

Trudy Rankin ([00:06](#)):

Welcome to the Online Business Launchpad podcast. We're gonna be helping guide you step by step through the process of growing your business online. And we're gonna be giving you tips and techniques that are going to help you break through the barriers that can stop you making progress in your business.

Trudy Rankin ([00:22](#)):

This podcast is presented by West Island Digital and I'm your host, Trudy Rankin. I'm speaking today with Martina Kramer. Now, Martina has a real passion for using her deep experience and marketing skills to help architectural and product design businesses get to the top of their field. And really use concepts like product design and market segmentation to give customers what they need and to give them a really great experience. Can you just tell us a little bit more about what you do, what's your business?

Martina Kramer ([00:54](#)):

All right. So, well, do you know how difficult it is to establish your business as a trusted leader and a supplier? So many businesses in the architectural design and building products market have this problem. They struggle with the fact that they have multiple and very different customer segments to which they market their products and services. I help them overcome these challenges. Uh, because I'm focusing my strategies on each of these different segments.

Martina Kramer ([01:35](#)):

So my background of more than 10 years in this industry, together with a really solid foundation in fashion cosmetics and my passion for architect and design, has helped me to develop a really unique approach. And in this approach I put the focus on the customer experience for each of the segments, instead of just focusing on the product. That's really, really important. As a result, the businesses become trusted leaders and trendsetters in their industries. And that's a success what I really thrive on. In fact, what I also really do is I turn them into marketing-like businesses. And as a result I facilitate normally always a major sales increase. What at the end is the important bit.

Trudy Rankin ([02:41](#)):

Oh, I was gonna say, can you just, can you just expand on that just a little bit? So you're saying that your superpower is helping architecture-type businesses-

Martina Kramer ([02:47](#)):

Yes.

Trudy Rankin ([02:47](#)):

... i- is actually helping them go from being operationally led, if that's the right term-

Martina Kramer ([02:54](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Trudy Rankin ([02:54](#)):

... to being marketing led so that they can increase their sales?

Martina Kramer ([02:59](#)):

Yeah. So what is important in this industry is you need to be a design leader. Cause you wanna sell sophisticated looking products, but also sophisticated technology needs to be behind. So it needs to be engineered or it needs to have benefit that really high quality standard because it, it goes into a house, in a home, in an office, in a building. So it's important that people who buy your products, they need to trust you. Because, I mean, it needs to have longevity and, and... Well architect is important that they can rely... You know, it's not enough if you have something that's cool, it needs to be a reliable product. For the end consumer it's the same thing, so if it's a, if it's a, it's a private home. So that's why you need to become leading, not only design led, but also led in technology. And that builds up trust, and trust also that your brand will, product will perform.

Martina Kramer ([04:03](#)):

And when I say I focus on different segments that means, you know, a, an installer has a different mindset than an end consumer or an architect or designer. So they, uh, have different language or they, they wanna know different things, so. Installer wants to know the technical things, not very interesting for the end consumer, they want to have a great looking product. So it's different information is what you need to give, but it's always the same product. So I try to focus what's important. And also with that I use different channels, I use a different language... images. So it really needs to be custom-made, you could actually say, for each segment.

Martina Kramer ([04:44](#)):

And then it, the result is not just the product because [inaudible 00:04:47] something bigger. It's a experience. So let's say showers, it's not to sell shower head or a good-looking [inaudible 00:04:56] or something. It's the result so you stand under the shower and you feel great. So it's the experience.

Trudy Rankin ([05:00](#)):

Yep. Yep. [crosstalk 00:05:00]

Martina Kramer ([05:00](#)):

So that's the other add-on. So focusing on how do you feel when you have that product, does it make me feel good? For the architects, does it help them to expel, to become a [inaudible 00:05:16], or to... ? And the end consumer, how do I live with this, is my family happy? So it depends. The installer, he wants it be easy. Uh, they don't wanna have, um, problems with the installation. So there's different aspect what you need to covering, what you need to look at. Then it needs to be communicated in a sophisticated way.

