CHANNEL TO EVERYTHING ELSE THAT WE DO FOR THE CUSTOMER, AND FINDING A WAY TO MEET THE CUSTOMER WHEN, WHERE AND HOW THEY CHOOSE TO ENGAGE WITH US ON THEIR JOURNEY, THEN I THINK WE'RE IN A VERY GOOD PLACE.

IT'S CHANGING RAPIDLY, SO... HOW OUR PEOPLE SHOW UP, FIRST AND FOREMOST, MOST IMPORTANT, HOW WE SHOW UP FROM A PLACE, SUPER IMPORTANT, WHAT WE DO FROM A PROCESS AND PLATFORM.

ALL OF THOSE THINGS AND THE FOUR PS WE TALK ABOUT AT RETAIL, SUPER IMPORTANT, BUT I'M BULLISH ABOUT RETAIL.

>> SO... WE TALKED A LITTLE BIT, YOU KNOW, MEETING CUSTOMERS WHERE THEY ARE, THAT KIND OF OMNI CHANNEL STRATEGY AND OMNI CHANNEL APPROACH.

SHELLY FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, WHO'S REALLY GETTING THAT AND GETTING TO THE HEART OF WHERE CUSTOMERS WANT THAT EXPERIENCE TO BE?

>> WELL... LOOK... I, I THINK THAT THAT IS A HETEROGENEOUS SORT OF LANDSCAPE AND... EVERYONE DOES SOME THINGS REALLY WELL, AND... I THINK EVERYBODY IS CONSTANTLY TRYING TO HIT A MOVING TARGET.

WE, AS A SOCIETY, ARE EVOLVING, FIVE YEARS AGO, IF YOU SAID TO SOMEBODY WHO WAS NOT AN EARL ADOPTER, SOMEBODY WHO WOULD BE TRADITIONALLY SEGMENTED AS A, A GRANDPARENT OR A, A MIDDLE-AGED EXECUTIVE, ABOUT, YOU ASK A QUESTION, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE APP THAT DOES BLANK?

OR YOUR FAVORITE BLANK APP?

FILL IN THE BLANK.

YOU'D GET PROBABLY NOT A GOOD ANSWER.

TODAY, I HAVE SAT WITH PEOPLE AT COCKTAIL PARTIES AND THANKSGIVING DINNERS AND DINNER PARTIES AND PEOPLE, DEEP IN THEIR 80S, START ASKING ME IF I LIKE WHAT'S APP BETTER THAN FACEBOOK MESSENGER AND DID I HAVE A PREFERENCE AND WHY?

IT'S LIKE, AS A SOCIETY, WE'RE GETTING BETTER AT UNDERSTANDING WHAT'S AVAILABLE TO US.

AND... THAT IS A REAL MOVING TARGET, BECAUSE, AS PEOPLE IN GENERAL, GET BETTER AT THEIR TECHNOLOGY, THEY EXPECT MORE.

SO... IF YOU'RE ON FACEBOOK AND IT'S SCROLLING AT 60 FRAMES AND YOU'RE USED TO LIKE, JUST, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, I'LL WATCH A LITTLE VIDEO, AND THE VIDEO STARTS TO PLAY AND YOU'RE GOOD WITH THAT AND YOU GO TO ANOTHER APP, AND IT'S DOING NOTHING AND YOU'RE GOING TO WAIT ABOUT ONE AND A HALF SECONDS, YOU'RE GOING TO BE LIKE "THIS IS NOT FOR ME!" AND YOU'RE GONE.

WOW.

YOU'RE NOT COMPETING WITH A RETAILER THAT SELLS WHAT YOU SELL OR DOES WHAT YOU DO, YOU'RE COMPETING WITH FACEBOOK'S TECH TEAM TO GIVE A CONSUMER EXPERIENCE THAT DELIGHTS THE CONSUMER AND YOU COULD FILL IN THE BLANK.

INSTAGRAM, TWITTER, AIR B&B.

THE TIER 1 TECH COMPANIES CREATE THIS EXPERIENCE THAT IS SETTING A BENCHMARK FOR EVERY OTHER RETAILER, FOR EVERYBODY WHO IS GOING TO PRESENT THEMSELVES IN A MOBILE WEB EXPERIENCE OR IN AN APP, A NATIVE APP.

ALL OF A SUDDEN, WE'VE GOT A DIFFERENT WORLD HAPPENING.

AS WE ALL GET BETTER AT IT, IT GETS HARDER.

WHO'S DOING IT?

WHO'S DOING IT WELL?

THE TIER 1 TECH COMPANIES, BY DEFAULT ARE DOING IT BETTER BECAUSE THEY HAVE BETTER TECH TEAMS.

NOW... THERE'S THIS WHOLE UNDERPINNING, THIS WHOLE UNDERPINNING OF ANKLE-BITING, NEW TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES THAT ARE COMING OUT TO DO STUFF, CASPER MATTRESSES OR THE DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB WHEN THEY STARTED BEFORE THEY WERE BOUGHT BY UNI-LEVER, JUST COMING OUT, TAKING SOMETHING THAT'S IN EXISTENCE, THEY SEE AN AREA, THEY DISRUPT USING, YOU KNOW... BETTER TOOLS, BETTER MESSAGING, ET CETERA, ET CETERA.

THERE'S THAT GROUP, BUT THAT'S NOT MOST OF RETAIL, RIGHT?

MOST OF RETAIL IS THE RETAIL WE EXPERIENCE EVERY DAY.

THAT, BY THE WAY, AS MUCH AS WE'D LIKE TO SAY HASN'T EVOLVED AS WELL AS IT SHOULD HAVE.

YOU COULD TELL FROM THE NUMBERS, THAT'S A CHALLENGE.

>> SO... YOU KNOW, IT'S INTERESTING BECAUSE WE TALK, SHELLY, ABOUT BEING MOBILE-FIRST, CUSTOMER-FIRST, DIGITALLY-CENTRIC AND... WE INTENTIONALLY TALK ABOUT BEING MOBILE FIRST BECAUSE OF A, WE REALLY HAVE INTRODUCED MOBILITY TO CUSTOMERS LIVES AND WHAT WE DO DAY IN, DAY OUT, BUT CUSTOMERS ARE SO MOBILE AND THEY HAVE SO MUCH OPPORTUNITY TO COMPETITIVELY SHOP, WHILE THEY SIT IN YOUR STORE.

THE POWER THAT HAS GONE TO THE CUSTOMER AND SO... HOW DO WE EFFECTIVELY, AS A RETAILER, THINK ABOUT OUR BUSINESS AS NOT A RETAIL BUSINESS, BUT... AS A CUSTOMER-CENTRIC BUSINESS THAT WE WANT TO APPROACH IN A DIGITAL MANNER?

