

# Verizon

*Making a Digital Marketing Strategy for Unpredictable Times*

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## PRESENTATION

**Andy Choi**

Hi, I'm Andy Choi with Verizon and I want to welcome you all back to our Small Business Webinar Series. Each of these webinars, of course, will feature experts offering professional insights and ideas all about coping with COVID-19, how this all relates to small businesses.

I'd like to introduce our expert for today's talk. We're excited to have Melinda Emerson joining us. She's going to walk us through the idea of an internal digital marketing reboot. Now, Melinda is a pioneer in social media marketing. She's the creator and host of #Smallbizchat, and my favorite part about Melinda, Forbes magazine named her the number one woman for entrepreneurs to follow on Twitter, so give @SmallBizLady a follow, and without further ado, I'll hand it over to today's webinar expert, Melinda Emerson.

**Melinda F. Emerson**

Hi, everybody. I'm Melinda Emerson, the "SmallBizLady", and I am so excited to be here with you today, and we are going to be talking about developing a digital marketing strategy in these unpredictable times. Now, listen, we are all going through a lot. It's one thing to be running your business from your house. It's a whole nother thing to be running your business, homeschooling and stressing over how you're going to keep your business open right now, but I promise you, if you hang in there with me until the end of this webinar, I am going to give you your post COVID-19 action plan, all right? I promise I'm going to do that, and I have a special gift for you as well, so let's jump into the presentation.

Now, as was just mentioned to you guys, I am Melinda Emerson. I am the "SmallBizLady" and I am the host of the #Smallbizchat podcast and I'm so excited to be here with the Verizon Small Business Webinar Series. Now, what I'm going to talk to you about is just the real deal. What we're going to talk about is digital marketing now that things have changed, the nature of business has changed, the nature of how everyone is doing, things have changed, but that's also an opportunity for you potentially, so let's jump in.

First of all, I just want to give you just a few bits of information about me and why I am the right person to teach you this information today. I've been an entrepreneur for 21 years. I'm an international keynote speaker and small business influencer, and I was a social media pioneer. I have been on Twitter for a long time, so I am definitely a person that could teach you about reinventing your business online. I'm an advocate for small business owners. I publish a resource blog called [succeedasyourownboss.com](http://succeedasyourownboss.com). I host Smallbizchat Live on Wednesdays on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, and I also am the host of the Smallbizchat podcast, so please go and check it out. I have owned a marketing consulting firm, Quintessence Group, for those 21 years and I work with Fortune 500 companies who target small business owners. Some of my clients include Visa, FedEx, Google, HP, American Express, and of course, Verizon, so I'm very, very happy to be here today.

So, let's talk about what has happened in this COVID-19 era. A lot of things have changed about marketing, but a lot of things have changed about how everybody's working. Everyone's working remotely. Everyone is streaming and live streaming everything. People are spending a lot more time on social media, and people are looking for escapes and entertainment, but they're also going cashless with payments, and anything they're buying now, nobody wants to touch anybody, nobody wants to touch cash, and that is an opportunity for you as well, so think about that as you reinvent your new customer experience.

Now, one of the things I want to explain to you is no matter how you engage customers, 97% of all interaction is digital, so looking at your digital marketing strategy in this day and age is really what you need to be doing, because no matter what you sell, you better be selling online, so I'm going to give you some of the things you need to look at and how you might need to retool, so that you are positioned. Because it's not just about surviving what's going on right now. It's about thriving in the post COVID-19 era, and that's really what I want to get into.

So, do you need a new digital marketing strategy? Yes... probably. So, I checked the 'maybe' button just because I wanted to be fair, but we all know that no matter what you're doing, you've got to be doing it differently right now.