Trudy Rankin ([05:38](#)):

Yeah. Wow. You've got, so you've got, you've got multiple-

Martina Kramer ([05:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Trudy Rankin ([05:41](#)):

... people that you're speaking to about the same product?

Martina Kramer ([05:43](#)):

Yes. Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([05:44](#)):

But with a completely different angle for each of those...

Martina Kramer ([05:46](#)):

Yes. Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([05:47](#)):

And then you add the sophistication on top of that and it gets really, really interesting.

Martina Kramer ([05:50](#)):

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([05:52](#)):

Yeah. No, that's, that's really, really fascinating. Do you wanna just tell me a little bit about, you know, who are you serving, and a little bit about the background?

Martina Kramer ([06:01](#)):

Yeah. Well, look, my big passion is design and architecture. I have also a background in fashion and a cosmetics. But coming to Australia I needed to find a new way how to, yeah, what, what I can do and how c- I can help businesses, and I ended up in the architectural design and building product market. What first was a big [inaudible 00:06:25] because it's a lot of tradies and installers and technical things involved, but I realized it's really, really very exciting. So yeah, and that's where I am at the moment.

Trudy Rankin ([06:37](#)):

Awesome. Excellent.

Trudy Rankin ([06:38](#)):

So tell me maybe just a little bit about what that journey was like for you trying to make the switch from moving from another country into Australia, and trying to get yourself established. Tell me a little bit about that.

Martina Kramer ([06:52](#)):

Yeah. Well, that was quite difficult because the first area was language.

Trudy Rankin ([06:59](#)):

Uh-huh (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([07:00](#)):

So to have that trust in myself that I'm able to, to work in another language than what I'm used to. That was a big, a big step. But the interesting thing is so when I went on, on my journey, surely I try to also

reach the cos- the fashion and cosmetics industry. But there was, it's always, you know time, time is always something what is important. So it, as it turns out there was just no position at that moment when I was looking at that window. And then I read a, a really interesting ad about design and design-oriented and marketing led, and also about something marketing to women. And then that's when I realized there's actually, there are many other markets that could really have, uh, can have an advantage entering these other markets. Because working in fashion and [inaudible 00:07:56] style and beauty products, that's already very much tailored to women and the female customer and it's very aspirational.

Trudy Rankin ([08:03](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Martina Kramer ([08:04](#)):

And the way, how to communicate is, uh, it's, yeah that's, that was something new what I could bring to that other industry and, yeah. That has a little bit, since then, that has also revolutionized the industry in the sense that they realized well at the end they market to the female customer, she then drags her husband along-

Trudy Rankin ([08:30](#)):

(laughs) Yes.

Martina Kramer ([08:31](#)):

... and he needs to approve. So it's a little bit as an interesting approach. You market not only to the women, you, they're different decision makers. And on top, you also need, still need to communicate with the, uh, traditional customers, which are the tradies or the installers. Or if it's more for bigger projects it's also architects and designers where that, the approach is very sophisticated there too. So you have very different ways how you need to communicate and present the same product to different, to different target group.

Trudy Rankin ([09:06](#)):

Oh, great. Very, yeah, no, that's so true, isn't it? It really is true.

Martina Kramer ([09:09](#)):

Mm. Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([09:10](#)):

So what made you decide to set up your own business?

Martina Kramer ([09:13](#)):

Well, I've worked many years in, in, in this industry and put a lot of effort into helping other businesses or helping or going in a business and establishing marketing. And I thought, well I also could do that as a consultant because there's so many businesses out there, they have great products, but it's so difficult to establish your business as a trusted leader and that's the thing. Because it's always more technical products. Even a carpet or a floor covering has some technical specs what gives a lot of insecurity. Will it be good, will it perform? So it's important to build up trust and an experience, than just have a product.

And I could, I- I can see in during the years I've worked in these industries there's, they're many, many businesses that really could need more help and support. And they're slowly opening up to that opportunity and they see they need to do something different.

Trudy Rankin ([10:13](#)):

Yeah. So-

Martina Kramer ([10:13](#)):

That's where I can come in.

