

Kate VanderVoot ([00:00](#)):

Often when people hear community, they think Facebook group or they think online forum and they're really clear obvious communities that I have got a technical boundary around them if you like, based on the technology that's being used. But we also use it more loosely in that, it's your whole customer avatar ecosystem is your community. And that community can include internal stakeholders. Often we do it. We have a lot of work (laughs) to do on culture change in businesses and companies. And so there's culture change that needs to happen. And in some ways it's almost a rewiring and eerie, you know, it, it turns a lot of traditional principles on its head.

Trudy Rankin ([00:46](#)):

Are you someone who has a lot of small business experience, but you're not quite sure how to get your business online. Or have you started an online business, but now you're going, what do I do now? Do you feel overwhelmed to just thinking about all the work that needs to be done. Does the thought of asking people to pay you make you feel squeamish or have you got a thousand thoughts and worries racing through your head about your business and whether you're going to fail or succeed. In this podcast hosted by me, Trudy Rankin, of West Island Digital. You're going to find lots of guidance, actionable tips, interviews with experts and inspiring stories to help you grow your online business with confidence. So I'm really looking forward to having you listening and use that information to help you grow your business successfully.

Trudy Rankin ([01:36](#)):

Hello everyone. And welcome to the Online Business Launchpad Podcast. I'm really delighted to have Kate VanderVoot with me today. Kate is the founder of Social Mediology, and she also hosts the Social Lights Podcast. And I was introduced to Kate through a mutual friend, and we've since collaborated together on a Masterclass, which we ran for our Online Business Lift-Off community, and then [Four Kate's People 00:01:56]. And this masterclass was all about understanding your avatar or ideal customer. And at the end of it, the participants were able to print out an A4 picture and description that can sit on their wall as a reminder of who their avatar is.

Trudy Rankin ([02:09](#)):

And that was really a lot of fun because Kate created the training. We created the diagnostic tool and we both work together to help our people take a really big transformative step forward and understanding who their customers are. So welcome, Kate, and welcome to the podcast.

Kate VanderVoot ([02:24](#)):

Thank you, Trudy. It's great to be here with you.

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

Fantastic. So I know, you know, having a name for a business like Social Mediology is, is like, that's gold. That's a really great name. I love it. But before we start to talk about your business and, and how you help people, can you just tell us a little bit about yourself and your background?

Kate VanderVoot ([02:42](#)):

Sure. So I started out... I went to uni and did social work 'cause that was what I thought I wanted to be when I grew up. And when I finished my degree with some bumps along the way, I realized that working

within that system was never going to work for me (laughs). I think for a lot of us entrepreneurs and business owners, you know, we're unemployable, right (laughs)?

Trudy Rankin ([03:07](#)):

Yeah.

Kate VanderVoot ([03:07](#)):

We don't make good employees and I just rocked the boat too much. I kept seeing different ways, um, th- things could be done that would not only make things more efficient, more productive, but would actually serve the clients in a better way. But no one likes a young upstart university student telling them how to change these systems, which have been there for a long time. So I graduated, but on the day I graduated, I decided I didn't wanna be a social worker anymore. And so I didn't re- I kind of, you know, bounced around a little bit, trying to figure out who I was and what I wanted to do.

Kate VanderVoot ([03:46](#)):

And I got so many scholarships to do different leadership programs and different kinds of development, all of which have formed, you know, a big part of who I am today. But I ended up being a yoga teacher, which I was really good at, but in typical type A personality, I ended up running 18 yoga classes a week. You know, I did the corporate thing of going into offices and running them at lunch and running them in the afternoon. And then doing conferences, I'd stand up in front, you know, I get whole big groups of people moving and that only lasted so long because I, I felt like there was more, there was more I needed to do.

Trudy Rankin ([04:25](#)):

Hmm.

Kate VanderVoot ([04:26](#)):

And so, all that time I'd also done a lot of work in the not-for-profit sector. Again, I love that sector, but there were things that just, I struggled working within the system. And so I finally broke out and went, what do I, what can I really contribute? And so I started a strategy company called 3 Degrees of Connection, at the time, um, which everyone kept saying to me, isn't it six degrees of separation. I thought, okay, this business names too hard for people to get, but very quickly, um, it was at the very start. This was 12 years ago, it was the very start of social media.