So, why might you need a new digital marketing strategy? Well, you might not have a direction now that things have changed. You might not really know your customer online, who your online audience is, and if you do, you might not be competing very effectively against your competitors. You might want a tight, powerful unique value proposition. You might not have a digital team. If you're doing it all yourself, and you're not good at it, you might be shooting yourself in the foot, so we're going to talk about what kind of folks you need to have on your team. You might also have just a poor online customer engagement. If you're out here on social media and all you do is share links and stuff back on your website, that is a poor online customer engagement, so we want to think about how you can do all of that differently. You might not have an integrated approach. You might be doing this over on Facebook, this over on Twitter, this on your blog, doing this with your newsletter, all of this stuff needs to look like it is a concert of music and every piece of your marketing is playing the right note. And you just might not be agile enough to catch up or stay ahead with digital because a lot has changed and you lack optimization. It's great to be publishing content, but if you're not publishing content that is optimized well, you might not need to even be doing it, so I'm going to talk to you about all of those things as we move into this presentation.

So, how do you create a digital marketing strategy? Well, the first thing you've got to do is think about your own business and what you sell, and is it time to create a new offer? Do you need to pivot your business model? Do you have an email list? Let me tell you something. If you have an email list, you have the ability to make money right now, and we're going to talk about that a little bit. Who is your best target customer, and do you have a powerful, unique value proposition? Right now, nobody's looking for me to businesses, I promise you that. People are wanting people who specialize in what they make or what they do, and you want to make sure that you have an argument to make for why people should do business with you, now more than ever.

Now, the other thing I want you to think about is if you know that it's time for you to pivot, or maybe tweak some things, here's a few things that you can look at. Number one, what can you substitute? Can you use different vendors to maybe lower your costs? What can you combine? Can you combine some of your services together to develop a new innovative solution? What can you adapt? What changes do your customers need right now based upon how their business has changed? What can you modify? How can you modify and add value without adding price? What can you do, and then is there another market you can serve? Sometimes you might be able to put your products and services to a completely different use. Let me give you an example. There's all these hair salons and makeup artists that are out of work right now because you're not allowed to go to those kinds of businesses. They're not essential. They're shut down. Well, I happen to know plenty of makeup artists and hairdressers that are giving courses, teaching people how to look great in their Zoom meeting – five-minute face. All of these kinds of things are a way that you can repurpose what you do. You might not be able to charge people to do the service, but you might help people do it themselves and still make a little bit of money, and then the other thing you got to think about is what is it that you need to stop doing? Sometimes we just need to eliminate stuff, and certainly you might need to reverse course all together. Can you reorganize your business to be more effective? Now, I know we're supposed to be talking about digital marketing here, but it doesn't make sense to talk about that if you need to talk about what you're selling, and how your business is doing, because until you get really clear on that you can't get clear on your messaging and your marketing, so it's worth having a conversation about that as well.

Now, here are the top six marketing channels that I think you need to be concerned about. Your website is your number one marketing channel, so if you pay attention to anything, pay attention to that. SEM, search engine marketing, that is also called pay-per-click. We're talking about Google ads, Facebook ads, Instagram ads, even display ads on your website, all of that is pay-per-click marketing, and you really need to figure that out because no longer do you have the option to just write blog posts and think it's going to work, you really have to have a strategic plan about how you're going to incorporate pay-per-click marketing in what you're doing. Social media is great, but we're going to talk a little bit later about what platform you should really be on. Do you really need to be on all the platforms? I'll tell you, you don't. And then think about how you can build through transparency and really sharing valuable content. Social media is about give-to-get and you really need to make sure that you're a part of the community and seen as a valued resource. Email is simply the best method of direct response marketing, so you need to figure out how you can juice up your email, reengage your list, because if you have a customer list or even a prospect list, you have gold, you have the ability to make money right now. And then there's content marketing and SEO. Certainly you want to demonstrate your expertise with your content, but you can't lose sight of the fact that you also need

to be driving organic search traffic, and just making sure that – nobody clicks to the second page of Google, right? You've got to figure out how the content you're developing, how can you get that—

*[Technical difficulty]*

—what kinds of things can you optimize on your website to increase your ranking in search results. And lastly, and most importantly, word of mouth referrals are still one of the most valuable ways to get business. People will trust a referral over any other marketing you can do, so we're going to just talk a bit about referral programs and online reviews. You want to make sure that you are engaging your happy customers so that they will go other places and talk about you.

