

Introduction: Welcome to the Enchanting Lawyer podcast, the show that walks you step-by-step to improving strategies you can use today to grow your business. We show you how being kind, useful, and, of course, enchanting will bring you more clients and build a thriving community.

Now here's your host from sunny San Diego, Jacob Sapochnick.

Jacob: Hello everybody, this is Jacob Sapochnick with the Enchanting Lawyer podcast. Today, I'm very honored and excited to have Michael Stelzner as my guest on the show.

Michael is the founder of Social Media Examiner, one of the largest social media magazines online. He's also a podcaster, he runs a social media marketing podcast, and he's the founder of the largest social media conference in the world – I was honored to attend this year.

Michael, welcome to the show. How are you today?

Michael: Jacob, thanks for having me. I'm having a great day.

Jacob: Michael, why don't you tell our audience a bit about yourself and how did you get where you are today.

Michael: Almost five years into my journey as the founder of socialmediaexaminer.com and that is a website for business owners and marketers who want to understand how to use social media.

Before that I was a white paper guy. I'm sure some of the attorneys listening probably are familiar with what a white paper is but I had spent quite a few years teaching others and creating documents that were persuasive in nature but were used mostly in the business capacity to help businesses figure out like -
- A business that had a really complex or expensive item to sell would typically employ a writer of white paper and that's something that I was really well-known for.

So my background is writing and marketing and that kind of help set me up for a successful launch of Social Media Examiner. We launched in October of 2009 just as social media was starting to explode. Today, we have 250,000 people that get our email in their inbox everyday and it's been an awesome journey.

Jacob: Right. And I'm one of those people.

Michael: Awesome.

Jacob: Michael, yesterday I saw on your Facebook page you posted an interesting post. You said that somebody asked you recently what you learned from your biggest

business failure. Initially I didn't think about asking you that question but what I liked about your response is kind of tied in to the journey that you started -- how you started Social Media Examiner.

So why don't you tell our audience? First of all what was the lesson that you learned from your biggest business failure and how it kind of tied in to the start of that movement?

Michael: Yeah, absolutely.

It was probably 2006 or 2007, way before Social Media Examiner, I had paid a lot of money, about \$2,000 basically to take a course to help me how to essentially rapidly grow my business. It was a very persuasive sales page wherein I thought, "Wow! If I just pay this \$2000 and follow the instructions that this person is teaching me then I will be very successful."

I paid the \$2,000, I took the course, I was a good student and I did exactly everything I was taught and it was a dismal failure. As a matter of fact, it felt ethically horrible. So many people asked for their money back and there was just something wrong with it. It didn't connect good with my soul so to speak. So I use the analogy was like [unclear 00:03:25] and it was like, you know, I put all my eggs into this basket and the basket burned up.

The good news, though, is it forced me to clear my plate so to speak and ready to explore new ideas. I regrouped and I thought how can I do online events which is what I was trying to do, sell online information. How can I do online events is what I thought of in a way that fits within my ethos and within my ethics.

I started doing these things called Success Summits and my first one was on copywriting and then I did one on white papers, social media success summit. They were very successful, everybody love them. They were online conferences. People from all over the world are participating.

Jacob: Right.

Michael: That social media one was such a big hit that I decided to start socialmediaexaminer.com as an experiment to see whether or not the world was interested in learning deep knowledge about social media.

So long and short of it is, that horrible failure led to new seeds and one of the seeds grew into a mighty oak called Social Media Examiner. I'm really glad that I went through that failure because that's the only way I would be where I am right now.

Jacob: When you describe this story, creating that place for people to come and read content, having that vision in 2009, there's some big blogs already out there. How did you feel that you're going to differentiate yourself, compete with them when you had no experience in social media whatsoever?

Michael: That's a very good point. I was not a social media expert but what I was an expert at -- Well, I was actually really well-known in the world of white papers. I was referred to as the king of white papers by a lot of people. What I had learned through many years was how to brand myself and how to create a movement and ultimately kind of help an industry grow.

So what I did was I took all of my writing knowledge – and I knew how to blog really well. And then I took a lot of the relationships that I had built with marketers because white papers were one of the most popular forms of marketing back then. And I kind of bridged the two together. And I said even though I know nothing about social media, I know a lot of people who know a lot about social media and I know a lot about blogging, and I know a lot about writing, and I know a lot more than almost everyone at the time who was doing social media. When it came to blogging, I knew a lot more than they did.