IF THE CUSTOMER STARTS THEIR LEARNING PROCESS ONLINE, I WANT TO RESPECT AND RIGHT SIDE THEM AND MEET THEM WHEN, WHERE AND HOW THEY CHOOSE TO ENGAGE AND INTERACT.

THAT'S WHERE A LOT OF RETAILERS HAVE FAILED.

THEY THINK THE RETAIL HAPPENS WITHIN THE FOUR WALLS OF THE, YOU KNOW, BRICKS AND MORTAR.

THAT'S JUST NOT TRUE.

THAT'S MAYBE ONE STEP IN THE PROCESS.

WE'VE DONE A LOT OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN IN-STORE PICK-UP MEETING THE CUSTOMER WHEN, WHERE AND HOW THEY CHOOSE TONE GAUGE.

IT'S GREAT FROM A CUSTOMER STANDPOINT, IT'S GREAT FROM EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE, BECAUSE WHAT CUSTOMERS STILL DEMAND OF US, IS THEY LIKE THAT EXPERIENTIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR EXPERTS.

AND I THINK THAT'S A PART OF, FOR ME, RETAILERS THAT HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, OFFER SOMETHING THAT THE CUSTOMERS VALUE AND FOR US, THAT'S ABOUT THAT EXPERIENTIAL ENGAGEMENT AND HOW DO I MAXIMIZE THE USE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DEVICE?

>> IT HAS TO BE, AND THE REASON IT HAS TO BE IS THAT INFORMATION ASYMMETRY IS BASICALLY OVER.

IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT A CUSTOMER'S GOING TO WALK INTO A PHYSICAL RETAIL ENVIRONMENT, KNOWING MORE ABOUT WHAT THEY WANT TO PURCHASE THAN THE PERSON WHO IS GOING TO SELL IT TO THEM.

NOW... I DON'T WANT TO CAST ASPERSIONS ON THE VERIZON RETAIL EMPLOYEES, BUT, IN GENERAL, PEOPLE RESEARCH A LOT AND, AND PRICE ISN'T GOING TO BE THE WHOLE THING.

NOT ANYMORE.

AMAZON PRIME IS NOT ALWAYS THE LOWEST PRICE ON AMAZON, FOR SOMETHING, BUT PRIME CUSTOMERS TEND TO PAY A LITTLE MORE JUST FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF THE ONE CLICK.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE 20 CENTS CHEAPER THAN THE PHONE STORE ACROSS THE STREET.

YOU HAVE TO HAVE A REASON FOR ME TO WANT TO COME IN THERE AND FEEL LIKE, THIS IS MY ONE CLICK, I'M WILLING TO PAY WHATEVER IT IS.

YOU CAN'T STAND FOR PRICE AND BECAUSE THE WORLD WE LIVE IN HAS REALLY CHANGED THIS IDEA OF I KNOW THAT YOU KNOW THAT I KNOW... THERE ARE NO SECRETS.

THE INFORMATION ASYMMETRY IS REALLY, IT'S, IT'S COME DOWN.

PEOPLE WALK IN, THEY KNOW WHAT THE PHONE COSTS.

THEY KNOW WHAT THE ACCESSORIES COST.

THAT'S THE QUESTION OF, ARE THEY WILLING TO DO IT BECAUSE THEY'RE GIVEN A REASON AND... THAT'S -- I THINK THAT'S THE ART OF RETAIL.

NOT THE SCIENCE.

>> YEAH... CLEARLY THE ART PIECE IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF THAT. BECAUSE... THE SCIENCE COULD HAPPEN ALL DAY WITH THE CUSTOMER RESEARCH, BUT THE PEOPLE REALLY MAKE THAT, OR COME TO LIVE FOR CUSTOMERS.

NOW, WE ALSO THINK A BIG PIECE OF THAT IS NETWORK AND HOW OUR NETWORK PERFORMS, SO WHEN YOU BRING THE NETWORK TOGETHER WITH THE DEVICE WITH THE PROFESSIONALS THAT ENGAGE WITH OUR CUSTOMERS DAY IN, DAY OUT, WE CHANGE THE CONVERSATION WITH THE CUSTOMER BECAUSE WE UNLOCK THE POWER OF WHAT THEY'RE TRYING TO DO AND BEGIN TO TEACH THEM HOW TO DO IT.

YOU KNOW... THE OTHER THING I THINK IS CHANGING A LOT IS HOW THE PLACE LOOKS, SO... WE TALK ABOUT THE FOUR PS OF RETAIL IN OUR BUSINESS.

WE TALK ABOUT PEOPLE, WE TALK ABOUT PROCESS, WE TALK ABOUT PLATFORM, WE TALK ABOUT PLACE.

I THINK ABOUT THE PHYSICAL LOCATION, WE'VE DONE A LOT OF WORK OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS IN REDESIGNING OUR RETAIL STORES, SMALLER, CLEANER, CRISPER, LESS MERCHANDISE, BECAUSE... CUSTOMERS DON'T WANT TO GET LOST IN THEIR SHOPPING PROCESS.

THEY WANT TO BE ABLE TO SIMPLY FIND WHAT THEY CAME FOR.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SEEING IN THAT CATEGORY BUT FEELS LIKE THERE'S A LOT OF CHANGE HAPPENING THERE.

>> I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

THE WORLD, THE WORLD IS CHANGING IN A WAY THAT I -- IT'S KIND OF FASCINATING.

FROM A RETAIL PERSPECTIVE.

THERE ARE PRICE SHOPPERS AND THEY HAVE HAND RAISED AND THEY HAVE SELF-ASSEMBLED INTO A GROUP CALLED "I'M A PRICE SHOPPER."

AND THEY ONLY WANT THE CHEAPEST PRICE.

AND... IF YOU SO DESIRE, YOU CAN GO THERE, NOW... WAL-MART WAS THE ONLY PHYSICAL RETAILER THAT EVER STOOD FOR PRICE IN THE PAST, BECAUSE... THEY WERE THE ONLY ONES THAT COULD AFFORD TO.

SEARS TRIED IT, IT ALMOST PUT THEM OUT OF BUSINESS THE FIRST TIME.

ULTIMATELY, THEY HAVE OTHER PROBLEMS, BUT WHEN THEY WENT TO BRAND CENTRAL AND STOPPED BEING ALL ABOUT SEARS BRANDS AND TRIED TO COMPETE ON A PRICE FOR PRICE BASIS, THEY GOT REALLY HURT.