So, let's talk about your website. Your website is your number one sales tool. If you want to start just doing a mini review of your site, I suggest getting a – social media is great, you can go right out now and offer people a \$5 gift card, and they will give you feedback pretty easily, so pull together a group of people and just ask them some questions. Does your website make a good first impression? Your website is really the door, it's the welcome mat into your business, so if it doesn't make a good first impression, you're never going to get somebody's money, and so you want to really think about what it is you can do to spruce up your website, even if you're on a budget, so first things I want you to do is conduct a site audit, just check all the links, make sure things are working. How fast does your site load on a mobile device? How fast does it load on a laptop? Make sure you understand that, and then test your user experience, and this is where you want to pull together five to 10 people, ask them what their impression of your user experience is. That's what UX stands for, and so you want to also make sure that you check your lead magnets. When's the last time you created a new lead magnet that will get people to give you their email address? That's how you get a prospect list, and like I said, if you've got an email list, you have the ability to make money right now, and absolutely use Google Analytics. It's free. It's under the hood of your site. Bare minimum, you should be looking at it every month, but if you're ready to make some tweaks to your website, you need to spend some time really digging into your analytics. What attracts people to your site? What is your bounce rate? Where does most of your referral traffic come from? These are all things that you'll find out by looking at your Google Analytics, so before you start messing with your website, get information, ask people what they think of your site, and then you go from there and just start making tweaks.

Now, there's all kinds of metrics out here. People often want to talk about conversion metrics and on, but listen, I want to talk about website metrics because, again, I believe your website is your number one sales tool, so let's look at website metrics, and here's the website metrics I want you to think about. Number one, revenue. Does this website make money? How much? What is your cost per lead? That's very important for you to calculate. Traffic sources, what's coming to your site? Where is it coming from, and this is going to be important later when we talk about social media because a lot of people spend a lot of time on social media, on sites that are not driving them traffic. The whole point of doing social media is to drive traffic back to your website, so if you're not tracking that, it just doesn't make sense, but you also want to track things like your website traffic to lead ratio. What is that? How many people come to your website and actually click on your lead magnets and give you their email address, right? That's what your website traffic to lead ratio is talking about. And then your landing page's conversion rates, that's really important. Are people coming to your landing pages, and are they converting when they come? And then I want you to look at your customer lifetime value and churn rate. How fast are people getting off your email list? Are people giving you repeat business or are you only getting business one time? These are all things that you need to be looking at as it relates to your website.

Now, let me talk about what I think are the two most unreliable website metrics, your open rates and your unsubscribe rate, and the reason why these are irrelevant is because depending on what device, someone could open your stuff and look at it, but if they don't download the pictures, it doesn't count as an open rate, even though it was open. And your unsubscribe rates, there's so many automation tools out here unsubscribing people from stuff, you don't know if your unsubscribe rate is real or not, so I would not use these two metrics to evaluate very much, and so that is my public service announcement to you. These are unreliable, don't use them.

Now, here's what I want to talk to you about though as we move into really talking about email marketing. Companies that excel at lead nurturing generate 50% more sales, so it is really important that once you capture a lead with your irresistible free offer on your website, you have to talk to these people, you have to introduce yourself, you have to add more value, and you have to ask them to buy more stuff from you, but you can't do that until you build a trust relationship, so let's talk about how you do that.

Now, there is a big difference between developing sales copy, that we call copywriting, and content, and so content is like your blog post, your eBooks, that is content, but in order for you to use email to generate money, you have to hire a copywriter or you better become one, because that is really... at the end of the day, you have to ask for the business. Now, if you're going to do DIY copywriting, I suggest you use what I call the PAS formula: address the problem, agitate them so that they really drive the pain, and then offer your solution. If you do that, there's all these people that write these big long sales letters, there's people that write short sales letters. Look, it doesn't matter. If you're not doing these three things, you're not going to close a sale, so think about it. Whenever you're going to write a sales email for your list, problem, agitate, solution, very, very important. Certainly, content is important too, but at the end of the day, you have to ask people to buy something from you, and that's going to happen through email with a great pitch letter that's driven by what I just talked about.