So I knew that my differentiator, my unique value proposition, Jacob, was going to be deep, rich, valuable how-to content. All my competitors at the time were just putting the opinion pieces out about what they liked or didn't like but none of them were actually revealing how to do anything because they were trying to grow consulting practice. I was not trying to grow a consulting practice, I was trying to grow a media company. So I brought a lot of those people together in a movement and it just exploded.

Jacob: Right. And it continues to grow even today.

Michael, as I was getting ready for this interview and I was sharing this with some people, attorneys and other people that are in the marketing of our niche, I know there's a lot of interest to find out about content, they wanted me to ask about building blogs – we'll get to it in the show.

But I wanted to bring out this report that Social Media Examiner release every year, the 2014 social media marketing industry report, and I think that it's a good moment to talk about it because this is really where the heartbeat of marketing stands right now.

According to this report, 94% of marketers, they said that original written content is the main focus that they currently focus on right now. That was the main thing. The content and after that there was visual content. And I wanted to get your take on this report. Were you surprised by the results?

Michael: Well, there's a lot in the report and it's available for free at socialmediaexaminer.com slash ... I think report2014. There's a ton in there. It's about 50 pages long. But this particular finding that you're talking about which I'm literally pulling up right now as we're talking. Basically, we asked marketers where they're most likely to invest in the future. Original written content 81% of them said they were going to increase their activities in original written content this year followed by original videos and original visuals and then audio content.

So I was pretty surprised that the power of the written word is still as valuable as I thought it might be and it does kind of connect with what I'd been sharing with my whole story all along, right? Which is that we produce really rich -- at least a thousand word articles at Social Media Examiner and that's why literally millions of people read it, I think. From a marketing perspective, more is actually better not the other way around.

Jacob: Right.

Michael: And this might be problematic for some people that are listening right now that are used to selling their knowledge, right? Which is what attorneys do, right? Attorneys sell their knowledge and the idea of giving it away for free seems counterintuitive. But in reality, it's the best marketing medicine there is because it draws people to your content and encourages them to share the content which draws new people to your content and all you need is that little tiny fragment that say, "Huh, how much more will I gain if I hire Jacob or whoever else is the expert?"

Yeah, I was surprised that the number of people that were stating that they were going to increase it. To get more precise, we asked people what is their number one most important form of content and they can only choose one. 58% said original written content followed by 19% original visual assets. So, the vast majority of marketers, if they had to choose only one, they'd choose writing.

Jacob: Right. And the reason I chose to focus on that particular statistics is because for us as advisors, as counselors and attorneys being professionals, right now it's so difficult to dominate Google. You know, all these SEO tactics, the paid search is not working as effectively.

I felt that this is a key statistic for our audience because if they are not going to invest in content that is not just good content but superior content, there is no way they're going to be able to dominate their niches in whatever they do. I think this is something that was validated by their report. Correct me if I'm wrong but since 2010, that was the last time that blogging was a top priority for marketers. Now it's coming back.

Michael: I believe that that's correct. I don't have that -- you have it fresher in your brain than I do but I believe I trust your assessment of the report. Yeah, that's a pretty big deal. Yeah. I think part of it is because Facebook for example is becoming less effective, you know? And it's forcing a lot of people to revisit some of the old proven methods and content is timeless. It's always going to be important. It always has been. It always will be.

Jacob: For our audience just to take from that is keep working on creating good content. Forget about keywords and trying to gain the analytics. Just create good, quality content, superior content, and I think people are going to be fine.

Michael, I want to bring you back to Social Media Examiner at the beginnings. What do you think looking back are some of the factors that contributed to your success, the speedy rise of that first platform and, of course, all the other ventures that you continue?

Michael: There's a couple of things that we do uniquely at Social Media Examiner. One of them obviously you hit on which is the most important one which is we are continuously spinning out quality content on a daily basis. And in the beginning it was about three days a week. But I think there's something else that a lot of people don't realize.

One of the reasons why I think we're so successful is we have a very visually attractive looking website. I know it sounds kind of crazy to say that but when people come to a website – and it's not fundamentally changed since 2009. It's still the same design it was then, with very minor changes.

My background way before all this was I used to own a creative services agency and I knew how to work an art direct designers. I knew that if someone comes to website for the first time and they've never heard of it before but it's very professionally, visually stunning, they're going to assume it's been around forever.