WAL-MART HAD SOME PEAKS AND TROUGHS OVER THEIR HISTORY, BUT THEY CAME OUT SAYING ALWAYS THE LOWEST PRICE, THAT WAS, IN THEIR MIND, THE RIGHT WAY TO GO.

ABOUT HALF THE POPULATION AND YOU CAN DETERMINE HOW TO COHORT THAT OUT IS WILLING TO PAY FOR AN EXPERIENCE.

YOU REALLY HAVE TO PUT THESE TWO THINGS, LIKE... JUXTAPOSE THEM, IF YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A PHYSICAL RETAIL SPACE NOW.

YOU NEED TO DECIDE, LIKE... WHO ARE YOU GOING TO CATER TO?

BECAUSE... YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LET SALES WALK OUT THE DOOR AND BE SO FOCUSED ON WHAT YOU'RE PROVIDING, AND I THINK THIS IS WHERE THE BIGGER, WIDER-BASED RETAILERS ARE FAILING.

IT'S JUST IMPOSSIBLILY HARD TO DO AND WHY THE SMALLER BOUTIQUE-STYLE STORES OR SINGLE-PURPOSE STORES ARE SUCCEEDING BECAUSE... THEY CAN CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT I KNOW I'M IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

IF YOU WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT IN JUST TERMS OF YOUR OWN -- USING YOURSELF AS A FOCUS GROUP OF ONE, WHICH I'D NEVER, EVER SUGGEST YOU DO.

[LAUGHTER]

>> IF YOU WALK INTO URBAN OUTFITTERS AND YOU ARE SOMEONE OF MY AGE AND STAGE... YOU MIGHT FROM THE MUSIC PLAYING, THE MERCHANDISE ON DISPLAY AND THE GENERAL LOOK AND FEEL OF THE SALES HELP, KNOW YOU'RE IN THE WRONG STORE.

I'M JUST SAYING.

I MIGHT NOT BE KIND OF CLASSIC URBAN OUTFITTERS CUSTOMER, I'M JUST... THERE ARE, HOWEVER, SOME STORES IN THE WORLD WHERE I WALK IN AND EVERYBODY KIND OF LOOKS LIKE I LOOK, DRESS LIKE I'M DRESSED, THE MERCHANDISE IS SOMETHING THAT MIGHT FIT ME... MAYBE.

SO... THESE ARE, YOU KNOW... YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

SO... KNOWING YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE, HOWEVER YOU DEFINE THAT IS IMPORTANT.

IT'S A KEY TO THE EXPERIENTIAL RETAIL APPROACH AND I THINK A LOT OF STORES ARE STRUGGLING WITH HOW TO DO THAT.



ESPECIALLY DIGITALLY.

>> SO, TAMI, I THINK IT'S INTERESTING, AS THE LEADER OF THE VERIZON WIRELESS TEAM, YOU KNOW... THE CUSTOMERS WE ARE LOOKING TO ATTRACT AND CATER TO RUN THE GAMUT IN TERMS OF THEIR DEMOGRAPHICS, AGE, INCOME, ET CETERA, SO... TALK TO US ABOUT HOW WE APPROACH THAT WHEN OUR CUSTOMER BASE IS SO DIVERSE?

>> YEAH... SO I THINK IT'S A REALLY IMPORTANT DIMENSION OF HOW WE THINK ABOUT THE CUSTOMER BASE.

WE'VE GOT 110 MILLION CUSTOMERS, RIGHT?

YOU SERVE A LOT OF DIFFERENT CUSTOMERS AND A LOT OF DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHIES THAT HAVE A LOT OF DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS.

YOU KNOW, IN A PURE MARKETING SENSE, WE USED TO THINK ABOUT SEGMENTATION, AND YOU HAD, YOU KNOW, STUDENTS AND YOU HAD, YOU KNOW... THE RETIRED SEGMENT AND THEN YOU BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT SEGMENTS A LITTLE MORE BROADLY.

NOW WE'RE THINKING ABOUT SEGMENTS OF ONE.

LIKE... WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT SHELLY PALMER AS A CUSTOMER AND HOW DO I TARGET WHAT HE'S LIKELY TO NEED?

OF COURSE, YOU WANT, AND NEED THE CUSTOMER'S PERMISSIONS TO DO THAT, BUT YOU BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND BECAUSE OF BIG DATA AND AI CAPABILITIES, THE ABILITY TO REALLY UNDERSTAND HOW DO I TARGET SHELLY'S EXPERIENCE?

I KNOW SHELLY'S BEEN A CUSTOMER FOR MANY, MANY YEARS, THANK YOU.

I KNOW --

>> BEST PHONE ON THE BEST NETWORK!

[LAUGHTER]

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

BUT... I KNOW A LOT ABOUT SHELLY BECAUSE... HE'S BEEN A CUSTOMER FOR MANY YEARS.

I KNOW WHAT HE NEEDS AND HOW HE NEEDS IT.

CUSTOMERS GIVE US PERMISSION TO USE THAT INFORMATION, HOW DO I TAILOR THAT EXPERIENCE TO BE VERY SPECIFIC AND VERY UNIQUE TO SHELLY AND HOW HE USES WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN HIS BUSINESS AND WITHIN HIS FAMILY AS WELL?

AND YOU KNOW... YOU BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT HOW YOU CROSS CHANNELS WITH THAT INFORMATION SO THAT IF SHELLY GOES ONLINE AND STARTS AN ORDER ONLINE, I CAN SIMPLY AND EASILY COMPLETE THAT ORDER WHEN HE WALKS INTO THE STORE.

AS I KNOW ABOUT THE USAGE THAT HE HAS, WE CAN MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT HOW HE CHANGES HIS PLAN OR THAT HE NEEDS A NEW DEVICE.

AND... SO, I THINK THE POWER OF BIG DATA, WE SOMETIMES FORGET THAT, IT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THAT I THINK YOU KNOW, THE AMAZONS OF THE WORLD HAVE TONS OF DATA, SO DO WE.

AND HOW WE USE THAT DATA ON BEHALF OF OUR CUSTOMERS, BECAUSE THEY TRUST US TO USE THAT DATA, IS VERY, VERY IMPORTANT TO THAT RETAIL EXPERIENCE.

>> PROBABLY, PROBABLY MORE NOW THAN EVER BEFORE, CONSIDERING GDPR AND WHAT FACEBOOK'S GONE THROUGH AND THERE'S, THERE'S A LINE BETWEEN COOL AND CREEPY.

AND I DON'T -- I, I KIND OF THINK IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EVERYBODY.