Now, when someone gives you their email address, and they sign up for your lead magnet, that is how a person becomes aware of your business, and all of this is really a sales funnel, so your lead magnet drives people into your funnel, so there's people at the top of the funnel, and there's people at the bottom of the funnel, so let's just walk through sales funnels and how they work. So, someone signs up for your lead magnet, and then they become aware of your brand, and then, by doing so, they demonstrate some interest if they continue to click on some of the emails that you're sending them, so if they are clicking on things that are important to your business, then that makes you know that they're interested in getting some more information or they're feeling more pain. Now, once you pitch them an offer, and typically, your offer should come four to seven emails in – it used to be back in the day it was a four to one ratio of helpful information to pitch, but I've actually recently read that it's become longer. It's really maybe seven emails, six emails before a pitch email, so seven all together, so just do what feels right for you and your customer. You know your customer, but once you make a pitch to them, they're going to go out and see who else is out there, they're going to evaluate you against your other competitors, so that is where you want to make sure that your value proposition is so clearly stated, why should you pick me? That has got to be really important in the follow-up emails you send after you send your pitch email. Then eventually you get, they're going to make their buying decision, and hopefully, the purchase will be made with you, but this is how it works, and this is what your emails drive people to do. They drive people to get more information, and then hopefully you make a sale.

Now, let's talk a little bit more about email because email is how you drive your sales funnel. Number one, you have to know your audience. Number two, you have to give lots of valuable content, and you have to have very clear calls to action. You've got to be clear, concise, and clever. People do still respond to humor, so you want to make sure that you keep it 100 with people, but you want to make sure that you clearly tell them what you want to do. You also want to make sure that you're tracking your email metrics, what are your open rates for your emails. Even though I told you open rate is a shady way to evaluate, it is one of the ways you can find out how many people open this email, how many people clicked on stuff, and watch email fatigue. If you start to see your open rates go below 15%, it might be time to clean up your list because you might have people on there that just wanted your free stuff and they don't want anything else, or your writing might not be that good, and you really want to make sure that it might be time to bring in somebody who's a professional copywriter to keep people interested in your emails. You also need to make sure that your emails align with your overall brand. You don't want to be saying something in your emails that people can't find demonstrated in your own way that you run your business or the other social media things that you're sharing. And you should test everything. A/B test every element. I'm a big fan of testing slug lines, subject lines with different audiences to see which one opened up better. Those are the kinds of things that you definitely want to test every... the time of day, the day of the week, you want to be testing your emails so that you can make sure what is going to be most effective for your audience.

Now, when it comes to social media, at the end of the day, it is always about what I call the six Cs of social media marketing. The first C is Connect. You have to connect with people in social media, but once you connect, you need to communicate. Now, one of the things that I've seen a lot of people do that is really unfortunate is the way they want to communicate two seconds after they connect is to pitch me something to buy from them, and I see a lot of this on LinkedIn, and it's really unfortunate because that is a great way to turn someone off, so you want to communicate, but you want to communicate valuable free content first, and it should be compelling content. You don't just want to send them anything. Send them something of value. Once you build a value relationship, and you do that consistently, then you become a trusted member of the community. Once you get to trust with someone, that is when you can turn that relationship into commerce. The biggest mistake I see people do is they go from connect to commerce in two seconds flat, and that's a great way to become a pariah online. That's not what you want to do. Make sure that before you go out and connect with somebody in social media, you have a plan and you have a drip campaign for how you're going to provide value and introduce yourself and demonstrate

what you do. Sometimes I have seen really, really effective pitches. Someone recently sent me a pitch where they recorded a video, a two-minute video, just for me. Hey, Melinda, I looked you up online, I'm a big fan of your work, and I see that you do this, and I have a custom solution that can help you do this faster. I'd love to get five minutes of your time just to talk about it, and you know what, I wasn't interested in what the person had to sell me, but you know what, I sent them back... I took the time to send them back an email to say you know what, thank you so much for sending me a personalized message just to me, and using video is a great way to do that guys, especially if you're doing a sales follow up. So, think about ways that you can connect and communicate with people in a compelling way, and even if they're not ready to buy, you could develop a great referral from that a pitch.