Kate VanderVoot ([05:03](#)):

And very quickly it was evident that, that was the big black hole for a lot of organizations and a lot of businesses. And so being an early adopter and someone who loves to try new things and, and test out and kind of always see, uh, a better, more efficient way of doing things, I jumped right in on social media. And that was kind of, that was how I got started and it, it just went from there. And funnily, it's still a big black hole for a lot of people in their businesses, 12 years on.

Trudy Rankin ([05:35](#)):

(laughs).

Kate VanderVoot ([05:36](#)):

Um, but that's how Social Mediology came about and a bit about my journey to get there.

Trudy Rankin (05:41):

Yeah, no, I love that. And I, like I said, I just love the name, Social Mediology. It just sort of, it just falls off the tongue really, really nicely. [crosstalk 00:05:48]-

Kate VanderVoot (05:48):

So the reason I chose that name-

Trudy Rankin (05:49):

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Kate VanderVoot (05:50):

... is social media is a little bit like alchemy. It's a little bit of this. It's a little bit of that. There's no necessarily a right way to do it, but it's about testing and trying. And so Social Mediology really encapsulated that for me. Um, so I went from 3 Degrees of Connection to Social Mediology pretty early on.

Trudy Rankin (06:09):

(laughs) And, and proves that you, you paid attention to what worked and what didn't, you know, that whole concept of doing experiments.

Kate VanderVoot (06:18):

Yeah, funnily enough, though, Social Mediology proves now that it's not six degrees of separation, that's 3 Degrees (laughs) of Connection. I'm convinced (laughing).

Trudy Rankin (06:27):

You were right, but you've gotta talk in language that people recognize. Absolutely.

Kate VanderVoot (06:32):

That's right.

Trudy Rankin (06:32):

So coming back to, to Social Mediology, um, can you just talk a little bit about who you serve and why you chose those people to serve?

Kate VanderVoot (06:42):

Yes. So we work with a couple of different audiences. What I'm most passionate about is working with change makers and innovators. So people who are up to great things in the world, and often it's people who've amassed a tribe of people around them naturally because of who they are, what they're doing, it's exciting, it's new, it's innovative. They end up with this tribe of people around them and then don't really know what to do with them. And so that's kind of arizon of genius if you like is to get in and really look at not only how do we grow that community, but how do we really energize and activate that

community to take action, whether that's to buy something, to follow a cause or a purpose, whatever, whatever that is.

Kate VanderVoot ([07:27](#)):

Um, and so that's, that's, uh, a big part of our work. And then we have the Social Media Success Circle, which is more for business owners or small teams who tend to be over 40. They tend to be a bit of a more mature audience 'cause let's face it. You know, the young folk nowadays, they're digital natives. There's a lot of this, comes naturally to them. Um, and so the work we do with business owners and, um, small teams in, in kind of the SME market is really helping them understand who their customer is and how they can connect with them in a meaningful way on social media.

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

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So, so I'm, I'm, I'm, it's interesting to me that you said that there's a, there's a bit of a, there's a, uh, demographic, an age demographic that helps delineate some of who you work with. Um, because of what we've seen obviously with the Online Business Lift-Off Program, the groups that we've just finished putting through, or they're either carers or they're, they're people 50 and above, and obviously it, it's not true of everyone, but a lot of people in that age bracket just need a bit of help learning those digital skills. It's not like they can't learn them. They want to learn them. They just need to know how to learn them, what they need to learn and stuff.

Trudy Rankin ([08:45](#)):

So that's, that's kind of interesting to me and I wanna come back to something else you said. You, you just briefly mentioned it and I wanna make sure I heard you, right. You talked about wo- activating communities on, on social media. Do you want to just expand on that a little bit?

Kate VanderVoot ([09:01](#)):

Yeah. So I think particularly with ads and funnels, it's easy to amass an audience if you're willing to pay for it. Um, and equally, particularly with functionality like Facebook groups, you can bring people together, but often, um, people get the engagement piece, they can activate them in terms of engagement, but at the end of the day, what are we doing social media for? We want people to take action. And so we really look at that whole journey of, from when people first come into contact with a business or a community through to the action that they want to influence, whether that's a purchase, whether that's a sign-up, whether it's advocacy, whether it's a donation, whatever that might be or behavior change.