I WALK INTO A HOTEL ROOM, OBVIOUSLY I TRAVEL A LOT FOR BUSINESS AND IT SAYS "HELLO, SHELTON PALMER."

I KNOW FOR A FACT, THAT'S JUST THE DATABASE PUTTING -- NO ONE CALLS ME SHELTON, EXCEPT MY MOTHER, AND ONLY WHEN SHE'S MAD AT ME.

AND SO... YOU KNOW... I KNOW THAT'S THE DATABASE AND I KNOW IT'S BEING DISPLAYED, BUT IF THAT THING SAID "YOU KNOW, SHELLY, 'SUP, WANNA GET SOME RED BREAST OUT OF THE MINI BAR?" I'D FREAK OUT!

[LAUGHTER]

>> AND BE LIKE CALLING THE CIA WONDERING HOW THEY KNEW THAT I HAD LIKE -- SO, THERE'S A COOL LINE AND A CREEPY LINE AND... WE HAVE TO BE, I THINK, JUST, CORPORATELY RESPONSIBLE ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT IS.

AND I WOULD ADD TO THAT, THERE'S... THERE'S A SIMPLIFICATION APPROACH THAT I THINK IS UNIVERSAL.

AND... THERE ARE SEVERAL APPROACHES THAT, THAT WOULD FALL INTO UNIVERSAL CATEGORIES.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT COMPLEXITY WHEN I WALK INTO A VERIZON STORE.

I'M IN THE BUSINESS, AND IF SOMETHING IS OVER-FEATURED, I'M AS LIKELY AS MY COHORT AND EVERYONE LIKE ME.

COMPLETELY INTERESTED IN FEATURES, BECAUSE... WE'RE FEATURE GEEKS.

MOST PEOPLE ARE BENEFIT PEOPLE.

THEY'RE LOOKING FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE DEVICE.

IS THIS GOING TO LET ME CALL GRANDMA?

IS THIS GOING TO LET ME FIND MY KID AT SOCCER PRACTICE?

IS THIS GOING TO ALLOW ME TO... FILL IN THE BLANK.

IT'S A BENEFIT THAT THEY'RE BUYING.

THEY'RE BUYING THE CAPABILITY TO AND SO OFTEN, WE TALK TO OURSELVES IN TECHNOLOGICAL RETAIL.

AND I THINK THE DATA, IF IT TELLS YOU ANYTHING, SHOULD TELL YOU MOST PEOPLE AREN'T VERY TECHNICAL AND WOULD PREFER TO BE TREATED LIKE HUMANS, AND WOULD PREFER A SIMPLE SOLUTION, COINED AS A BENEFIT, AS OPPOSED TO A SIMPLE SOLUTION COINED AS A FEATURE.

THIS HAS A GREAT CAMERA.

IT'S 12 MEGA PIXELS FRONT-FACING AND NOW, THE PERSON ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT CONVERSATION IS THINKING... WELL, WHICH ONE'S THE FRONT?

THE ONE THAT'S ACTUALLY FACING ME OR THE FRONT-FACING, LIKE THE ONE THAT FACES THAT WAY?

AND IS 12 MEGA PIXELS A LOT OR A LITTLE?

I'D GO DOWN THE LIST OF THINGS THAT MAKE NO SENSE TO NORMAL HUMANS.

EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM AND EVERYBODY LISTENING IS GOING... YEAH, YEAH, YOU DO.

>> YEAH...

>> BUT NOBODY ELSE IN THE UNIVERSE DOES, SO SAY 300 MEGABITS IS SOMEBODY.

ASK WHAT BPS STANDS FOR AND I'LL REST MY CASE.

WE'RE LIMITED IN A DATA-DRIVEN WORLD, BUT DATA HAS TO DO TWO THINGS.

WE HAVE TO USE IT AS A GUIDEPPOST TO KEEP US ON THE COOL, CREEPY LINE AND THAT LINE MOVES TOO, SO GOOD LUCK WITH THAT.

BECAUSE EVERY DAY IT'S COOLER OR CREEPIER, DEPENDING.

AND THEN, THAT DATA CAN SERVE TO HELP YOU TEACH AND CRAFT A BENEFIT STORY.

THAT IS PART AND PARCEL TO THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING IN A GREAT RETAIL ENVIRONMENT.

SO... IF I DON'T GET A BENEFIT, I DON'T NEED TO BE HERE. I'LL JUST GO SHOP PRICE AND FEATURES.

FEATURES AND PRICE ARE EASY.

MATCH IT UP, FIND THE LOWEST PRICE AND GO.

THAT'S WHAT PROCUREMENT DOES.

PEOPLE AREN'T PROCURING A PHONE, THEY'RE NOT PROCURING -- THEY WANT TO COMMUNICATE.

SO... FROM MY PERSPECTIVE, VERIZON IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO, TO SUPER SERVE FROM AN EXPERIENTIAL, IN AN EXPERIENTIAL WAY.

I GOTTA TELL YOU, GO TO THE VERIZON STORE HERE ON MADISON AVENUE, 43RD STREET, THAT'S A GREAT STORE TO WALK INTO IF YOU'RE A CONSUMER.

IT'S GOT EVERYTHING AND THE PEOPLE ARE, YOU KNOW... ALL OVER YOU, IMMEDIATELY.

IT'S A REALLY GOOD RETAIL EXPERIENCE, I'VE BEEN GOING THERE A LONG TIME.

ONLY TO BE OUT-DONE BY THE VERIZON STORE IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, OFF THE STRIP, WHERE I WAS, I HAD A DEAD SIMPLE CARD IN A PHONE.

JUST DIED.

AND... IT WAS, I CALLED THE VERIZON STORE, IT WAS FIVE MINUTES UNTIL CLOSING, AND IT'S -- I FIGURE, I'M DOOMED, IF THIS IS NEW YORK, IT'S OVER

[LAUGHTER]

>> GUY'S LIKE, TAKE YOUR TIME, IT'S COOL, I'LL BE HERE.

WHAT?

>> THAT HAS TO BE OUR KATIE STORE.

>> GET THERE, TOOK THREE MINUTES, AND SAID "WHAT DO I OWE YOU?"  
HE LOOKED STRAIGHT AT ME AND SAID "ARE YOU KIDDING?"

NO, NO."

IT'S GOOD.

OKAY... AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, YOU CAN -- I'M DONE.

WHERE ELSE ARE YOU GOING?

RIGHT?

THAT'S JUST PART OF THE WHOLE THING.

IS THAT DATA-DRIVEN?