Now, one of the things that I want to talk about is social and what platforms you should be on. In my personal opinion, you should really focus on one or two platforms, because there are so many platforms and there are so many people using them, you just don't have the time to do all of them well, and sharing the same piece of content on all of the platforms, that's never going to work. So, you want to really think about what platform makes sense, but I do just want to point out something. Facebook is still king. People are on Facebook sharing a lot of information, particularly if you're reaching out to consumers or specific groups of people, Facebook really is a great solution for you. Now, if you're into videos and you like to engage people with video, YouTube is where it's at. Honestly, YouTube is the second most searched site on the internet behind Google, and Google owns YouTube, so it never is a bad thing for you to post content on YouTube. Instagram is a great way – if you sell products, you can sell products on Instagram. Instagram is growing really, really fast. It is the fastest growing social media site still, so if you have something that's visual, interesting, that has a video component to it, Instagram is where it's at. If you are trying to reach people who are C-suite executives, decision makers, people making over 60,000 in revenue personally in terms of being the executive, LinkedIn is where it's at. LinkedIn is international. You definitely want to use LinkedIn, and now LinkedIn has a video component to it as well. There's lots of different platforms that may make sense to you, but if you're selling B2B, LinkedIn is where it's at. Twitter is interesting, because you can reach consumers as well as B2B folks as well on Twitter. I will confess, I'm absolutely a Twitter diva, but I'm big on LinkedIn and Facebook as well. Pinterest is a great niche play, depending on what you do, there's a lot of heavy use for women on Pinterest, but there are people making big money over on Pinterest as well.

So, you just want to kind of look at what you're selling and how you're selling and figure it out, but honestly if you just focused on one or two platforms, that is more than what you need.

Now, one of the things that I wanted to offer to all of you is these are tough times, these are perilous times, COVID-19 has changed everything. I created a brand-new eBook just for you all, just for this community today, and it's called *How to Recession Proof Your Small Business*. If you all head over to [www.succeedasyourownboss.com/recession](http://www.succeedasyourownboss.com/recession), you can download this eBook for free and get lots of more value and tools and tips, so that you cannot just survive these times, but thrive after them. I want to make sure that you guys all know to head on over to [www.succeedasyourownboss.com/recession](http://www.succeedasyourownboss.com/recession) so that you can grab a copy of my free eBook, *How to Recession Proof Your Small Business*.

All right, I promised you guys a post-COVID-19 Marketing Action Plan, and so I will deliver it now. The first thing I want you to do is map your new customer journey. It may have changed, and your customer journey is all about how do your customers find you, whether it's through organic search, paid search, ads, social media. How do your customers find you? Because that is how the relationship starts, so map out your customer journey so that you can develop focused content to drive people on the journey that you want to go, and that is going to be really important. Figure out how you want to pull them in and then pull them in that way.

The next thing I want you to do is talk to your existing customers. Here is the thing guys, the most expensive sell you will ever make is the first one, so if you are in a position right now where you need cash, you need revenue right now, you have got to talk to your existing customers, because they are your single best chance of getting low hanging fruit sales right now, so you've got to talk to them, send them emails, call them on the phone, call 10 a day, whatever you have got to do, talk to your customers, get their feedback. Find out what they're struggling with, find out what their new normal is, and figure out how you can step in and save the day. You never know, you could build a customer for life right now if you can solve a customer's problem that they never anticipated they would have.

The third I want you to do is look at your competitors. Look at what's going on, what are your competitors doing? Are they offering deep discounts? Are they pivoting and focusing on a new niche? What are your competitors doing? You need to make sure you know what it is so that you can zig

where other people are zagging. Don't put your head in the sand and just work on your website. Look at your top three competitors' websites before you develop a new position for your own business. Make sure you're looking at the competition. Look at their social media as well as their website to find out what they're up to.