Kate VanderVoot ([09:49](#)):

And then we look at that journey in between, and often what people wanna do is they wanna go from step one, to step 27 in one or two leaps. And, as you know, with digital marketing in particular, and any of those actions, um, you know, it's micro-commitments, it's, it's lots of little steps and it's, it's really about that user journey or that customer journey, whatever the terminology is for the community that we're working with, but what are all of those little pieces or engagements that activate them that actually move them forward to taking action with the business or organization.

Trudy Rankin ([10:29](#)):

So, so you must have some really strong insights after all this time about what, what, what sorts of things help people get to those micro-commitments those many yeses? Um, yeah. Do you want to just expand on that a little bit?

Kate VanderVoot ([10:44](#)):

Yeah. Look, it's different for every business or every community. Um, but for some it's things like how do you put in place a recognition reward referral system so that all of the, uh, interactions that you're having, all of the content that's being shared, the calls to action are around growing that community and bringing more people in. For others, it's about the more traditional funnel or sign up for a lead magnet, nurture them through an email sequence. And then we look at where does social media fit in that journey and how do you really nicely integrate that, so it's seamless. 'Cause what a lot of businesses and organizations do is they set social media up to the side, so they operate their business.

Kate VanderVoot ([11:30](#)):

And then they go, Oh, and then we've got our community. And if you've got a completely separate strategy for the community to your core business strategy, you miss an enormous amount of opportunities. And when we work with companies, um, or organizations, one of two things happen. They either have the business strategy, and they're really clear on that. They've got the marketing and comms, all of that sorted. And they wanna look at how to integrate social media, or we start down the social media coaching path and realize how much of this side is not (laughs), not in place and that facilitates, but ideally you wanna have a strategy that, um, helps delayed, it helps to achieve the business objectives.

Kate VanderVoot ([12:15](#)):

And they'll, they look at every single point of how social media plays a role in that. So those micro-commitments are about integrating social media engagement and integrating membership of a community into each step of th- that business planning process as well.

Trudy Rankin ([12:34](#)):

Hmm, that's interesting because, uh, I mean, we, I, I wanna come back to that concept of community because we have an online community and online business community, but I wasn't quite sure when you talking about it, whether you're referring to a, a formal community as in somebody has to join the community, or if you're talking about like a, a, an audience that has a lot of similarities where they're, it's a community, but it's an informal community, w- is it both, what or was it one of the other?

Kate VanderVoot ([13:03](#)):

It's both. And we use community quite loosely from that perspective. So it could be often when people hear community, they think Facebook group-

Trudy Rankin ([13:11](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Kate VanderVoot ([13:12](#)):

... or they think online forum, and they're really clear, obvious, um, you know, communities that have got a technical boundary around them, if you like, based on the technology that's being used. Um, but

we also use it more loosely in that it's your whole customer avatar ecosystem, is your community. And that community can include internal stakeholders. Often we do it. We have a lot of work (laughs) to do on culture change in businesses and companies, just to, you know, I'm working with a client at the moment who, um, they have, they have a long history that needs to be acknowledged, but also prevents them from moving forward with new technology.

Kate VanderVoot ([13:56](#)):

And so there's culture change that needs to happen. And in some ways it's almost a rewiring and eerie, you know, it, it turns a lot of traditional principles on its head because, um, you know, we're no longer broadcasting, we're developing relationships. So there's, there's lots of nuances to that. But community, we look at that as kind of the whole customer ecosystem, both current customers and potential customers.

Trudy Rankin ([14:24](#)):

I love that concept of ecosystem. It's one of my favorite words because I, I tend to be a systems thinker. Um, when I think about things, you can, you can see all those different pieces. And so if you're looking at it from the point of view of I, I'll call it customer ecosystem, or, uh, you mentioned avatar ecosystem, which as you said, also includes the people in the organization who are wanting to work with that community. That becomes a, that becomes a, a much picture. And, and just that, knowing that it's a much bigger picture, like that means there's more moving parts, how do you help customers keep track of all those moving parts?