I'll give you a quick story. We were three days old and we were at a conference and I was walking around with a microphone in my hand and I had a video guy with me. I went up to the CEO of Technorati which was a bigger deal than it is now which is a ranking site for blogs. I went to their booth and I actually talked to one of the gals in the booth and I said, "Hey, I'm with Social Media Examiner," and I had one of those nice little things around my microphone that you would have if you were, like, with a TV station.

And the gal pulled up our website on her mobile phone. This is before anybody had mobile optimize websites. Looked at our website, it was visually very attractive, and she said, "Oh Richard, this is Mike with Social Media Examiner

and he's here to talk to you," as if we'd been around forever. We were only three days old.

Jacob: Right.

Michael: And he immediately did an interview with me. I even had people come up to me months later and tell me "Oh, I've been following you for years." (Laughs) So I think that the combination of a strong visual look, combined with great content, has really been a key part of it.

And the last part of it is I had very strong relationships with people before I started Social Media Examiner. I called them in my book launch, Fire Starters. These people were Mari Smith who's very well-known as the queen of Facebook, Denise Wakeman from The Blog Squad, Chris Garrett who co-authored the book ProBlogger, and then Jason Falls from Social Media Explorer which has got a similar name to Social Media Examiner.

I had built really good relationships with all four of these folks and they agreed to help me in the beginning. I think all those factors combined: great content, great visuals, and help from friends was what really got us going very fast.

Jacob: I know Mari personally and I've taken some of her courses. She was always mentioning your progress. Aligning yourself with key people is a factor. You cannot do it yourself.

Michael: Yeah, absolutely. And you really need to be thinking about that way before you have something in mind that you want to start.

And what I did with a lot of these people is I used my other platform, my white paper platform. I put out a weekly newsletter and I interviewed these people and I video interview with these people and I just gave and gave as much love as I could and kind of lifted them up and put them in front of my platform as often as I could and that led to relationships.

Jacob: Perfect. That's very important advice and I think that people are always wondering how could this big blogs become so successful? There must have been something there. The secret is how we work, doing the right things.

The next question I wanted to ask, if you were going to start this blog today, what would you do differently? Do you think it's even possible to get to that kind of success if you were to start Social Media Examiner today?

Michael: Well, here's the good news. When I started Social Media Examiner, thousands of other bloggers talking about social media, now there's not nearly as many. So I went into an extremely crowded marketplace and I saw that I could do something different than everyone else. That was my unique value proposition.

So I think anybody could come into my space or I could do this again in a different space as long as I can find something unique. And I am doing it again, believe it or not, in the parenting space. I can talk about this a little bit but I'm literally nine months into my new project and the parenting space is way bigger than the social media space and I did do it differently.

Jacob: Just couple of days ago I read an article about what is the success of major blog like Mashable or Tech Ranch. I think Pete Cashmore from Mashable, he mentioned that when he started, the reason he was so successful is because the way they were blogging back then is different than today. They're blogging very consistently, they were focusing on content, cover it in their blogs or lengthier. Today, there's just so much content out there it's just difficult to do it. But I do agree with you that if you focus on a niche, there's still always room for growth if you are consistent, correct?

Michael: Well, absolutely.

I just started this new project called mykidsadventures.com. Yeah, mykidsadventures.com. I started that about nine months ago and I filed a very similar playbook for Social Media Examiner. But the difference, this time around, is I did not develop the relationships with all the thought leaders in the parenting space.

Instead, I thought, "Well, maybe I can just fly into this new space assuming that a subcategory of my existing large audience of millions of people are also parents." It's worked to an extent. We've had 400,000 people visit the site in the first nine months which I think is spectacular, but it's still not quite where it needs to be.

So, this time what I'm doing is I'm launching a podcast called Parenting Adventures and this is a new strategy that I never would have thought about back in 2009 but the idea is to do what you're doing but in the parenting space. So, Parenting Adventures. It's going to be about interviewing experts that are childhood psychologist or people that are families doing fun things with their kids.

I know that in the podcasting world there are very few parenting podcasters so this gives me a chance to establish thought leadership in the podcasting world that will cross, supply back to the benefits of My Kids' Adventures. So it's a different situation and it's a different angle.

And I know that the combination of what will hopefully be a top podcast in its category and a small yet growing blog in a much bigger category, those two things combined I think will have sticking power and I think it will allow me eventually overtime to develop one of the larger parenting blogs as well.