Trudy Rankin ([10:13](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So thinking, I'm just thinking about that whole authority and credibility side of things and-

Martina Kramer ([10:24](#)):

Mm.

Trudy Rankin ([10:25](#)):

... just helping businesses, especially those particular types of businesses that you work with, in terms of building up that authority and credibility. And you've had... have lots of experience in that space. What would be the couple of things that you might tell somebody who owns a business like that? You know, what are couple of things that they could do to start that journey of building that credibility and authority?

Martina Kramer ([10:46](#)):

Well (laughs), what I do, I look at what's the potential, what's the product? And then I would sit down and say, "Look, and who is your customer? And what what are you doing now? And does it actually tick all the boxes?" So it's a kind of an evaluation and just a, a communication and talk. But what I've experienced, now I have people approaching me just based on my LinkedIn profile. Or, not approaching me, but I have their profile, I connect. And there is a lot of awareness in businesses at the moment. They know they need to do more and they all think, oh, we need to do more social media, and [inaudible 00:11:29] that's the magic thing.

Trudy Rankin ([11:31](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Martina Kramer ([11:31](#)):

But it's not only social media, it's actually you need to start from scratch.

Trudy Rankin ([11:36](#)):

Yeah. So, so, just a, and now just coming back to what you said before, you were talking about how you would, you would basically sit down with them and help them evaluate their customers and what their customers are looking for. How do help them, or how would you go about helping actually answer that question? Because, and the reason I'm asking is because you know, you know in the Online Business

Liftoff program we really focus on that whole concept of making sure people do understand their customers. But there's 10 billion, gazillion ways of doing that. How w- how would you go about helping your customers understand their customers better?

Martina Kramer ([12:09](#)):

Well, actually it starts with a conversation and mostly people then know it intuitively. But they are not aware that they need to have different approaches and different messages for the different levels.

Trudy Rankin ([12:24](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([12:24](#)):

And it's not only the communication, it's also the way how you, how you present your business. So there's so many... I mean, it starts with the name and your logo and the colors you choose. So that needs to relate somehow, but how do I start, yeah, how do I start? (laughs) Well it starts with a conversation and asking questions.

Trudy Rankin ([12:45](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([12:45](#)):

By asking the questions, very often they actually, the all the questions are answered by the customer. So I just need to hold back (laughs) and they find out themselves. So [inaudible 00:12:57] (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([12:59](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, for sure.

Martina Kramer ([13:01](#)):

Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([13:01](#)):

No, um, because, you know, I could be, I could be wrong, but for the types of businesses that you work with, how large do they typically tend to be, or how small? What's the size of the businesses that you tend to work with?

Martina Kramer ([13:13](#)):

So my expertise is really more in smaller business, small to medium size. Often family businesses or privately owned businesses. They sometimes also have their own manufacturing, what is a kind of a limitation to the products, but on the other hand they need to have enough, they need to sell enough, otherwise it's not profitable. So, yeah, I have worked in past also for really large corporations. What is very different because the decision makers are... the, the process is much longer. So it takes more time, it takes more convincing, more meetings.

Trudy Rankin ([13:54](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([13:54](#)):

So the, the, the quick and efficient way's actually and if you wanna have a quick success, it's really the small to medium size businesses, that's the fun part.

Trudy Rankin ([14:03](#)):

Yeah, yeah, easier to get to the decision makers for sure.

Martina Kramer ([14:06](#)):

Yes. Yeah, yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([14:07](#)):

But at the same time, they're, they're super busy. And they're having to do, you know, wear six different hats in terms of the roles that they have to do. Is there anything that you bring to those conversations with those, with your customers that sort of help them... You know, it's, it's obviously that, you know, you can really quickly help them understand who their customer is. What's the next step after that? And do they often do that work themselves or do they outsource it? How do they take the next step after, once they've understood who their customers are?