Kate VanderVoot ([15:04](#)):

So help our customers or our clients?

Trudy Rankin ([15:07](#)):

Yeah.

Kate VanderVoot ([15:07](#)):

Yeah. Um, look, I mean, there's lots of tools to do that. We, um, have kind of a slate of tools that we recommend clients use, as often there's already tools in place. So we, we're fairly agnostic when it comes to the tech behind what makes all of that work. Um, but it's, it's again, starting from point one to the first time that customer or potential customer becomes aware of the product or the service right through to when they take action and beyond, because beyond is where the goal really starts to happen with community. Um, and then it's about finding the appropriate tech and systems and processes to manage that. And I wish with every cell in my body, but there was a formula that worked for every single business that I could just roll out. 'Cause then, you know, I'd be, uh, an incredibly wealthy woman.

Kate VanderVoot ([16:03](#)):

Um, but there's not every, and that's what we've found in our business is that so much of it is, which is where Social Mediology comes in that alchemy, is it's about each individual business or organization finding their own uniqueness in how that works. And so there is no formula and there's no right or wrong way of doing it. There's lots of different ways that you can, you know, that you can approach it. Sometimes it comes very much from a marketing perspective. Other times it comes from a customer

service perspective, other times it's donor member focused. Um, and the way in will often dictate how the structure is set up, if that makes sense.

Trudy Rankin ([16:44](#)):

Yeah.

Kate VanderVoot ([16:45](#)):

It was more black and white. I really do (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([16:48](#)):

If it was more black and white, I think that it would take away the value of that uniqueness for each, each organization, because it's that uniqueness that becomes a competitive advantage that makes it much, much harder to copy what they're doing. Um, so, yeah.

Kate VanderVoot ([17:04](#)):

And if it was black and white, everyone would find it easy to do. Right (laughs)?

Trudy Rankin ([17:09](#)):

Exactly.

Kate VanderVoot ([17:09](#)):

And, and unfortunately, social media is becoming harder and harder as this, the platforms themselves are actually making it harder and harder, um, for a whole variety of reasons. Shareholders generally being the end (laughs), the, um, the end result of that. But, um, that t- you know, I think there is still, and this is something you and I have talked about over time. There are still fundamental principles that have been teaching for 12 years, that despite all the changes and fluctuations that happen with these platforms, there are fundamental principles that are still as true today as they were, you know, when social media first started and a lot of people say organic reach is dead, and there's no way to do this without big ad budgets.

Kate VanderVoot ([17:55](#)):

I completely disagree for those who truly understand their customer avatar and truly understand what value they need to deliver. Um, they are in a p- much stronger position to build a community because they attract the people that they most wanna serve from the, you know, with their business.

Trudy Rankin ([18:17](#)):

I think that's a really important point because I've heard a lot of talk about recently as well about, um, social media platforms, you know, really cracking down, kicking people off with no reason, changing their algorithms without warning. And, you know, that whole thing about make sure you have an email list because you can lose your business off of those platforms at any time. It's quite, quite real, but it also acts as a, as a disincentive for new business owners to actually get serious about using social media platforms to help them grow their business and serve their customers.

Trudy Rankin ([18:50](#)):

What would you s- what kind of, uh, advice would you give to somebody who's maybe just starting out right now, who's going ahh, you know, can't keep up with all these changes. What are those principles that you were talking about that, that if you follow those principles, you always go- going to, you can have a lot of confidence that you, it's gonna last the test of time using social media.

Kate VanderVoot ([19:12](#)):

Yeah. So maybe if I can address one of the things you said right at the beginning of that, around, um, the platforms changing it is, and I'm not always popular for saying this, but I'll share it anyway. Um (laughs), these platforms are pushing the boundaries of what's acceptable when it comes to digital communication. 12 years ago, we didn't have a lot of what's there now. And we didn't have the issues that are coming out in our society because of the use of these platforms. They're just tools. It's not the platforms that are at fault. It's how humans use those tools. Um, but, you know, you wanna look at the likes of Facebook and Mark Zuckerberg.