I KNOW HE LOOKED UP WHAT PHONE I HAD, I KNOW HE LOOKED ME UP AS  
A CUSTOMER, I KNOW HE KNEW EXACTLY -- AND HE HAD ALREADY  
PREDONE -- IT TOOK HIM A NANOSECOND TO PUT THAT THING IN AND  
TELL ME YEAH... IT'S HOOKED UP, I GOT YOU.

COUPLE MORE THINGS IN THE COMPUTER, I WAS OUT THE DOOR.

UBER JUST WAITED FOR ME, IT WAS LIKE, LITERALLY JUST OUT THE  
DOOR.

THAT LEVEL OF USING DATA TO SOLVE A PROBLEM, GET ME IN AND OUT,  
THAT'S AN AMAZINGLY GOOD WAY TO USE A CUSTOMER DATABASE AND I  
ACTUALLY, I ACTUALLY STOPPED TO TALK TO THAT PARTICULAR EMPLOYEE  
ABOUT THAT.

I SAID "HOW DID YOU KNOW?" HE SAID "WELL, YOU CALLED ON YOUR  
CELL PHONE AND I KNOW YOU, I KNOW YOUR ACCOUNT." VERY GOOD WAY  
TO USE IT.

IT DIDN'T CREEP ME OUT AT ALL.

IT MADE ME SUPER HAPPY.

>> YEAH, YEAH AND THOSE ARE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES THAT WE'RE  
TRYING TO CREATE, EACH AND EVERY DAY BECAUSE... IT IS ABOUT THE  
EXPERIENCE, IT'S ABOUT HOW DO WE MAKE SURE YOU'RE ALWAYS  
CONNECTED TO THE THINGS MATTER MOST TO YOU AND YOU LOSE THAT  
CONNECTION, LIKE OH MY GOSH, I'D RATHER LOSE MY WALLET THAN LOSE  
MY PHONE OR NOT HAVE THAT CAPABILITY.

AND CERTAINLY, WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME MAKING SURE THAT WE'RE  
VERY THOUGHTFUL ABOUT THE COOL VERSUS THE CREEPY, BECAUSE  
CUSTOMERS EXPECT US TO RESPECT THEIR INFORMATION AND IT'S ONE OF  
OUR CORE TENANTS AS TO WHO WE ARE AT VERIZON, HOW DO WE

CONSISTENTLY OPERATE WITH INTEGRITY, HOW DO WE RESPECT THE CUSTOMER IN HOW WE SHOW UP AND HOW DO WE DELIGHT THE CUSTOMER IN A VERY HUMAN WAY?

THAT EXAMPLE, I LOVE THAT STORY, I HADN'T HEARD THAT STORY UNTIL NOW, REALLY REFLECTIVE OF GIVING OUR EMPLOYEES TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO BE SUCCESSFUL AND THEN TURNING THEM LOSE AGAINST THE PROBLEM.

BECAUSE... I PROMISE YOU, THERE'S NOT AN OWNERS MANUAL THAT SAYS, WHEN SOMEBODY CALLS ABOUT A BROKEN SIMPLE CARD, DO X, Y AND Z.

IT'S ABOUT CREATING A CULTURE.

WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME AT VERIZON TALKING ABOUT, IN RETAIL IN PARTICULAR, HOW DO YOU CREATE A CULTURE THAT IS PRO-CONSUMER?

THAT YOU OBSESS OVER THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND DO THAT IN A WAY THAT MINIMIZES THE AMOUNT OF TIME CUSTOMERS NEED TO BE IN THAT STORY.

CUSTOMERS ARE BUSY, THEY HAVE A LOT OF OTHER THINGS HAPPENING.

HOW DO WE MAKE SURE THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS AGAINST THE OPPORTUNITY?

>> TAMI, YOU TALKED ABOUT CREATING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, FROM LOOKING AT TODAY'S RETAIL INDUSTRY AND THE RETAIL BUSINESS, WHO IS USING TECHNOLOGY IN A REALLY COOL WAY?

YOU KNOW, MARRYING IT WITH THEIR PHYSICAL PRESENCE IN THEIR PHYSICAL STORES?

SHELLY, YOUR THOUGHTS?

OR TAMI, KIND OF WHAT VERIZON IS DOING IN THAT SPACE?

>> YEAH... LISTEN, I THINK WE'VE DONE A LOT AROUND TECHNOLOGY.

ONE OF THE THINGS I'M PROBABLY MOST-EXCITED ABOUT FROM A TECHNOLOGY STANDPOINT, RECENTLY IS THE PARTNERSHIP THAT WE HAVE WITH SALES FORCE.

WE ARE THE FIRST RETAILER TO GO OUT AND USE SALES FORCE IN OUR RETAIL LOCATIONS AND IT'S ENABLING US TO HAVE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CUSTOMER.

IT ISN'T THAT THE CUSTOMER WALKS IN AND COMPLETES THE TRANSACTION, THE CUSTOMER COMES IN AND WE BEGIN THE JOURNEY OF THE RELATIONSHIP THAT WE HAVE WITH THAT CUSTOMER AND SO... OUR

SALES TEAMS CAN KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THAT CUSTOMER IN A VERY SIMPLE, EASY WAY, THEY HAVE THE CUSTOMER'S PERMISSIONS, THEY CAN ANTICIPATE WHAT THEY WANT.

THEY CAN ENGAGE WITH THEM VIA, YOU KNOW... TEXT MESSAGING AND E-MAIL AS OPPOSED TO DIALING A PHONE NUMBER BECAUSE NO ONE'S GOING TO ANSWER THAT PHONE NUMBER.

SO... I'M SUPER EXCITED ABOUT THAT, I THINK IT'S A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW DO WE USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENABLE

A BETTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, TO ENABLE A BETTER EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE AND TO CREATE YOUR OWN TRAFFIC.

AND SO... I THINK THAT RETAILERS THAT WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL, CREATING REASONS FOR CUSTOMERS TO COME INTO THEIR LOCATION.

I THINK APPLE DOES THIS VERY, VERY WELL.

I THINK, YOU KNOW... THEIR TOWN SQUARE CONCEPT THEY CREATED, THE LESSONS AND TEACHING THEY DO THERE, I THINK IS ANOTHER GOOD EXAMPLE.

I'D LIKE TO THINK WE DO IT BETTER THAN THEY DO, BUT... YOU KNOW, SALES FORCE IS JUST ONE TOOL WE'VE ENABLED THAT ALLOWS US TO SHOW UP DIFFERENTLY ON BEHALF OF OUR CUSTOMERS AND... QUITE FRANKLY, ON BEHALF OF OUR EMPLOYEES.

>> ALL RIGHT... SO LET'S TURN IT OVER TO QUESTIONS?