You also need to be very clear about sales versus marketing. A lot of times, I see people get this really confused. Right now, what we all have is limited time and limited resources, so you want to be really, really clear about this. Marketing is how you get leads. Sales is how you close them. So, you want to make sure that your marketing efforts and your sales efforts are in lockstep with each other. If you're fortunate enough to have salespeople, you want to make sure that your new marketing ideas that you're in the process of coming up with, that you communicate and run them by your sales folks, so make sure that everybody agrees that this is the right approach, because you've got such a narrow window right now to generate revenue, so you want to make sure that everybody is on the same page and that you've gotten feedback from both sides. Sometimes folks that do the marketing or do the social media aren't talking to the salespeople, and that doesn't make sense, because everybody has got to know what's going on, so that the salespeople have the articles to share. It's really important that these things are aligned.

Now, the other thing you've got to do is do a channel analysis. You've got to see what marketing channel is really converting the best for you, what makes most sense. Is it pay-per-click ads? Is it Facebook ads? Is it your new lead magnet on your website? What is it that is converting the best for you? Is it email? Is it what kind of emails? Do you have to lower your price on some of your products and services? You really need to do channel analysis as well as look at your channel analytics. What is converting best for you? What are the best pieces of content on your site that people share, so that you know that those are things that you need to develop products for people who like that kind of content? This is a really, really sensitive thing that you need to do and if you've never done it before, you must do it now, but you really need to know where are your sales coming from and where is your traffic coming from and how can you get more of those people to buy from you.

You also need to do an internal resource audit. You want to make sure that if you're really starting to do a big digital push and you haven't been doing it, you want to make sure that you have all the people in place, the software and things place so that you can do it. Do you have someone that does your daily social media, or are you doing it yourself. Do you have somebody that's managing your Facebook ads or your graphic design for your ads? Who is doing that? Are you doing that too? Are you going on Canva and developing your own ads, or do you have someone helping you? This is what you want to figure out right now. You've got to generate sales right now, you've got to figure out do you have the right team and skillset personally to do it, or do you have a little bit of resources that you can invest in bringing somebody in to do it for you, but you really need to think through who you have on your team and is everybody playing the right position.

You also want to look at what can you automate. Marketing automation is a beautiful thing. If you want to develop a series of emails that we call a drip campaign, you need to automate that stuff. Who is doing that for you? Do you know how to do it through your email marketing software? Are you using [Keep], or are you using Mailchimp, are you using ActiveCampaign? What are you using? It doesn't matter. What can you automate? Can you automate your follow-ups once you send out a bid to someone? Or someone went in your shopping cart and abandoned your shopping cart, do you have an automated email that goes, that asks them, 'hey, did you forget to... let us know how we can help you finish your transaction'. All of these types of things need to be automated and you need to look at how you can do that, because it's going to save you time and make you money, and that is the reason why marketing automation is so powerful.

The other thing I want to talk about is budget. These things don't happen in a vacuum. If you're going to make a new Facebook ad campaign, you've got to have some money to do it, and you really need to be doing your campaign three to four weeks in order to really see great results. Certainly, you can test your campaign for the first week, but after you test it and figure out what work is actually converting, you've got to have budget to keep going. My suggestion would be at least three to four weeks, in a perfect world, three months, but your money might be too tight for that. I would say to you, give your marketing a chance by figuring out where you can get some budget from to work on your marketing.

Now, the last piece of your post-COVID-19 marketing plan is really going to be to develop an annual plan. You need to figure out what you're going to do over the next 12 months. We don't know when we're all going to be cleared to leave our homes and go back to our regular lives. Where I live, they've already cancelled school for the rest of the school year, so we know that it's probably not going to be before June. Some people are saying

September, even December, but you need to put together an annual plan of what you're going to do month by month to promote your business, engage your customers and build your digital marketing footprint in a way that it makes you money.

With that, I will just leave you with this, swords are made, how leaders are made. Do you guys know how swords are made? Swords are made – they heat up the metal, they beat it with hammers, they smooth it out, flatten it out, and then they put it back into the fire and heat it some more, and that is what's going on right now ladies and gentlemen, that is what we are living through. Let me tell you something, better businesses are made in hard times. So, now that you have a little bit more time than you've had before, in your quiet time when your kids are laying down and they are finally asleep, work on your business, don't just work in your business, work on your business, develop a digital marketing strategy for these uncertain times, because they will not be forever, and when they are over, you want to make sure that you have everything you need to take advantage. Because let me tell you something, they're going to be some winners and some losers that come out of this recession economy that we're dealing with, and I want you to know that I'm here for you as a resource, and I'm cheering for you. If you just do a few of the things that I've talked about today, your business will absolutely be better for it.