Kate VanderVoot ([19:53](#)):

I actually think that deep down, he's a really decent human being. When you look at his humanitarian work and t- what he wants to achieve, of course, he's gonna push the boundaries. He's got shareholders to serve. And so we, as society need to decide what's okay. And that's the process that we're going through now, which is there's a lot of teething issues that are happening around that. And they're in a no-win situation. You know, they allow massacres and violence and racism to be broadcast. They get shot down for it. They start kicking off people that are deemed to be bad actors because there's two and a half billion people on the platform and they have to find a way to do that.

Kate VanderVoot ([20:37](#)):

And so the pendulum has swung. They gonna have to find a way to come back to middle ground, but they're not easy issues to deal with. Like, how do you build the artificial intelligence that does that on scale? That's what they're grappling with on a day-to-day basis. So I'm not defending Facebook because I think Facebook has a lot to answer for, which is another conversation. Um, but I think t- we're sometimes a bit harsh on our judgement of how these things are playing out. 'Cause they're not always just this big, bad corporate that's, you know, raping and pillaging the earth.

Kate VanderVoot ([21:10](#)):

Anyway, I'll get off that soap box. But I think what we're seeing now with a lot of people being auto blocked and banned and accounts been shut down. It's just them trying to react to massive pressure, both public and legal pressure to better moderate their platform. And so this is, this is the impact of that. And it's the same with everyone's, you know, all of the privacy changes where you can now opt out, so they can't track you. That's all good and well, if you wanna say ads for Russian brides and red sports cars, and if that's not of interest to you, then, you know, you opt in by paying with your data.

Kate VanderVoot ([21:49](#)):

So it's, it's complex. And I think we wanna try to simplify it, but the reality is you can't. So from a business perspective, stepping in to all of that and trying to understand that if you don't understand it from a user perspective, you've got back ways of understanding it from a business perspective. So first and foremost, they need to put themselves in the shoes of their avatar. Every customer avatar, sorry, A customer avatar is not on every platform and how you talk to a 25 year old on social media is completely different to how you talk to a 60 year old.

Kate VanderVoot ([22:27](#)):

The imagery that you would use, the tone that you would use, the platform that you would use. So first and foremost, it's about deeply understanding the avatar so that you can choose the right platform. And the feeling, in fact, I was just approving a piece of content, um, around this, which is, you know, we compare ourselves and our businesses to everybody else's highlight reels. Um, the reality is those who are, have got this amazing, you know, one video a day and 20 posts and five blogs a day, they've got teams of people that are doing that.

Kate VanderVoot ([23:04](#)):

So when you just getting started and you look at people that are really doing an amazing job of social media, just remember, there is no way that is one business owner that's sitting there creating all of that content. So the key is what's manageable for someone in business to, you know, to get started. Now, if video's not your thing, don't start with video. If writing's your thing, maybe blogging and creating, you know, written content using the LinkedIn publishing tool might be a better way to go. So it's about each person figuring out what their avatar needs first and foremost. And then secondly, how they're going to deliver on that, using the skills that they have or buying in the skills that they need.

Trudy Rankin ([23:53](#)):

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. T- that, those are, those are pretty important points. And I'm just thinking, I'm just thinking to myself, you know, t- the last thing that you said, which was, you know, think about bringing in somebody who has the skills, uh, in terms of, in terms of this and this I'm gonna try and phrase this question in a way that's gonna, gonna be clear is, is that a lot of people who are just starting their business and they, they want to be on social media and they're, and they're, um, they're at the point where they can bring somebody in, if, if, if they wanted to, w- what should they be looking for in terms of somebody who can help?

Kate VanderVoot ([24:37](#)):

This is such a tricky question (laughs) because, you know, there's a real trend around outsourcing the skills that you don't have, which I completely understand as a business owner, I get it. You know, you wanna outsource the skills that you don't have. Having said that outsourcing the most critical voice in the most public platform is tricky. You can't give your social media voice to somebody who can't write and speak in the way that fits with your business. You know, branding and persona, whether that's you as an individual or a business brand and persona. Um, and often what business owners do when it comes to social media is they dump and run.

