

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, host of the Enchanting Lawyer Podcast. Welcome to the show. We had a very amazing guests in the past four weeks, but today I have a special guest, somebody who's special to me in my heart. A person I met several years ago and became friends, and I learned a lot from her. Our guest today is Mari Smith.

For those of you who know Mari, Mari is one of the world's leading social media strategists and widely recognize as a top Facebook marketing expert in the world. She's author of *The New Relationship Marketing* and co-author of *Facebook Marketing: An Hour A Day*. Fast Company describes Mari as a veritable engine of personal branding, a relationship marketing whiz, and a Pied Piper of the online world. Forbes named Mari as one of the top 10 social media influencers in the world.

Recently, Facebook has chosen Mari to lead the Boost Your Business event which is a series of live events throughout the country and Mari is taking small businesses and showing how Facebook is helping them grow their businesses, which is amazing.

Mari, welcome to the show. I'm super excited to have you today.

Mari: Well, thank you, thank you, Jacob. This is wonderful to be on your show. It's been a real joy to watch your rise to fame and fortune, so to speak, and this podcast is one of them. I really admired how you've taken this on. I plan to launch my own podcast someday but it's a joy to be on the show with you today.

Jacob: Thank you. It's one of those things where you can ... we talk before there's so many platforms out there, but I think a podcast is an opportunity for the host and the guest to have a one-on-one conversation and people can listen to it in their own time and just take whatever they can from this conversation. I'm sure we're going to have a lot of value to share today.

Mari: Yes.

Jacob: Mari, I introduced you a little bit, and I'm sure ... most of my listeners are professionals, attorneys, and non-attorneys, and people that enjoy learning about social and how they can build businesses kind of like how I've done it. But I want to, perhaps in your own words, share how you came to this country. Again,

we share the immigrant story together. Just tell us a little bit where you come from, why did you come to the US, and how you get started on social media.

Mari:

Okay, great. Yes, absolutely. I just love that you have that new book *My American Job, My American Dream Job*. It's so amazing because, gosh. Having been born in Canada to Scottish parents, and then when I was 12 my parents divorced, my dad got [audio breaks] just amazing, cross the Atlantic in a big old boat. Took us 9 days, I'll never forget. I was 12 years. And then I was in the UK for the next 20 years.

And so then, went to high school there, got my jobs there. I had always been an employee. I left school real young and did not go to college, and I just was really anxious to get out in the workforce, start making money, and be independent. Because my dad really struggled to make ends meet, but he did a great job.

I don't know. I never really thought about being an entrepreneur until '98 [audio breaks] creating and launching my own speaking and training business with personal and professional development skills. I worked a lot with attorneys as I spoke about, in admin and secretarial roles, sales role, software demonstrations, sales and marketing, etc. So then all of that kind of culminated if you will in '98 and like, "Okay, that's it. I'm going to start my own business."

For many, many months I'm putting together my course outlines, my talk outlines, and business cards and marketing materials, building my own website because I'm real tacky. I'm going into the bank [audio breaks]. Right at that moment I got this invitation out of the blue to come to San Diego. It was really from a long lost friend. I hadn't seen him for about five years. But I just knew. It was this defining moment of my life.

I'm like, "Wait a minute. Oh my goodness. I am supposed to start this whole new life and take this business idea that I have and go to America to be an entrepreneur." I just knew. I like to teach the difference between a belief and annoying. A belief, every now and again doubt can creep out and go, "Oh, are you sure you know what you're doing? Maybe you should go back. I don't know if this is going to work out." But knowing you just go far [audio breaks] every cell of your being. I just knew.

I had limited resources. I came over with 50 British pounds, two suitcases, I knew one person. Yeah, but within a real short period of time, gosh, about six weeks I was introduced to a lady who ended up becoming my sponsor. I got a visa and one visa through the NAFTA with having the Canadian passport. I remember walking over the boarder down there at Mexico to be able to get that little ...

Jacob:

Tijuana.

Mari: Yeah. I went out to Tijuana and got the stamp on my visa and ... gosh!

[audio breaks] talk about being an overnight success 10 years in the making because, seriously, from '99 to 2009, I was just really, really applying myself and the internet world speaking, coaching, training, creating information products, growing my email list, loving life. At the same time, it wasn't really till 2009 that I reached a critical mass and a tipping point.

I got on Facebook in 2007 and it also was a defining moment in my life. Just fell in love with the platform. Really saw the vision. They had not reached their first hundred million back then. I think it was still [audio breaks].

So then ... Oh my goodness! Defining moment. Yup. This is it. Facebook is it. I'm just going to teach everybody about Facebook because this is perfect combination of all my passions, talent, skills, my vision to really touch people's lives using the technology that we have available to us.