WHAT DO WE HAVE IN THE ROOM?

JUST WAIT FOR A MICROPHONE IF YOU'RE HERE WITH US.

>> SHELLY, THIS QUESTION'S FOR YOU.

SO, WHEN WE TALK ABOUT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND YOUR BACKGROUND, WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WE'RE STILL DELIGHTING THE CUSTOMER, AT THE SAME TIME, VALUING THEIR TIME.

WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS BEEN THAT BEST APPROACH TO THAT?

YOU KNOW... YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU VALUE THEIR TIME, BUT THEY WANT THIS IN AND OUT TYPE OF EXPERIENCE, SO... WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THAT SWEET SPOT FOR THAT?

>> ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MAKES DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING AND DATA-DRIVEN RETAIL REALLY HARD IS THAT EACH OF US ARE NOT ONE THING.

AND THE DATA TELLS ONE STORY.

SO... YOU, AND OUR CURRENT WAY THAT WE UNDERSTAND DATA-DRIVEN BUSINESS, OR THE WAY THAT WE, YOU WILL COHORT SOMEONE INTO... INTO A GROUP OF PEOPLE YOU THINK HAVE A CERTAIN SET OF ATTRIBUTES OR PROPENSITIES.

THIS PERSON IS PROBABLY GOING TO GET A PHONE THAT COST BETWEEN THIS AMOUNT AND THIS AMOUNT.

IT'S PROBABLY GOING TO BE FROM THESE TWO COMPANIES OR ONE COMPANY.

THERE ARE GUARANTEED APPLE -- YOU'RE GOING TO PUT THEM IN A KIND OF A, A ZONE, BECAUSE THAT'S THE BEST WAY YOU CAN SEGMENT THAT AUDIENCE.

BUT... HUMAN BEING WALKS IN AND THEY MIGHT BE IN A RUSH BECAUSE THEY JUST GOT A TEXT MESSAGE FROM SOMEBODY THAT SAYS THEY HAVE TO DO SOMETHING.

THEY MIGHT HAVE ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD, TRYING TO KILL AN HOUR BEFORE A MEETING AND YOU HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO WAY TO KNOW THAT.

SO... ALL THE DATA IN THE WORLD BREAKS DOWN, LITERALLY BREAKS DOWN, WHEN, WHEN HUMAN BEINGS AREN'T INVOLVED.

IF I NEEDED TO TELL YOU MATHEMATICALLY, HOW MANY CHINESE MEALS WILL BE SERVED IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK TONIGHT, I'D PROBABLY, BY TAKING ALL THE STATISTICS REQUIRED, THE AMOUNT OF INGREDIENTS AND THE NUMBER OF RESTAURANTS AND THE NUMBER OF SEATS AVAILABLE AND GENERAL, WHAT TIME OF YEAR IT IS, WHAT'S THE WEATHER?

I HAVE TO TAKE ALL THAT STUFF TOGETHER, WHAT'S THE TOTAL CAPACITY OF THE RESTAURANTS?

WHAT'S THE ORDINARY LEVEL THAT THEY'RE FILLED TO, I'D GET YOU A NUMBER THAT'S PROBABLY WITHIN A COUPLE PERCENTAGE POINTS OF DEAD NUTS ON, FROM A POPULATION STANDPOINT, BUT I CANNOT TELL YOU WHO IS HAVING DINNER TONIGHT IN A CHINESE RESTAURANT.

RIGHT?

BECAUSE... YOU COULD START THAT IN THE MORNING THINKING "I'M GOING TO HAVE CHINESE FOOD," MAKE THE RESIES AND YOU'RE DONE.

AT 4:00, SOMEONE SAYS "OH!

HEY, LET'S GO TO DINNER TONIGHT, I HAVE A RESERVATION AT THIS GREAT MEXICAN RESTAURANT."



ALL DAY I'M THINKING CHINESE FOOD AND SOCIALLY ENGINEERED OUT OF IT AT 4:00.

SO, HUMAN BEINGS CANNOT BE PREDICTED.

POPULATIONS CAN BE PREDICTED.

WHERE... WHERE THIS BECOMES ART, NOT SCIENCE, ESPECIALLY AT RETAIL, IS THAT YOU NEED TO PAY ATTENTION AT LIKE... THESE ARE HUMAN BEINGS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE, OF THE COUNTER.

AND... I THINK THAT'S, THE HUMANITY IS YET TO BE BUILT INTO THE SYSTEM AND MAY NEVER BE ABLE TO BE BUILT INTO THE SYSTEM, AT LEAST NOT IN THE NEXT COUPLE YEARS.

THERE COULD BE A TIME, YOU KNOW... MACHINE-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OR NEURAL NETWORK ENVIRONMENT OR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ENVIRONMENT WHERE WE CAN TRAIN PARTNERS, AI PARTNERS OR COWORKERS AND THE AI COWORKER COULD TELL US MORE ABOUT WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN THIS HUMAN BEING WALKS IN.

CERTAINLY, YOU COULD PASS THE CREEPY FACTOR, AS FAR AS YOU WANT TO GO AND GET A PRETTY DECENT DATASET THAT WOULD TELL YOU, THIS PERSON, ESPECIALLY VERIZON, DUE TO PROXY SERVICES LAYER AND KNOWING THEIR TEXT MESSAGES, A PRETTY GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEIR DAY IS LIKE, BUT THAT'S NOT GOING TO BE LEGAL AND PROBABLY NOT MORAL.

SO... WE HAVE TO FIND THAT BALANCE.

IT'S A GREAT QUESTION, BUT IT ALSO PLAYS UP THE MOST-IMPORTANT PART ABOUT EVERY, SINGLE THING IN THIS WORLD.

PEOPLE FIRST.

THE DATA'S JUST A TOOL.

IT'S JUST A CRIB SHEET.

IT'S LIKE GOING IN THERE, TAKE A TEST AND YOU JUST KNOW A LITTLE MORE AND THE PEOPLE WHO ARE GOING TO SUCCEED THE MOST AND THE BEST IN OUR WORLD TODAY, NO MATTER WHAT BUSINESS THEY'RE IN, ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE THE BEST MAN-MACHINE PARTNERS.

IF YOU KNOW HOW TO MANIPULATE YOUR DATA, AND YOU KNOW HOW TO BECOME A PARTNER WITH YOUR MACHINE LEARNING TOOLS OR YOUR -- JUST YOUR SPREAD SHEETS, WHATEVER DATASET YOU HAVE, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

BUT... IT STARTS BY BEING A HUMAN BEING BECAUSE... YOU DO WHAT THE HUMANS DO AND THE DATA DOES WHAT THE DATA DOES.