Kate VanderVoot ([25:26](#)):

And so they find someone who says they can do social media and they go, yes, got that nailed, found my social media person, here's my business, go for it. And the best case scenario is nothing happens. They just generate all this content. There's no engagement, no results, nothing happens, but tick I've got my social media being done. But the worst thing that can happen in that place, if you have a real hands off approach, is that people can, you know, actually do a lot of damage to your brand by being out there on your behalf, on social media. So, um, I'm not saying don't get those people, but choose the, the part of social media that makes sense to outsource and retain the part that you need to, in terms of the quality, the tone, the persona, how, how you're portrayed on social media.

Kate VanderVoot ([26:22](#)):

Um, and that's a, it's a tricky balance and well, we're working on a program at the moment around supporting VA's to work with business owners to do that well. Uh, but i- it's, it's not a dump and run scenario. You know, it's not just an Excel spreadsheet, but things like you can say to a VA, go and find me 20 quotes about plumbing, if you're a plumber. Um, here are some websites you might wanna start with and they can come back and give you 20 quotes and you go great. These nine fit without business and work. Could you please do some visuals that go with that?

Kate VanderVoot ([26:57](#)):

And then you get the visuals back and then it might be okay, could you put those into whatever our planning tool is and make a couple of notes about what the copy might look like, but then that final approval, the final tone and voice, I would always say needs to sit with a business.

Trudy Rankin ([27:14](#)):

Hmm. I think that's, that's, that's, it's, I, I love the concept of dump and run it's so-

Kate VanderVoot ([27:20](#)):

(laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([27:21](#)):

... so tantalizing, because you kinda go, I'm so busy. I know I should be doing this. Can I please dump and run, but you're right. You can't actually, you can't actually do that, not if you wanna get the results that you're looking for. So it's a, an abrogation of duty really to, to do that. So that's, that's good advice. It's good [crosstalk 00:27:40] advice-

Kate VanderVoot ([27:39](#)):

And there are ways, there are ways to kinda batching content. So if video is your thing, maybe you hire a videographer one day a month who comes and you do a full day worth of filming. And then give that to a video editor and then your social media person can cut that up into lots of different pieces and use that across the platforms. Um, or there are other strategies, like if writing's your thing, or let's say you, you record a video, you can send that video off to a transcription service like Rev or Temi and get the transcripts back that can then be turned into a blog post.

Kate VanderVoot ([28:19](#)):

VA can absolutely do that. Put that on, up on your blog, create the visual that goes with it, create small social media snippets that promote that blog. That's the kind of stuff that a VA can do. And if the business does that initial content creation or the thought leadership piece, then you can often systematize some of the, the rest of what happens after that.

Trudy Rankin ([28:41](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. We've just been, well, we're going through actually, we're getting towards the end of it, a process of just getting a lot tighter on, planning ahead. Um, and then actually using that, um, to, to just sort of drive what we do because with us the podcast is the start point, and we use the podcast to then create content for a number of different places. But, but even having said that you need some, some clarity of where you're going with those things to be able to, to make use of them. Um-

Kate VanderVoot ([29:14](#)):

Yeah. So the process that we, um, uh, that we have developed over 12 years is an annual strategy, and I'm not talking a 10 page document, two, three pages. And obviously we've got, you know, a process that we do with our members, but it's, what are your annual goals? And then on a quarterly basis, you wanna have, what are the quarterly action plans that are gonna help to achieve those goals. This works across business, but we're using it in a social context. Um, so you want an action plan by goal and an action plan by platform for those, and then your monthly content calendar sits underneath that. And so in our Social Media Success Circle, we do a 90 minute content sprint every month where, where we plan out, live on a webinar, 90 minutes, all of the content for the month.

Kate VanderVoot ([30:03](#)):

And then every, uh, what we suggest for people is that they are two weeks ahead at any one time with their content creation. And so once a fortnight, you wanna block out time to make sure that content is created. And then on a weekly basis, you can bring it down to just 15 minutes of scheduling what's there. And of course, that's the foundation content that can be scheduled. Then you wanna overlay all the day to day stuff, new, t-shirts get delivered with your logo on it and take a photo of the delivery guy with the box and the t-shirts. There's a massive storm and there's a rainbow above your office, take a photo of it, talk of, you know, build it into a metaphor.