Jacob: What is amazing to me, Mari, I know shared it with me before. As an immigrant, you have this drive. You feel that there's so many opportunities that you can actually create in this country. During those 10 years when you're learning and consulting ... and I think, at some point, you even took [audio breaks] just traveling. Just did all these amazing things because you could. Then you found your focus of Facebook marketing which kind of became your platform.

Mari: That's right. Yeah.

So, in 2007, right at the time I got on Facebook and right at the time my business started really takeoff, I actually left Mission Beach with my then husband. We're now divorced and it's all good. We decided to go and travel the country in an RV. I got in Twitter and Facebook around the same time [audio breaks] Mari know and I'd be like tweeting pictures of moose in Alaska or here I am, here's the Old Faithful in Yellowstone Park. Oh, I'm in Yosemite now, mostly around the West Coast.

We spent three months in Alaska. But it was just awesome to be able to have the freedom of flexibility to run my entire business from the road, from the RV, from the RV parks. It's really experiencing Mother Nature and just having an incredible amount of freedom. But like I said, my business is really starting to take off at the time and so we have to kind of plan our schedule around where we'd get good internet. [audio breaks]

Jacob: 2007, right? It's still early to use that kind of platform.

Mari: Yeah, exactly.

If anybody's ever seen that movie RV with Robin Williams, that was me. I was standing on the roof trying to get a signal.

Jacob: With his laptop in the restroom?

Mari: Yeah, that's right. Exactly. Or his phone or something. Yeah, exactly.

Jacob: What is it about Facebook on your first time? Back then I remember we had MySpace and we had all these other little platform. What is it about Facebook when you started using it – and I'll share my own story about that as well – that kind of drew you and say, "You know what, this is something that will [audio breaks]"

Mari: Yeah. It's interesting enough when I got invited. It was actually by an app developer. He had just launched an app. It was called Podclass. It was where you could take or teach classes. He asked me to be a beta tester on the app. I was like, "Okay. Well, I suppose I better sign up for Facebook account if I'm going to test this app." I haven't not even gone to Facebook.com at that time. I'm on LinkedIn, Ryze, Ecademy, MySpace, forget it. My head would hurt every time I went to MySpace.

So I was a little reluctant because I'm like, "Well, what do I need an internet site to network for? I'm a natural networker. I got big network here in San Diego." [audio breaks] a visceral experience. I was like, "Oh my God, there's something magical here." There's all this white space, there's the uniformity of the profile. Anybody's profile I looked at, all the exact pieces of the name, where they live, what they do. It's all in the right place. I could find it, their bio.

Most importantly, what I realized, Jacob, is that there's people who I'd admired and followed for years. Like I read their books, Jack Canfield, Tony Robbins, Wayne Dyer, rest his soul. He passed recently. I don't know. Louise Hay, you name it. All these people [audio breaks] for years. And I'm like, "Oh my gosh! Well, I just friended this person. It kind of feels my buddy and I'm actually chitchatting with them. How cool is that?"

I conducted like you with these interviews. I reached out to so many different marketers and leaders and ... "Can I interview you? Just for 15 minutes. I want to find out the three ways that you're using Facebook for business" or something like that. So I create a program out of that, a course, teleseries, [unclear 00:10:09] and then webinars. Yeah. It just was profound. I thought, "Wow! This is a fundamental change in the [audio breaks]."

Jacob: I feel the same. When I started using Facebook in the beginning and really ... you feel that people that connect with you on that platform and they follow you, and they see that you provide value or maybe they like something about you, they

will connect with you. You can't just pick up the phone and call somebody like Jack Canfield, like you mentioned, or somebody that ... I met Leigh Steinberg, the legendary sports agent. We met on Facebook and we connected, and then I invited him to be a guest on my podcast. What other way can I get to talk somebody like that.

Mari: Exactly.

Jacob: You know I'm passionate about Facebook, trying to build myself on that platform.

The first time where I had a shift was actually when I went to your live event which I think was early 2012 where I actually met you first time in person and many other people like April and others that we're still friends today and really, really good connections that we made on live event. What I found very interesting at that event is that not only these people are professionals in what they do, but they generally want to help and they really want to help others that hire them [audio breaks] unbelievable.

I want to share that because people ask, "Well, how did you build this Facebook following, and how did you build ..." I feel that what I learned during those three days with you made a difference for us for the rest of the year. Each one of us created something different businesses. But for me, it was like an awakening. You need to use it for customer service, you need to use it for engagement, you're not selling. Things that we shared and it stayed with me forever. I wanted to share that.