AND RESPONSIBLY USING THAT TO HELP INCREASE YOUR CAPABILITIES, THAT IS THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE I THINK EVERYBODY WHO IS IN RETAIL SHOULD STRIVE FOR.

BY THE WAY, EVERY EXECUTIVE EVERYWHERE SHOULD STRIVE FOR THAT AND THE THING WE HAVE TO KNOW IS THAT WE WILL -- WE SHOULD NEVER, WE WILL NEVER, WE SHOULD NEVER, IN THE NEXT FORESEEABLE, 60 MONTHS OUT, I'LL GO FIVE YEARS FROM THIS TIME.

60 MONTHS, WE SHOULDN'T BE RELYING ON DATA TO DO OUR JOB.

THERE MAY COME A TIME, BUT RIGHT NOW, RELY ON YOUR GUT INSTINCT AND YOUR HEART AND YOUR INTELLECT AND YOUR INTUITION AND FEED THAT WITH THE DATASET.

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A MUCH MORE SUCCESSFUL, YOU KNOW... TIME. THAT'S MY HUMBLE OPINION.

>> YEAH... LET ME JUST ADD ONE THING, BECAUSE I THINK IT'S SO IMPORTANT AND I LOVE THE FRAMING OF THE SCIENCE AND THE ART BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY, PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE.

PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE THEY TRUST.

AND THE SIMPLE QUESTION, HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE TODAY?

IS A GREAT QUESTION TO FRAME UP HOW DO YOU PULL ALL THAT INFORMATION IN AND YOU KNOW... SHELLY, ONE OF THE THINGS THAT WE DIDN'T TALK ABOUT TODAY THAT I THINK IS REALLY IMPORTANT IS THE ROLE OF THE MANAGER IN OUR STORES.

WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF GOING THROUGH WHAT WE CALL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, WHICH IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERY MANAGER TO BE TRAINED ON EVERYTHING THEY NEED TO KNOW SO THAT THEY CAN CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE CAN BE PEOPLE.

AND SERVE CUSTOMERS.

IT'S NOT SO THEY CAN BE THE BOSS, BUT SO THEY CAN ENABLE THEIR PEOPLE WITH TOOLS AND CAPABILITIES AND TURN PEOPLE LOOSE TO GO DELIVER AND DELIGHT CUSTOMERS, WHICH IS WHAT YOU GUYS DO BETTER THAN ANYBODY.

>> WE HAVE A QUESTION ON FACEBOOK FROM ANDY BROWN WHO ASKED "AS RETAIL EVOLVES, HOW WILL REPRESENTATIVES NEED TO ADAPT IN ORDER TO ADOPT THE NEW STRATEGY?"

AND WHAT SKILLS WOULD THEY WORK ON NOW TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING?"

>> FOR ME, YOU KNOW... I'VE SPENT MANY YEARS AT VERIZON AND ONE OF THE THINGS I HAVE LOVED ABOUT MY TIME WITH VERIZON IS I'M A STUDENT TO THIS BUSINESS EVERY SINGLE DAY AND I WOULD ENCOURAGE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US TO BE WELL-READ ON THE INDUSTRY, TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU MAINTAIN A PERSONAL RELEVANCY TO WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND YOU.

BE A CONSUMER, GO OUT AND SHOP OTHER RETAILERS, FIND OUT WHAT YOU LOVE, FIND OUT WHAT YOU THINK IS TERRIBLE AND THEN HAVE A PASSION FOR BEING BETTER TODAY THAN YOU WERE THE DAY BEFORE.

AS YOU DO THAT, AS YOU'RE A STUDENT OF THE BUSINESS, WE GET BETTER AT WHAT WE DO.

WE GET BETTER AT HOW WE SERVE CUSTOMERS AND WE MAINTAIN THAT RELEVANCY.

MY COMMITMENT, AS YOUR LEADER, IS THAT WE'LL SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN TRAINING, MAKING SURE THAT AS THE INDUSTRY CHANGES, WE CAN BE THE SOURCE OF TRUTH.

SO... SHELLY TALKS ABOUT BEING A SOURCE OF TRUTH WHEN CUSTOMERS ASK INFORMATION, WE SHOULD BE THE ONE THAT CAN WALK THEM THROUGH AND ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS IN A WAY THAT MAKES SENSE FOR HOW THEY'RE GOING TO USE THAT.

SO... I'M A HUGE BELIEVER OF BEING A STUDENT TO THE BUSINESS, DON'T WAIT FOR SOMEBODY TO TRAIN YOU, BUT GO OUT AND BE A CONSUMER, ABSORB IT, LEARN FROM IT, BRING THOSE IDEAS BACK IN AND BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION.

>> I COULDN'T AGREE MORE.

>> GOT ANOTHER QUESTION ON FACEBOOK FROM JEFF SWANSON.

IN A COMPLEX BUSINESS AND TECH WORLD "IS THERE A MINDSET THAT HELPS THOSE CUSTOMERS SIMPLIFY THE COMPLEX?" WE TALKED ABOUT THE SOLUTION AND THE BENEFIT AS OPPOSED TO THE FEATURE, BUT ANY OTHER THOUGHTS ON THAT TOPIC?

>> YEAH I THINK IT'S ABOUT KNOWING YOUR PRODUCTS WELL ENOUGH THAT YOU CAN TALK ABOUT THE BENEFIT AND SOLUTION IT ENABLES, AS OPPOSED TO THE TECHNICALITY BEHIND IT.

YOU MAY NEED TO KNOW THE TECHNICALITY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM, BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE THAT AND SHOULD BE DEEPLY ROOTED IN WHAT THE TECHNICALITY IS, SO YOU CAN SPEAK VERY HUMAN.

I THINK IT'S ABOUT UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMER, IT'S ABOUT KNOWING YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, AND SPEAK ABOUT THE BENEFIT, YOU CAN CONSISTENTLY DELIVER THE BENEFIT AND THAT'S HOW CUSTOMERS -- PEOPLE BUY FROM CUSTOMERS -- I MEAN, PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE THEY TRUST, PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE THEY LIKE AND WHEN YOU KNOW YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, CAN COMMUNICATE THEM EFFECTIVELY, PEOPLE WILL BUY FROM YOU.

>> JUST ONE LITTLE TWIST ON THAT.

I 100% AGREE WITH EVERYTHING TAMI JUST SAID, THERE'S SOMEONE IN YOUR WORLD WHO IS, LET'S JUST SAY, LESS TECHNICAL THAN YOU ARE.