Jacob: So if somebody is trying to get into the blogging world right now, in 2014, you would still encourage consistent lengthy content and maybe add a podcast as a leverage to kind of arise above the crowd.

Michael: Absolutely. Because the podcasting world, as you know Jacob, is still a baby compared to the blogging world.

Jacob: Right.

Michael: And there are some people that are consumed by listening, there are some people that consumed by reading. I happen to be a listener so there's a great opportunity to develop an extremely intimate relationship with people.

And I learn this on my social media marketing podcast. I have about 25,000 people that listen to my show every week which is a huge number. That's like having a mega church, you know? And they're listening to me for 45 minutes, they love it. You think about how long people spend on your blog. If you're lucky it's a minute or two. But if they're spending that much time with you every week then you can develop a really super loyal following.

But I don't suggest you just kick right out of the gates with trying to have a big blog and a podcast. Maybe you start with the podcast and see if it resonates and then do the blog or maybe you go vice versa.

The other key thing that I'm doing now that I wasn't doing as much in the beginning is making sure that I have social sharing integrated really tightly into every single post. Because one thing we learned along the way with Social Media Examiner is that when people read really valuable content, they often like to share it which means they'll hit the Facebook like button, they'll share it on LinkedIn, on Twitter, Pinterest, whatever. You know what I mean? Facebook.

So, making sure that you make it really easy for people that consume your content, to share it, is critical and so many bloggers overlook that. Every time someone shares it it's like bringing new people to your content. They become like a walking advertisement for your content.

Jacob: Perfect. That's a great advice.

And since we're talking about podcasting, I went to the last conference in March. In your keynote, you stated that this is the year of podcasting. Why don't you kind of explain a bit why you think that and what you see the value of podcasting.

Michael: The industry report that we referenced earlier in today's interview has some really interesting data in it. Currently, only 6% of marketers are actually involved with podcasting and 21% plan on increasing their activities in 2014. That's a

pretty significant -- that's more than a 3X increase. It's unlike any other category that we've measured. So, that's pretty important.

The second thing to keep in mind is that more and more consumers are beginning to realize that their smartphones are like radio receivers and they can listen to their favorite show whenever they want when they're in the car.

I did something really funny, Jacob, just recently. I asked people to take a picture of where they are and post it up on my blog. I've got like 330 comments. It's really intriguing to see where people listen to podcast. They listen to podcast when they're in the car, they listen to podcast when they're in the office, they listen to podcast when they're on boats, when they're walking their dogs, when they're on horses. It's crazy. All over the place. Whenever they have idle time, they listen to these podcast. And that's an incredible opportunity for you to deliver your special content to a very narrow audience that is your ideal audience.

I think the last thing I want to say about podcasting is that the car is a big deal. We're seeing more and more of next year's cars are going to have dashboards in them that allow you to plug your smartphone right into the car. Apple has come out with something called CarPlay, I believe it's called, and it allows you to literally play your podcast or your Google Maps or whatever, you know what I mean, right through your dashboard.

In that way, it's really easy when someone's driving it just -- just like they're tuned in into a radio station or satellite radio, they can instead tune in to your podcast. And I believe that that represents a massive opportunity for us podcasters to be heard by people that are driving their car.

Jacob: Before I started podcasting, I really couldn't understand really the value -- except from having another medium to reach people. For me, it's the connections you make with the audience and also the guest, the guest becoming your extended network.

Four months ago I was not podcasting, now in June I met people like John Assaraf, Q, I met Michael Gerber, James Altucher, all these people who are on my show and didn't know about me before but it's just because of the podcast. It's a huge tool that people cannot really appreciate until they actually do it.

Michael: Yeah. It's funny because I literally just -- if you go to socialmediaexaminer.com/95, I just finished an interview with John Lee Dumas about relationship marketing. It was called How to Secure Guest Who Become Allies. It's John's story about how he use his interviews, and it's the story that anyone could learn from, how they use interviews to develop relationships that

lead to business opportunity, just like what you were talking about. That's a huge part of it.

In the olden days, I mentioned I used to have a camera crew with me. Well, now I don't do that anymore at all, I just do podcast. It's more convenient for both parties. I can go longer. Instead of just ten minutes, I can go 45 minutes or whatever, and I got a much larger audience. So it's a win all around.

Jacob: Right. And people can listen to it everywhere. They don't have to be sitting in front of a screen; they can listen in running, driving.