[audio breaks] stay on top of Facebook. How do you understand the new stuff? Maybe I can ask you that question people want to know. How do you stay up to date with all the Facebook news and the changes that happened on almost on a monthly basis?

Mari: Yeah. Well, sometimes even a daily or a weekly.

Jacob: Yeah.

Jacob: Yeah. I have a lot of different sources and it's just fairly rudimentary but extremely effective system initially, kind of phase 1 if you will. My own sources and vast majority of it is, you know, Facebook's different blogs, Facebook's [audio breaks] list. One of my most popular interest list. It is a public list and people can follow it. That has hand-curated probably about 130 or so sources. So I will look through that list probably a few times a day. It's a mix of both profiles and pages that predominantly teach and share about Facebook. That's one area.

Also, I'm a member of Facebook media group. Anything that hopefully is kind of breaking news there, Twitter. And then I have two people in my team [audio breaks] kind of my extra eyes and ears. We compile a weekly list of news and updates in the social media world that includes Facebook and I'll share that with my inner circle. Also, even just my inner circle ... this is a monthly membership program because there's so many social media experts in that group that we will share with one another too. I guess a long-winded answer.

To summarize it up – that was long-winded – but to summarize it up, it really does take a village shake up. I can't possibly know [audio breaks] texted me every morning and go, "Hey Mari, here's what we're working on," then that'd be great. I think sometimes people think that that is what happens but he's got bigger fish to fry. They're on to making whatever ... making this big plains that put internet down thousands, tens, hundreds of thousands of feet, whatever, to get internet all over the world. But, yeah.

I would say it's an evolving process. I'm always looking for better ways to really stay on top of things. For instance, the other day, Facebook changed the page layout. Just a little bit. But it's prominent enough to make [audio breaks] button now that sits on your cover image, everything else is sitting below. I spotted it, I quickly marked up a social media examiner image. I got to tell you, that's gotten the most reach every than all my posts put together in months, months, and months and months.

But I got to tell you, before I published that, I looked all over. I looked in every single part of my search of my sources, Googled it, I looked all the news sites, and nobody was talking about. There was no official announcement anywhere. I just made my own official announcement.

Jacob: Which is great because people will follow you. Kind of to summarize what you [audio breaks] some sort of a group that is respected and they have somebody who has the knowledge and just going to get it from there. I remember your circle so I try to get it from there.

Mari: Yeah.

Jacob: But it's funny because when I saw your post I realized, "Oh my God, the picture on the business page is now smaller."

Mari: Yeah, exactly.

Jacob: Which is kind of interesting because like, oh, wow!

Mari: That's what I thought, too. Yeah. Wow, that's really small. What happened to my photo? It's all tiny.

Jacob: Exactly. Maybe they want people to see the call to action more than the photo.

Mari: That's a good point.

Jacob: But it's still important to have a good profile picture.

Mari: Yeah, of course, it is.

Jacob: Mari, [audio breaks] you consult businesses and large companies and many people that want to learn how to do this efficiently but what is the number one, the most common question that you get asked today?

Mari: Well, I would say in general it's about content. I think small business owners get really, really stuck for content. On this [unclear 00:15:56] ask with Facebook, I'm getting to sit down and talk one-on-one with literally hundreds of small business owners. Hands down, the question I keep getting asked is about contents. Big problem [audio breaks] we're basically co-leading these events, and Jonathan says the same thing that content is the biggest headache for most businesses.

Interesting enough, what I'm seeing is that business owners, they almost need to stand back and have the word content define. People like you and me we know what a content is but to most business owners, what does that mean? I'm supposed to post about my cat or my breakfast or ... because maybe they're looking at what their kids do. But content really kind of transcends the form whether it's audio, written, video, visual. [audio breaks] story, how you got started, how your service or product impacts others, the lives that it changes, that kind of thing, the difference that you make. But, yeah, I would say the number is content regardless what platform people use.

Number two, when it comes specific to Facebook it's really about ad. It's such a complex product with multiple ways it can be used. People say to me, "Oh Mari, I tried Facebook ads, they just didn't work for me. I spent ..." [unclear 00:17:15] lady recently she said she spent \$10,000 on Facebook ads and it didn't get a good result. [audio breaks] With all due respect, I usually put that down to user error, or just lack of education error simple because it's ... Facebook does put out educational content about Facebook ads but it's mostly self-serve and people just get ... they get stuck. They don't know what they don't know.

Jacob: And it's hard because you have to measure, you have to test. It only works if you try and tweak, tweak, tweak and then it works.