Martina Kramer ([14:37](#)):

Yeah. D- often they don't have marketing, are not yet marketing, or they have... assistant. So the places I worked for as an employee, I mostly have set up the marketing department and that's quite interesting. That's the last piece of the puzzles what mostly falls in place. You know, they tidy up their operations, they tidy up the manufacturing, they tidy up how they service their customers, and something is missing. Still something is missing. And then one business they had a meeting with their accountant and strategized the business going forward and they always identify actually you need... to do proper marketing. So not only on the side, or marketing on the run. And that's specifically important with the customers now wanting to have more an experience, they wanna feel good, it's, and the competition is so big so there is more work to be done than it used to be.

Trudy Rankin ([15:38](#)):

Yes. Yeah, th- is, yeah, a- any, for any small business owner it just feels like you're, you're basically lifting the whole world yourself and-

Martina Kramer ([15:45](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([15:46](#)):

... lots of people who are sort of getting ahead of you in the race. It's, uh, it can be quite stressful. You mentioned that you, that a lot of times you find customers, you're looking for customers or you find customers via LinkedIn. Do you tend to use any other social media platforms? Is, is LinkedIn your primary [crosstalk 00:16:03]

Martina Kramer ([16:03](#)):

So for me, LinkedIn is my primary source of contact, but also they come from contacts I have established. So it's just reconnecting.

Trudy Rankin ([16:13](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([16:13](#)):

What is very helpful. But a next phase of my business could be that I say I just explore, so that's actually my plan, I explore businesses who would s- ... wh- whom I could be helpful and then contact them without knowing and getting in contact.

Trudy Rankin ([16:30](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([16:31](#)):

I can imagine other option is to go to start doing presentations. Or maybe putting, literally put cards out. Go on industry events and-

Trudy Rankin ([16:43](#)):

[inaudible 00:16:43] mm-hmm (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([16:43](#)):

... yeah, just do some networking. [inaudible 00:16:45]

Trudy Rankin ([16:46](#)):

Yeah, that's a really powerful way of, of building a, a network of people who are interested in what you can do and how you might be able to help them-

Martina Kramer ([16:53](#)):

Mm, that's right.

Trudy Rankin ([16:54](#)):

... and that's, that's be something, uh, something that's worth considering. Yeah. So it's interest- always like to ask that question about h- you know how are you reaching out and what are you doing to attract people to your business, helping them get aware of what you do and how you can help them. So that's, that's always an interesting thing. As you've been setting up your business and, and you know, gotten started with your business, what's been one of the biggest challenges that you've faced?

Martina Kramer ([17:18](#)):

That's me. (laughs)

Trudy Rankin ([17:23](#)):

(laughs) Tell me more.

Martina Kramer ([17:25](#)):

Managing myself (laughs). Pushing myself to the edge and doing it and jumping (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([17:27](#)):

Uh-huh (affirmative).

Martina Kramer ([17:30](#)):

And selling myself is so ha- it's harder than selling somebody else. Because if you have a customer of somebody who is further away, you can see it with a distance. But if, if it's you (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([17:45](#)):

(laughs) Yeah, I- I- I- I know what you mean. So we all, we have a saying, you know, it's just like, you can do it for your customers, but you can't do it for yourself, when somebody's got a superpower sort of a thing.

Martina Kramer ([17:53](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Trudy Rankin ([17:54](#)):

Th- that's tricky, but in terms of, a- and I have to say this, and I've s- I've, I think I've said it before, but a lot of women entrepreneurs do struggle a little bit with the whole promoting themselves side of the equation. Partly because we, we are com- more comfortable building relationships, but partly because at least for some of us, and I know I struggled with this myself, just that whole, I don't want to feel salesy, I don't wanna feel slimy, I don't wanna come across as being somebody who's needy and desperate for sales. So what are some of the tactics or techniques that you've used to help you sort of get in front of that feeling and that challenge?