[LAUGHTER]

>> IN MY CASE, MRS. PALMER SERVES THAT PURPOSE.

IF I CANNOT EXPLAIN IN GOOD ENGLISH, WHICH IS NOT ENGLISH, TO MY WIFE WHAT SOMETHING DOES, THEN CLEARLY, A, I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT WELL ENOUGH TO TEACH IT.

AND IF I CAN'T MAKE HER KNOW WHAT IT IS IN A SIMPLE, FAST, EFFECTIVE WAY, THEN OBVIOUSLY I JUST NEED SOME WORK.

EVERYONE HAS IN THEIR LIVES, SOMEONE WHO IS SOMEWHAT TECHNICALLY CHALLENGED OR TECHNO PHOBIC.

MOST PEOPLE ACTUALLY ARE.

THE MONA LISA SMILE WHEN SOMEONE'S LOOKING AT YOU GOING... AND YOU'RE SPOUTING OFF FEATURES, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO YOU.

IT DOESN'T MEAN THEY UNDERSTAND ANYTHING, IT JUST MEANS "I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO YOU."

AND THE MORE THEY LOOK LIKE THEY UNDERSTAND, THE LESS THEY PROBABLY UNDERSTAND.

I'D ALWAYS ARGUE, IF YOU REALLY WANT TO PRACTICE THAT, RUN YOUR HEADLINES AND RUN YOUR EXPLANATION.

IF YOU CAN'T, YOU HAVE TO KNOW IT TO TEACH IT, BEING ABLE TO TEACH IT TO SOMEONE THAT DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS IS THE BEST WAY TO GET GOOD AT THIS AND... YOU'RE GOING TO FIND, ACTUALLY, THERE'S A RICH ENVIRONMENT OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT IS THAT ANYONE YOU GUYS SELL ACTUALLY DOES EXCEPT MAKE CALLS AND TAKE PICTURES AND TEXT.

LIKE, AND THEN THERE'S MORE STUFF.

YES THERE, IS.

SO... IF YOU CAN EXPLAIN IT, THEN, THEN, WELL TO SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T UNDERSTAND, WHO DOESN'T COME WITH A PRECONCEIVED UNDERSTANDING, YOU'LL HAVE DONE YOURSELF A GOOD SERVICE.

>> WE'RE JUST ABOUT OUT OF TIME FOR THIS AFTERNOON, BUT TAMI, I'LL TURN IT TO YOU FOR FINAL THOUGHTS FOR WRAP-UP.

>> THANK YOU FOR THE CONVERSATION THIS AFTERNOON.

I'VE ENJOYED THE CONVERSATION.

I'M SUPER EXCITED ABOUT THE ROLE THAT RETAIL PLAYS IN TERMS OF HOW WE SERVE CUSTOMERS IN THE COMMITMENT WE HAVE TO SHOWING UP DIFFERENTLY, ON BEHALF OF OUR CUSTOMERS.

I THINK RETAIL IS CHANGE-RIPE.

WE TALKED ABOUT ALL THE REASONS IT'S CHANGING, BUT I'M ALSO A BELIEVER THAT WE EMBRACE CHANGE AND THAT WE LEAD THAT CHANGE AND I BELIEVE THAT TOGETHER, WE WILL SERVE CUSTOMERS IN A VERY MEANINGFUL WAY FOR MANY, MANY YEARS TO COME.

LISTEN, I COULDN'T BE MORE EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS BUSINESS BECAUSE THE FUTURE OF THE BUSINESS IS, YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH 5G, YOU THINK ABOUT THINGS LIKE CONNECTED CITIES, YOU THINK ABOUT THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, WHERE ELSE WOULD YOU WANT TO BE THAN AT VERIZON TO GO ON THAT JOURNEY AND TO CREATE THE EXPERIENCE THAT CUSTOMERS WILL HAVE?

IT WON'T BE THE SAME AS IT IS TODAY, IT'LL BE BETTER.

WE JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'LL BE.

I'M SUPER EXCITED ABOUT THAT.

>> THANKS, TAMI.

SHELLY, ANY FINAL THOUGHTS?

>> I JUST WANT TO THANK YOU GUYS FOR INVITING ME TODAY.

MY FINAL THOUGHTS ARE... THIS IS HUMBLY THE MOST EXCITING TIME TO BE ALIVE.

IT JUST IS.

WE ARE ON THE CUSP OF A, AN EVOLUTIONARY STEP AND... A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE VERY SCARED BY IT.

THERE'S A LOT OF SOCIAL CHANGE GOING ON.

AND MOST OF IT CAN BE BLAMED, PRETTY SQUARELY ON THE TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED TO EMPOWER IT.

YEAH... THAT'S ONE WAY TO LOOK AT IT.

THE OTHER WAY TO LOOK AT IT IS OPTIMISTICALLY.

THAT'S TO BELIEVE, PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HERE A REALLY LONG TIME AND TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN THE STORY OF HUMANITY FROM THE FIRST ROCK USED AS A HAMMER UP TO TODAY.

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE, WHAT MAKES TOMORROW SEEM SO EXCITING IS THAT IT, IS COMES WITH POSSIBILITIES THAT TRULY ARE LIMITED ONLY BY TWO THINGS.

AT THE MOMENT, WE CAN'T TRAVEL FASTER THAN LIGHT AND WE CAN'T DO STAR TREK TELEPORTATION AND EVERYTHING ELSE, YOU CAN GET DONE.

LIKE... IT'S JUST UP TO YOU.

IT'S LITERALLY UP TO YOU.

YOU ARE THE ARCHITECTS OF THE FUTURE.

YOU WILL DECIDE HOW YOU WANT TO BE AN ARCHITECT THAT WAY, YOU DO IT BY LEARNING AND IMAGINING AND DOING.

AND SINCE THAT'S WITHIN ALL OF OUR CAPABILITIES, TO LEARN, IMAGINE, AND DO, I CAN'T THINK OF A REASON NOT TO BE SUPER OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE.

AND AGAIN, THANKS FOR HAVING ME HERE, THANKS FOR LETTING ME TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE THINGS I LIKE SO MUCH AND YOU KNOW, ONWARD AND UPWARD AS THEY SAY.

>> SHELLY, TAMI, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEING HERE FOR OUR UP TO SPEED PODCAST.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE IN THE ROOM AND THANK YOU FOR WATCHING ONLINE AS WELL.

HAVE A GREAT AFTERNOON.

>> THANKS FOR LISTENING.

YOU CAN FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER AT VZUPTOSPEED OR LIKE US ON FACEBOOK AT VERIZON UP TO SPEED.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY, TODAY.