It's funny, I thought that people will ask about reach because I get always questions like, "Nobody's seeing my post. Nobody's [audio breaks]" content's relevant if you know what to post then your reach is going to be, obviously is going to reach further, right?

Mari: Yes. And there's still many, many ways to get organic reach. Interestingly enough, some of it is counterintuitive. I actually say to people try posting less because "Oh my God, I just got to crank out more content and I got to be in the newsfeed and the top of the newsfeed so I'm just going to post every hour and see if that works." An actually fact, that can be counterproductive because the number one reason that people hide content in the newsfeed is because the page is posting too often, the number two reason is because they're posting their [audio breaks] they know that page for.

Jacob: I see.

Mari: Right? There's days where ... I got to say, if I have a post doing real well organically, I'll let it sit for two days.

Jacob: Without posting at all.

Mari: Without posting a single thing. That's not prescriptive, that's what I found works for me, right? Because people go, "Oh well, I'll try that on mine," and "Oh, it didn't work."

There's so many components to this whole conversation about reach because one of them in a way is almost like educating your followers, your audience, what you tend to post about. What can they rely on you to be [audio breaks] have a question about immigrating or getting a job in the US, who do they come to, Jacob Sapochnick or Enchanting Lawyer.

They know, "Alright, he's my trusted source. I like how he's personable, I see him sharing about himself, he's very reachable. He doesn't talk a whole bunch of legalities," whatever reasons they have and they come to your page and they find valuable, useful content. Same with myself is like you just said, "Oh, new changes on Facebook. Let's see what Mari's got to say about it." Great.

With that I would just really encourage your listeners to think [audio breaks] do you most want to be known for. You want to be known as the go-to expert for fill in the blank. You can then craft all of your content around that one of your expertise including what we call OPC, other people's content. You can easily share, not necessarily to a direct competitor but, I don't know, I have a philosophy ...

Jacob: Can you use articles?

Mari: Yeah, other articles. But I just have a philosophy on life, there's not really competitors per se. Nobody can be you. There's only one Jacob Sapochnick. Even if other people were trying to copy what you're doing, they'd never do it the way you do it.

Jacob: [audio breaks] People get used to seeing at least five posts a day from our page and some of it is two or three ... two of them will be news articles about immigration topic that is hot like maybe Donald has had a lot of stuff. And then the three will be like quotes or something that we do at the office like a photo of somebody getting a birthday. Because I find that if I only limit myself to two, I can't share everything that I want to. The news, personal stuff about the office, and some of the quotes, and people really like the quotes. They said, "Oh my God, you're the only lawyer that I've seen that has so many quotes and we love that." [audio breaks] feel the reach is dropping because people get disappointed that I didn't post as I used to.

Mari: Right.

Jacob: I think you're right. If they're used to getting quality content from you like maybe once a day if you're still spamming the page, then you're going to lose.

Mari: Yeah. It's exactly about managing expectations of your audience. That's a beautiful illustration because we're kind of at very different ends of the spectrum here. My post often will almost be like a blog post. I don't blog as much as I would like to because I just find it easier to sit down and crank a Facebook post and hit post, hit the publish button. [audio breaks] be able to train "if you will" your audience of what to expect from you, and then to meet those expectations.

Jacob: Right. Exactly.

Mari, there's one thing that I actually wanted to ask you and I'm personally curious to see what you're going to say. This is about customer service, and people talking about customer service in the last Social Media Marketing World conference, this has been a huge topic. I wanted to get your take. What do you think business's, large or small, should actually use Facebook for customer service, and maybe some examples.

Mari: [audio breaks] in which Facebook really wants us to go because you can just tell way back in March at the F8 Developer Conference, Facebook announced that messenger now has an API so developers can create apps for it, then there's messenger for business. You can sign up for that messenger.com/business. That's going to be a full on integration with your website.

So people go to your website to make a purchase. If they're logged in to Facebook, a little message will pop up and go, "Hey, would you like to receive updates on this purchase through Facebook messenger?"

Imagine like a retail, an online retail are going, "Hey Jacob, that shirt you just ordered in red, it just came in in blue. Can we send it to you?" "Yup." "Great."

Click this button. It's on its way." Or you could say, "Oh, that package, your package will be here tomorrow morning. Click the map and you can track it." All done within messenger.

Where we're going with social customer care, particularly on Facebook, they're giving us the tools. Recently they introduced, in fact they have it on my page, you might do as well, where you can now reply privately to people who comment publicly. There's a little button there [audio breaks] private message people, not pages but people. That's interesting.

You know what, I just noticed, is they have the message button that's lit up on people but is there but grayed out on pages. And when I hover over it says "Pages can't send private messages to other pages." The fact that it's even there ...