With that, I want you to know how you can contact me if you need some help. Certainly, I have over 5,000 articles on my website, [www.succeedasyourownboss.com](http://www.succeedasyourownboss.com), if you just go to my search bar, start typing in stuff, you can find anything you need. If you liked this presentation, I would really appreciate it if you would like my Facebook fan page. You can also connect to me at SmallBizLady, I'm Melinda Emerson on LinkedIn, and I also have a SmallBizLady channel on YouTube as well. If you just want to reach out for some encouragement, shoot me an email, leave me a voicemail, I will get back to you, because right now it's not necessarily about trying to make a buck, it's about lifting all of us up, and so that is where we're at.

With that, I'm going to turn it back over to the team at Verizon and we are going to do some Q&A.

Hi everybody, this is Melinda Emerson, I am here in the flesh, and I am really excited to talk to all of you about this information, so many of you have sent in questions. I'm going to try and go through them as much as we can, but there's over 30-some questions here, so I'm going to try to address them.

First and foremost, I want you all to know that the good folks at Verizon are going to email all of you this presentation, so some of you had some technical challenges, don't worry about it. The good folks at Verizon are going to send all of you this presentation.

Now, some of you asked is what I talked about relevant to non-profits, to service businesses versus retail businesses. The answer is yes, yes, yes. Non-profits are just businesses that file their taxes differently, so just know all of these tactics work for anyone running an organization or a business.

Now, let me go back to the beginning, to some of these questions, because you guys were coming at me fast and furious. I think two minutes into the presentation I saw questions pop up.

Someone asked, "Can I repeat the information from my eBook?"

Yes, if you want to get my eBook, How to Recession Proof Your Small Business, go to [www.succeedasyourownboss.com/recession](http://www.succeedasyourownboss.com/recession). I'll make sure that in the email that's coming out to you guys with a replay of this video, you guys will have a link to it again as well.

Now, let me get into some of these questions. Someone asked, "How can we offer shipping specials and at the same time get the best shipping rates?"

Listen, in this day and age, people expect free shipping, and so you've got to figure out if you're going to raise your price a little bit to cover the free shipping, but when it comes to your shipping rates, that has to do with who is shipping your product. Are you going through USPS? Are you selling through the Amazon channel? Are you selling through FedEx or UPS? Depending on your volume, you can negotiate better rates with all of these people, but you've got to figure out what your volume is. I don't know if what you're selling has different weights and things like that or if you can do a flat fee, but I know that, for example, USPS charges differently for priority shipping depending on the zip code where it's going, so you're really going to have to dig in with your provider to find out how you can get the best shipping rates. But if I were you and I was selling something online, I would make it free shipping, because that's the number one reason that people abandon shopping carts, it is because of shipping prices, so just think about that when you're pricing out your products and services.

Someone else asked, "How do you feel the business environment will change coming out of the pandemic?"

Well, I think the first thing you've got to realize is that we're not going to just come out of the pandemic. It's going to take some time for things to ramp back, so I think as a business you want to position yourselves strategically. You've got to understand that what you charged three months ago, you're not going to get now and you might not get six months from now. So, you've got to figure out, can you repackage something? Remember the SCAMPER formula that I talked about early on in the presentation, you've got to figure out, can you right size your offer to the new price point that you're going to be at. I do think that we're going to be in a fairly deep recession, probably longer than 2008/2009, so everyone needs to be prepared for that and just really figure out how you can add value, how you can separate yourself from your competitors. That is really how I think we're all going to have to position ourselves. I'm talking to me as much as I'm talking to you.

The next question I got was, "Can you share the protocol for posting an article on your blog versus LinkedIn, what should go first?"

Let me tell you, I do this myself. It should always go on your blog first, and even when you post it on LinkedIn – I, for example, post a newsletter on LinkedIn, I still link back to my blog. I don't just put an article just on LinkedIn, and I wouldn't suggest that for any of the platforms, because you can't control LinkedIn, you can control your website and your blog, so I'm a big fan of posting it on your blog first and then posting it, secondly, on LinkedIn. That is my rule of thumb for that.