Kate VanderVoot ([30:40](#)):

So that's kind of at a very loose level. That's out the structure that we suggest. So an annual plan backed up by quarterly action plans and then the monthly content calendar sits underneath that. But everything is tied back to those annual goals. And if you don't have those, and I see so many businesses doing this, they're flossicking around, it's like, they're in a dark cave and they've got a match and they're like older and, you know, it's the shiny object syndrome. There's this big flash of light over here. I'll go and do it this way. And then although the algorithms changed and I'll go do it this way.

Kate VanderVoot ([31:13](#)):

But if you actually have a plan in process in place, and you've got your systems and processes that support that, how the platform's changed dynamics really matter, because you're standing really clear and this is who I am, this is what we deliver, and this is how we're going to deliver it. And you might tweak how you do that based on the platforms, but you've got your, your plan that you're working towards instead of flicking from, you know, this month it's clubhouse. And then it's way me, and then it's way not. And, you know, whatever there's new platforms every day. Um, anyway, I'll stop (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([31:49](#)):

I have to smile because that whole clubhouse thing has been, has been in, in my face, you know, for, for the last, however long. And I just keep looking at it and I keep thinking that has to be a shiny object for me because I'm working very hard on getting consistency and quality in my other social media platforms. Let me get those right first, then I'll move to another platform if it's still around by then.

Kate VanderVoot ([32:16](#)):

That's right.

Trudy Rankin ([32:17](#)):

And I'm usually an early adopter, I'm usually the first person to jump on and say, well, look at this. This is cool. And then, you know, six months later, there's nothing solid or consistent and it's not giving me the results that I want. So, you know, so it's, it's, I've, I'm determined this time not to do that. I wanna come back to, um, a question that somebody in our forum has asked. And it's, it's a, it's a common question, but it's just come up to the forum again. And, and that is that a lot of business owners, uh, especially people who are sort of new to business, new to marketing, maybe not new to social media and that they use it personally, but new to it as a way of putting themselves out there and making people aware of the business, how do you, how would you suggest people would go about getting comfortable with the concept of promoting themselves on social media?

Kate VanderVoot ([33:12](#)):

So often I say, and I say this in board rooms, and, and it's not always popular. I'm known for not always saying the popular thing. Um, at the end of the day, we, so there's, this is twofold. We don't ask for a return on investment anymore for our telephone, our email, the internet, they're all just seen as part of doing business. And in my view, that's where a business needs to get to with social media and community building. And their organic strategy is, this is just good business. This is me developing a relationship, serving my customers, you know, being connected to the people who, the stakeholders, internal and external, who are important to my business.

Kate VanderVoot ([33:57](#)):

Having said that we're not all there just to be altruistic and to serve every day. We also wanna see a business result. And so we talk about a one in five marketing to value ratio. So 80% of your content needs to be adding value. Most people go, what does that actually mean? That's where you truly understand the pin points, the challenges, the frustrations that your clients, customers, potential avatar have, and to deliver on that. And then the next question that often comes up is, well, Kate, if I give everything away for free, what are people gonna pay for? And the opposite is actually true. If you are stingy, no one sees you, no one hears you. No one can see whether you're the best business to go with.

Kate VanderVoot ([34:44](#)):

Um, so the more generous you are with answering questions, with providing content, with welcoming people into the story of your business, the more people get to know, like, and trust you that, you know, adage, that everyone uses in digital marketing. Um, but if you don't do that, they don't get that opportunity. And so we've got this trust economy now, that if you don't develop that trust, you know, it may be that another business gets the business because you haven't taken the time that they have to build that.

Trudy Rankin ([35:19](#)):

Yeah, yeah-

Kate VanderVoot ([35:20](#)):

[crosstalk 00:35:20]-

Trudy Rankin ([35:20](#)):

It's, it's, it's so true, you know, and, 'cause we talk about know, like and trust as concepts were, for our, for our community members, but I like that concept of a trust economy. Um, and because as, you know,

even when I was a kid, you know, we used to talk about withdrawals from the trust bank and, and deposits, and especially with our parents, you know, this is like, well, you did this. So now I don't trust you quite as much as I did. So you're gonna have to do that and earn my trust back, you know, it's just that concept is there. So we, we kind of resonate that with that. But when it comes to a trust economy, I don't think we transfer that awareness into our business and how we use social media.