Michael: Yeah. It's a funny thing. That almost goes without saying but our ears are designed to be multitasking mechanisms, right? You cannot watch a video and do something else other than eat at the same time. You can't watch a video and talk at the same time or read at the same time but you can do that. You can be gardening or you can be biking or you can be using your hands and still be listening to audio. That's something you can't do with video.

Jacob: I'll say one more thing about podcasting. I had a chat with Cliff Ravenscraft, Godfather of podcast, and he said that the impact of people listening to you in their ears, that intimate connection, you can't get it anywhere except when you see them face-to-face. And I think that withdraws the audience to come back every week to listen to your show.

Michael: I had a really surreal experience. I was at a conference and somebody said "I hear Mike Stelzner's voice. I don't know what he looks like. Where is he?" I never had that before. I was like, "What? Are you kidding me?" That's like what probably radio people experience.

So many people came up to me and said, "Oh my gosh! I'm a huge fan. I remember when you said this. I remember when you said that." So yeah, it really -- they feel like they know you. What better situation for those of us that are providing services to other people to have people feel like they know us before they ever become a customer. That's a big deal.

Jacob: Right. So definitely do podcasting in 2014. That's going to be our tip for this point.

Mike, me as a blogger as well, one of the biggest problems that I have, and I know other attorneys and people that are listening to the show and emailing me, is the subject of content production and creation. How do we create quality content? What is the strategy for consistent creation of content? Perhaps you can share some of your strategies with Social Media Examiner.

Michael: First of all, we've been talking throughout this interview about this interesting survey that we did the study, right? So we surveyed 2800 marketers. Well, guess what we asked in the survey? We asked what do you most want to learn more about? Guess what we do with that content? We used that to inform what we were going to write about this year on Social Media Examiner. Literally, we included some questions that made their way into the report and some that did not.

But the dual purpose of doing a survey, and you don't need to generate a report. You could just come up with the survey, you could use surveymonkey.com and you could ask a bunch of questions from your audience like, for example, the basic demographic questions like how old are you? What part of the world are you in? What are your interests? And then you can get in to the more specific questions. What would you like to learn most about fill in the blank? Whatever your topic of expertise is – divorce law, whatever. You know what I mean?

Or you could setup a email autoresponder when someone signs up for your list and replies back with, "Hey, what are you struggling with right now related to blank?" and you're going to start getting questions that come in or either via survey or via email and that is what you choose to make your content focused on. Because people are telling you exactly what they want and that's the kind of intelligence that is extremely valuable and that's how you can decide what you should and should not focus on.

For example, we know that people most want to learn about Google Plus based on our social media marketing industry report. It's at the top of the list. So we are producing more Google Plus content. That's a no brainer. So there you go.

Jacob: It's interesting that you mention the surveys which I agree that are powerful tools and I started using them as well in my blog. But a lot of these experts are talking about, "Well, you have to look at your analytics, go search the keywords." What do you think of the keyword strategy for content creation?

Michael: I think it's a very dangerous experiment because ... I'll give you a quick example.

If you Google Instagram apps -- we come up number one on Google -- and that delivers 5,000 page views every single day and it's been doing so for nine months. Now, if you look at the Google Analytics you'd say "Holy cow! I need to write more Instagram app articles." But guess what? That'd be a dangerous mistake. Because even though it's true that it comes up on search and a lot of people come to our website, they come and they leave. They don't actually end up getting our email list which is one of our most important business metrics. So arguably, it's the worst performing piece of content we have on the entire site despite the fact that it's the number one performing in the analytics.

So, what does this all mean? It means that if you strictly look at page views, you will end up not necessarily supporting your business objectives. Instead what you need to do, and we did a whole podcast on this, is you need to setup what's called a goal. You can do that in Google Analytics and typically a goal might be a sale or filled out an inquiry form or signup for a newsletter.

When you actually put a goal in place and then you start looking at your traffic, your content based on goals, it changes everything. Because you'll realize, "Okay. Well, we want to produce more content that have the highest conversion." So when you're able to sort out everything and you realize, "Oh my gosh! Articles on LinkedIn perform better than everything else for our conversion which support our business goals, we need to produce more LinkedIn stuff not more Instagram stuff." So that's the slippery, dangerous slope of just looking at analytics without actually taking it deeper.

Jacob: Right. And I think that once you understand how to find the best content and consistently produce it then you're in a much better position.