Someone asked, "Where do you see PR in the role of the marketing mix?"

I think PR is definitely... listen, I had to pick the top six, just because they only gave me 30 minutes for the presentation, but certainly PR, it would be on my top 10 list, but you've got to look at are you doing PR yourself, are you paying a publicist. Right now, people have to look at what their budgets are and what they're willing to spend on. I think it's tough to get PR money out of folks right now. I think you've got to figure out how you can still get PR. The television is still on. Broadcast media and newscasters are still looking for content and looking for stories, and if you can somehow relate your business to COVID-19, you absolutely can get PR, but you've really got to think about... PR is definitely part of it. Earned media is what we call PR, but I don't know that people are willing to pay publicists right now when people are trying to figure out how to keep their doors open and how to keep their staff.

The next question I'm going to say, someone asked if I could talk further about a lead magnet, so let me just give you guys an example of a lead magnet. A free eBook, a free quote, a video series, an audio series, anything that you can give away, a whitepaper, anything like that that you can use to entice people to give you their email list when they get to your website, that is a lead magnet. Offer people to sign up for your newsletter. That is a lead magnet. All of these things are lead magnets, so you want to make sure that you have at least two or three on your website when people go to your website.

For example, if you guys go to my website, [www.succeedasyourownboss.com](http://www.succeedasyourownboss.com), there's all kinds of things you can download. You can sign up for my newsletter. You can download a free chapter of my best-selling book, Fix Your Business, or my other book, Become Your Own Boss in 12 Months. I have another eBook right in the header of my website so that you can download – if you want to learn how to develop Facebook ads. I've got all kinds of things and you should too. You want to make sure that you meet people where they're at and that it's easy to find on your website. That is what a lead magnet is.

Someone asked, they said that they offer a lead magnet in their newsletter, is it OK to rotate a paid product in your newsletter?

Yes, it absolutely is. Certainly, every newsletter you send out, you might not want to have a paid offer in there, but it's definitely OK once you build your trust relationship with your audience for you to put a paid item or something on sale in your newsletter, absolutely. You wouldn't want to keep it a secret from people that are on your email list, right, so absolutely put it in your newsletter.

Someone asked what software do I recommend for lead magnets.

There's lots of different software out there. I like Leadpages, a lot of people use ClickFunnels. There's a couple of different ones out there. You might want to find out if your email marketing company offers something.

I only have time for one or two more questions, so I'm going to hit it really fast. "How can I check my email/Gmail metrics for opens and clicks?"

Gmail doesn't offer you analytics unless you're using something on top of it. I use software called Mixmax and that is how I get analytics on the success rates of my Gmail open rate, so that's the only way I know to get analytics out of Gmail. The only other analytics that Google gives away are your Google Analytics underneath the hood of your website and I hope all of you are checking your Google Analytics monthly.

Now, that's it. That's all I've got for you. Thank you, guys, so much. Listen, for those of you that asked questions that I didn't answer, I'm going to publish a Q&A blog post on my blog, [www.succeedasyourownboss.com](http://www.succeedasyourownboss.com) next week, so look out for it. I'm going to try to answer every single question you guys – but you guys killed me, there's like 50 up here.

All right, thank you guys so much, take care.

## **Andy Choi**

That's it for today's webinar. Thank you so much Melinda Emerson for sharing your insights, taking those questions. Folks, in the "Attachments" tab, you'll see that we're sharing a link to download Melinda's new book, *How to Recession Proof Your Business*. She is making that book available to free for today's attendees. You can check out the other webinars as well in this series on our BrightTALK channel page. You can also register now for our next webinar, that's Tuesday April 21, we're excited to have Mr. Brian Moran talking about how to pivot your business with 30, 60, 90-day planning. Please join us today and for all the events in our Small Business Webinar Series.

Thanks again for coming. Have a great day. We will see you soon.

The statements and opinions by Melinda Emerson do not reflect the views or opinions of Verizon and its affiliates.