Martina Kramer ([18:31](#)):

Well I have to say, I have a, I had a lot of help. I [inaudible 00:18:34] so if, if you have also, uh, conversations with people who know you and who give you confidence. So these, these meetings they are very helpful. Then also the, the knowledge that being a mother, being a woman, being educated maybe in more traditional ways, it's always, it's ingrained somehow in us that, that we, we talk about we, or we don't want to put ourself forwards of the team. And because of this awareness it helps actually to work against it.

Trudy Rankin ([19:06](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, it makes it, it makes it harder.

Martina Kramer ([19:09](#)):

Mm.

Trudy Rankin ([19:09](#)):

A lot of, you know, a lot of wh- what we have to deal with is that mindset and that whole, what do we expect of ourselves-

Martina Kramer ([19:14](#)):

Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([19:14](#)):

... and that we think about ourselves. So that's always a bit tricky.

Martina Kramer ([19:17](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([19:17](#)):

Um, so I'm just going to ask you a hard question and you can, you can dance around it if you want to, but how long did it take you to get over that whole mindset thing?

Martina Kramer ([19:26](#)):

Uh, it's there all the time (laughs). But a good thing is what I do is when I go into meetings, I actually do like a little meditation. And one part of it is to have, find grounding. So you stand on your feet, roll a ball or a massage ball on your foot soles, and just breathe and, yep, get the right posture.

Trudy Rankin ([19:51](#)):

[crosstalk 00:19:51] posture, yes.

Martina Kramer ([19:52](#)):

Yes. Yep. So do an own, uh, our own thing. Well, I- I- I envisage my partners and I send energy. So I just try to energize the, it in advance. And it works.

Trudy Rankin ([20:06](#)):

Yeah. No, that, that, that's really, really useful actually cause, like I said, it's the same sort of thing like, I think lots of people struggle with it. And for me, I had to make that mind shift of it's, is that I'm not trying to sell stuff to people. I'm offering them great value-

Martina Kramer ([20:21](#)):

Yes.

Trudy Rankin ([20:21](#)):

And they're willing to give me money in return for that value.

Martina Kramer ([20:24](#)):

Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([20:24](#)):

And, and I just like that whole idea of doing a little, a little mental, you know, exercise before you go into meetings. That's quite, that's quite helpful and [inaudible 00:20:32]. So yeah. When you're thinking about your, your business journey and the journey that you've sort of gone through in starting up your

own business, you know, there's a lot of people out there who are thinking about starting a business, or they're in the process of starting up a business. What would be w- a one piece of advice that you would give people who are in that situation? What would you tell them if they're s- if they're starting up or they're struggling?

Martina Kramer ([20:59](#)):

It, what is really important is not to get too much sidetracked and the days full of other commitments. So if you are in a program, and the program what I've did with OBL, that keeps you going. And this is [inaudible 00:21:13]. So whatever also I know when I, when, when I was looking for a job, my first job in Australia, I didn't do it myself. I had a career coach. And it's worth the money. It's just worth every investment because it's uplifting, it keeps you going, it gives you tips, and it, yeah, it just helps you getting on track. It's, it's a real good starter. It's extremely great to have expert opinion and to listen to experts and, and trust.

Trudy Rankin ([21:44](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, no, yeah, I know what, I know what you mean. It is, it is really useful. Can you just maybe just explain a little bit of what, because you mentioned OBL, and I know what that means, but do you wanna maybe just explain a little bit to our listeners what, what that is?

Martina Kramer ([21:55](#)):

Well it means O- online Business Liftoff program. And it is really, let's say, it's a tool to learn step by step... It starts actually with developing your business idea and knowing what you want, to getting tools how you can set up a business just online, but it could evolve also going further. So all the modern technology, it gives you tools and technology to get started without you needing to do all the research. So normally you would lose a lot of time to see where, how do I build up my website, what do I need to do, [inaudible 00:22:36]. So all the essence is in this program and then it can unfold. So it saves a lot of time and keeps you going.

Trudy Rankin ([22:46](#)):

Yeah, cause one of the things that we've sort of worked out is, is that when you're starting a business there's a lot of sort of technical types of information that you have to do a lot of work to learn and pick up.

Martina Kramer ([22:58](#)):

Mm.