I read your book Launch. You have all these business books and they just give you general and it's all beating around the bush, this one actually had consistent advice and step-by-step description as how you actually launched your own company. But one of the things that you talk in that book is the creation of content which is distinction between primary fuel content and nuclear fuel.

Michael: Right.

Jacob: And I think this is one of those things that is a major difference because -- and maybe I'll let you explain what the difference is and why you made the distinction.

Michael: Yeah. First of all to that Google Analytic stuff we were talking about, if somebody goes to the socialmediaexaminer.com/90 they'll find how to do what I was talking about.

Jacob: Perfect.

Michael: So back to your question on nuclear fuel versus primary, yeah. You think I'd know this, I wrote the book.

So primary fuel is your everyday articles that you write and it's like gas in your tank, in your car. It will last you for a couple of days and then you need to do more or your car is not going to have forward momentum.

Nuclear fuel are special things you do like the industry report that we've been talking about is nuclear fuel. That industry report has been downloaded 60,000

times at least in the last 30 days. So that's a big deal, right? We've been written up in entrepreneur magazine and Mashable, all over the web.

So nuclear fuel is the kind of stuff that makes a big splash. It requires a lot more work just like nuclear fuel. Making nuclear fuel requires a nuclear plant in real life, you know what I mean?

Jacob: Of course.

Michael: It's much more complicated than just gasoline. It's a lot more effort to produce these kinds of things. Free reports are great example, nuclear fuel events are examples like free webinars and stuff. But the point of it is that it has a big kind of tail. What I mean by that is it can deliver on and on and on and on where an article might be three days. You know? Something like a report could literally be a year and that could be really, really important for your business.

So the idea is to use nuclear fuel when you're launching something and then primary fuel to keep everything moving along. You could kind of interject nuclear fuel as often as you need to to give yourself a little boost or momentum and contest are another example of nuclear fuel.

Jacob: Right. So maybe the bottom line is that it's better to invest in people to help you create that kind of nuclear fuel like reports, like e-books that are actual free that you can download as oppose to paying for marketing that may not give you results because that actually gives you some credibility.

Michael: I agree. To be honest with you, Social Media Examiner doesn't pay for marketing really at all.

Jacob: Right.

Michael: We do very little advertising. If we do advertise it's only for the events that we have. But we don't actually advertise anything as far as our content. The content itself is the advertisement.

So the idea here is that you invest maybe in getting a writer to create an article for you or to write an e-book for you and the hope is that that will draw traffic to you. The good news is that it can keep drawing traffic indefinitely if it's done right and that's a really smart investment. Versus an ad that is on today and off tomorrow and then you got to just keep doing it.

I would much rather invest in growing an audience than give my money to someone who has already grown an audience. And that's how almost marketers have to operate. They have to pay Facebook or Google which has already grown an audience rather than invest in growing their own. And when you invest in growing your own then you can truly become independent and successful.

Jacob: I think this is actually one of the keys that hopefully our audience can take from this interview because a lot of attorneys are emailing me and they complain about, you know, how do we get more clients? How do we get more people to visit our website and retain us? And they still don't understand it. Even in 2014, they cannot continue to engage in the old practices of marketing where they pay yellow pages or they put a banner ad or they pay per click. You have to be useful in creating content.

Again, that's why I really value that book *Launch* and also I think Jay Baer, he was a friend of yours, and Youtility that he created, you both preach the concept of giving away, being helpful, creating content, creating this community or fans because you do something useful. I think in your book you called this the Elevation Principle that came before Youtility so I'll give you that credit. Why don't you explain to me what it is?

Michael: Okay. The simple concept is imagine you are in a rocket ship and you're in the captain's chair, okay? In order to grow, you need a very simple formula. It's great content plus other people minus marketing messages equal growth. And we've been talking about great content a lot so you all know what that means.

Jacob: Of course.

Michael: The 'plus other people' means that you need to know exactly who you're trying to reach and what they want and we talked about that a little bit but you also need to work with people that have access to the audience you want to reach. We've also mentioned that, right, with fire starters and stuff.

And then the minus marketing messages means to strip out the advertisements that you typically might have on your website like "Hey, fill out this form to get a quote," you know what I mean? Those kind of things. Instead replacing those with advertisements for your free stuff. That is not perceived to be a marketing message so get on our email newsletter list and in exchange you'll get a free video on Facebook marketing or whatever.

So that's the idea. The idea is to -- instead of advertising yourself, advertise your free stuff and that's not perceived to be advertised. And in the end, by doing that model, you'll grow.