Kate VanderVoot ([36:00](#)):

And one of the things we do in our Social Media Bootcamp is we talk about all of the top performing content on social media. And there's literally like 15 different types of content that you could be sharing. And then you've got permission to make the ask, but you have to do, you've gotta build up that bank account of trust and connection before you can actually make the ask. And even when you make the ask on social media now, you have to show not shout. You have to demonstrate who you are. And as people get more sophisticated in their copywriting, their digital storytelling, you can start to blend.

Kate VanderVoot ([36:39](#)):

So it's no longer, there's a marketing post. There's an engagement post, it's International Women's Day and you write why that's meaningful to your business. And then there might be a small or a soft call to action at the end of that. So you're blending your marketing into your storytelling. And that's where businesses start to really excel at social media is where they stopped putting all their content into individual silos, um, with only one objective and they start to, to blend that a little more. And then when I say that people often go to the complete end of the spectrum and they try and get an email, sign up a sale, a name, a joke, and adding value all in the same post and then it becomes completely unclear as to what that post is about.

Kate VanderVoot ([37:29](#)):

So it's, it's a balancing act. And I did a coaching session last week in our success circle. So it was in front of the whole group and I asked her, um, to share in the group what the biggest, uh, the biggest aha's were for her out of that in the group. And she goes (laughs), she said, okay, so now I have to figure out how to be more conversational, but less chatty. I have to figure out how to make, you know, she gave this list of contradictions that I basically gave her, which is right. It's alchemy. It's a little bit of this. It's a little bit of that. Try that if it doesn't work and what works this week might not work next week. So stay agile and flexible and, and keep finding, always keep finding what's going to work for your avatar, not for you.

Trudy Rankin ([38:19](#)):

Oh that's, that is an ama- that is an amazing piece of advice. And I, a hundred percent fully endorsed that. That is so true. Look, it's been really, really lovely speaking with you, Kate. And um, if people are wanting to find out more about you or, or want to connect with you, where would they go?

Kate VanderVoot ([38:39](#)):

Probably the best place is at Facebook group, our community, which is Social Media, or just changed the name, Social Media Community for Business, Social Media Success Community for Business. I'm sure we can put a link with the podcast (laughs).

Trudy Rankin ([38:54](#)):

I will put it in the show notes.

Kate VanderVoot ([38:55](#)):

(laughs) That'd be great, um, that we have a Facebook group where we share updates and breaking news and tips and strategies. Um, that's probably the best place to connect with us.

Trudy Rankin ([39:06](#)):

Fantastic. Well, thank you again. It's been great talking with you.

Kate VanderVoot ([39:09](#)):

You too, Trudy. Thank you.

Trudy Rankin ([39:12](#)):

Well, there you have it. I hope you got as much out of that episode with Kate as I did, so many good pieces of information and useful things, things like micro-commitments and, and basically trying to put yourself in the shoes of your avatar when you're, especially when you're trying to reach out to them on social media and trying to understand your avaton what they need. And things, things like the concept of an ecosystem and a trust economy are really, really powerful.

Trudy Rankin ([39:41](#)):

So I just wanna say thanks to Kate once again. And if you want to have more interesting episodes like that, ones that are useful for you and your business as you grow it, please hit subscribe. And if you could leave a review, I'll be really, really grateful once again. And I think I say this every time when you leave a review, it means that other people can see the value that you getting out of listening to the podcast. And if they see the value, they'll start listening to it as well, and there'll be able to get value for themselves and for their business. So thank you for listening and we'll see you next time.

Trudy Rankin ([40:17](#)):

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, uh, you can use to help grow your business, please sign up to my email list at [westislanddigital.com](mailto:westislanddigital.com). That's [westislanddigital.com](http://westislanddigital.com) all one word and subscribe to the podcast. Catch you later.