Trudy Rankin ([22:58](#)):

And you only use it once. Or you maybe use it once every three years. And being able to sort of not have to waste a lot of time on that part of it, I think helps people get started a lot faster. So just out of curiosity, just, and let's just talking technology just at the moment, if you had to rate your sense of familiarity is what I'll call it, I'll call it familiarity, with computers and technology sort of on a scale of one to 10 because you've, you know, you've been in corporate life, you've been in small businesses, where would you sort of put yourself there in terms of sort of the computer side of, well technology side of things?

Martina Kramer ([23:33](#)):

Not very high (laughs). Maybe four or five.

Trudy Rankin ([23:37](#)):

So, so yeah. Just explain what you mean, what you mean by that.

Martina Kramer ([23:40](#)):

Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([23:40](#)):

Technology is something that scares a lot of people.

Martina Kramer ([23:43](#)):

Yeah, yeah. Look, I'm always happy to tackle it, but when I start I get caught up and I sit there for hours and it just, it overwhelms me. So if I have an expert who can help me and guide me and point out important things, this is, yeah, that's incredible valuable.

Trudy Rankin ([24:04](#)):

Yeah. No, I know we, we sort of, a, a lot of people, it doesn't matter, [inaudible 00:24:10] who they are, where they're from, how old they are, how young they are, technology really, really stumps a lot of people-

Martina Kramer ([24:16](#)):

Mm.

Trudy Rankin ([24:17](#)):

... like, really quite interesting. But in terms of your area of expertise, your area of expertise is in the marketing side of things-

Martina Kramer ([24:24](#)):

Yes.

Trudy Rankin ([24:24](#)):

... is that correct, right? So in terms of that, a lot of that's more around developing the content, developing the brand, making sure that people... that it, that's all really clear, you know. And tell us just a little bit more about what you enjoy doing when you're helping businesses with that whole side, that marketing side.

Martina Kramer ([24:44](#)):

So one side is the strategy and seeing what would work. What's the best way to market products and also to communicate to your customers? The other side what I, I'm really passionate is also I, I like to implement. I, I really love to see how it unfolds and I like to see if it's successful or not. And success is really a big driving factor for me.

Martina Kramer ([25:11](#)):

And I like to manage and organize so, and strategize, so I like to introduce new processes and new structures and new plans. S- so that's little bit, it has nothing to do with marketing, it's just more a, another personality side of me. But that is really nice to combine because marketing is a lot of organizing and at market and, and product development. So it's, it's a lot of organizing, strategizing, timing, planning. Cause if you add to the whole marketing communications, also events and exhibitions that need to get organized then it's yeah, it's a big, big area. So organizing.

Martina Kramer ([25:55](#)):

And then the third thing I would say I love to work with people and manage people and motivate them. And I always manage to actually motivate them with my own passion so that's really... Yeah.

Trudy Rankin ([26:08](#)):

Yeah. No, that's fantastic. So if people were interested in having a chat with you or finding out whether you might be able to give them some help, where could they find you?

Martina Kramer ([26:18](#)):

Well, I can be reached by email or I have a website. The name of my business is Marketing Mix 4 You. Four is a four, the letter four. Uh, and my email address would be Martina@MarketingMix4You.com.

Trudy Rankin ([26:35](#)):

Fantastic. And we'll put those up in the show notes-

Martina Kramer ([26:39](#)):

Great.

Trudy Rankin ([26:39](#)):

... later so that people can, can see that. I, well I, Martina, I'd just like to thank you very much for coming on to the podcast and I really look forward to sharing this with all of our listeners. And I wish you all the best.

Martina Kramer ([26:53](#)):

Thank you. Great. Thanks for your questions and your interest Trudy. It was very appreciated (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([27:02](#)):

Hey, thanks for listening to the Online Business Launchpad podcast. If you'd like to keep on getting tips and techniques and more things from me that you can use to help grow your business, please sign up to my email list at WestIslandDigital.com. That's WestIslandDigital.com, all one word. And subscribe to the podcast. Catch you later.