Jacob: In my case, well, I was following non-attorneys because we couldn't find any good advice from the legal market that's why I created *Enchanting Lawyer*. But following all these other marketers who are giving value, giving stuff for free, we built apps, we built a video library and content that drives people to our website and they read and they say, you know what? Maybe they know something about the law and let's just hire them or let's give them a call. To me that's the future of marketing: content-based value being helpful.

Michael: Absolutely. I agree 100%.

Jacob: Michael, we talked about content, recreation and I think this is valuable things that nobody else can answer and that's why I focus on them with you. But I want to get your feedback on social: Facebook and Google Plus. A lot of the professionals are still not as actively using those platforms and even if they are using them, they're not using them correctly. What is your take on Facebook? You mentioned that there's been less effectiveness in that platform but where should we be and how should we be using it effectively if we should be doing it at all?

Michael: Well, I think that in the olden days it was about building communities on Facebook. Today, I think it's about using Facebook to encourage people to share your content more than it is about community development.

Because everybody's on Facebook all the time, you definitely can't just throw it out. But instead of focusing so much on Facebook pages and actively having people manage those Facebook pages, it might be much easier to focus on empowering users to share your content on Facebook. Because when they do that it shows up on their newsfeed and their friends that have similar interest might discover that content, share that content, click on the links. So Facebook still has a critical role but it is changing.

The other side of the equation is that Facebook is very good if you have money to invest in advertising. Facebook can do amazing things with advertising that you just can't do with anything else because they know so much about each of us as users.

So, for example, you could import a list of your entire email list and it will tell you which people -- the quantity of people on that email list that are also on Facebook. And you could target an ad to those people. You could, for example, say to those who have unsubscribed from your list, "Hey, we'd love to have you back. Here's a free gift." That's a great example of a way to use it. You could send out emails and then you could only export those who never open the email and put that up on Facebook, you know? And try to catch them another way.

So there's just so many things you can do with the advertising side of things with a little bit of money that you just can't do anywhere else. So the organic side of Facebook is changing but the paid side is growing.

Jacob: Right. That's exactly what they want. What do you think of Google Plus and other social for professionals? Is it something that we should put focus on?

Michael: I think it depends if your audience is there, you know? Again, you got to survey your audience and ask them which social networks do you most hang out on? If

they say Google Plus, then you need to be there; if they say YouTube, you need to be there; if they say LinkedIn, you need to be there; if they say Pinterest, you need to be there. So, there's no like magic. Google Plus is definitely a big network and there's a lot of people out there especially in the business side of things. So I would say don't ignore Google Plus.

Jacob: Perfect. And then, of course, survey your audience which, I think, is a great take away from this interview because a lot of people just keep pouring money to advertising. Doing things that are not producing results when you can just simply send a survey and we'll get exactly the answers we need to focus on our efforts.

Michael: Absolutely.

Jacob: Mike, why don't you share one thing with our audience that you feel -- either a tip or a prediction for 2014 and next year in social.

Michael: Two things: Number one, podcasting, as we already referenced, is big. Get into it and thank me later. Because you know, Jacob, you're beginning, I'm sure, to see the benefits of it and it's really, really big. Secondly, if you're going to be on Facebook, be prepared to spend some money and dabble a little bit with Facebook advertising. I think those are probably the two hottest things that I could say right now that are big trends right now for the future.

Jacob: Perfect. For you, Michael, I just want to, again, mention My Kids' Adventures, your family side of vlogging, and a new podcast. Why don't you mention that name again. Are you going to have a separate blog for it or it's going to be part of My Kids' Adventures?

Michael: No. Yeah. My Kids' Adventures is like the family activities blog for dads and moms and grandparents that want to do fun things with their kids. And Parenting Adventures is, parentingadventures.com, is connected to mykidsadventures.com and it will take you right to the podcast. There's not a separate website, it's actually all part of the My Kids' Adventure's property. Parenting Adventures is literally launching on June 13. So depending on when this recording comes out, it's going to be pretty fresh.

Jacob: I really appreciate you taking the time, Michael.

This is Jacob Sapochnick, enchantinglawyer.com. We welcome your comments, any questions on the show. I'm sure you're going to have a lot of questions. We'll be there to help support and answer those and we'll see you at our next show. Thank you.

Closing: Thanks for listening. You can find even more resources including the show notes for this episode at enchantinglawyer.com. That's www.enchantinglawyer.com.