Jacob: But they can to people, right?

Mari: They can to people but ...

Jacob: Yeah, not the pages.

Mari: Yeah, absolutely. The fact that's even there it tells me it might come at some point. So you can even do some B to B messaging at some point, who knows.

So then they're doing like saved replies and then encouraging us to respond really fast to get that [audio breaks] response time of 5 minutes and 95% is they've set the bar so high. But still, again, it's all in the name of social customer care.

One of my favorite sites out there, Socialbakers, they're based in Prague in the Czech Republic. They just do some amazing, amazing stats and facts. They have this really neat magic they call socially devoted. They've got all kinds of like leader boards of companies [audio breaks] social customer care on both Twitter and Facebook. Like ranking country number 35 out of 37.

I actually ... even though it's kind of a depressing stat, I'm like, "Wait a second, this is a massive opportunity for all your listeners listening here today, for all of us who really genuinely care and want to make a difference, and want to use Facebook and social channels for uplifting humanity and doing better business.

If you just turn up the volume [unclear 00:25:02], turn up the efforts on warm customer [audio breaks] mile responding probably. And I know in the many years of conversations that you and I have had around this topic, Jacob, we're speaking the same language. That's what your Enchanting Lawyer is about, that's your enchanting way, care about people. And as Gary Vaynerchuk says, "Caring is scalable." You can actually care about millions of people and they can feel it.

Jacob: It's funny because I'm just looking at my Facebook page right now and you mention the response time. It says right now 95% response rate, 1 hour response time and I'm thinking [audio breaks].

Mari: [unclear 00:25:44]

Jacob: This is crazy. I thought 1 hour is pretty reasonable. We were like 2 and a half, 3 hours, and now we're down to 1 hour [unclear 00:25:52] so it's pretty good.

It's interesting because last week I posted an image, I don't know if you saw it, of my stats from last week on our page. We got 679 private messages which people are asking questions like "How do we get to your office?" "I forgot this." Six hundred and seventy-nine. It's crazy because you talked about companies like Coca Cola and JP Morgan [audio breaks] people that are using this format to communicate with us and give us some opinions. One client is "I'm going to be late but can I pay with a credit card?" It's all through those 679 messages in a week. It's crazy.

Mari: Wow!

Jacob: This is the new ... yeah.

Mari: How Facebook expects you to respond [unclear 00:26:43].

Jacob: We have four people [unclear 00:26:44]. I have four people around the clock. I have one guy in New York who is 3 hours ahead, and I've got three people here in San Diego that are working in the office, they're doing other stuff as well. [audio breaks] These are people that we're losing. How the hell can you manage 679 inquiries just from Facebook? It's crazy.

Mari: Yeah.

Jacob: So customer service is definitely the future. Take a lesson from this, people should pay attention.

That's why I wanted to ask you the question because I felt that with all these changes they are doing, the API, they are leaning to be the customer service platform so we're going to be forced to use it.

Mari: Yes. Yes. Yes. Well, because when you think 1 and 7 people in the planet [audio breaks] the other week there reached a major milestone which was the first time ever that 1 billion people were using Facebook in one day, in a 24-hour period. It's just so ubiquitous. It's become a part of our daily lives.

Jacob: Absolutely.

Mari, as we come to the end of our show, is there anything that you wanted to share perhaps? Maybe a [unclear 00:27:56] wisdom with people that are either struggling on Facebook, they want to know what the future is, something that we can take away from this discussion.

Mari: [audio breaks] to get some help. Even a couple of hours a week of having someone help you find content, gather content, curate content. There's a lot of great tools and systems out there. It doesn't take a lot of effort or time or resources but you, as the business owner, really need to focus on what you are as the visionary, as the business builder, the CEO, marketer, whatever that might be.

And then even, like I say, some nominal support, take classes, get educated, go to events. It really makes a world of difference [audio breaks] in your industry when you can just implement a few little changes here and there.

Facebook is absolutely here to stay. We're moving into the realm of artificial intelligence and with the oculus, with the virtual reality. Fast forward even five years from now, you're going to see some incredible things and that whole internet of things. You're going to get a little message from your fridge, "Hey Jacob, you're running out of milk. Would you like to place an order?"

Jacob: Right.

Mari: And then there'll be post on Facebook about it. "Jacob just ordered [unclear 00:29:15]." [audio breaks] kind of scary but another way is just ... it's an absolutely integral part of our lives. Ultimately though, the good news for everybody is that we do control how much we share. We can still have a private life. [unclear 00:29:35] say to people all the time. There's your personal and your professional, those tend to be inextricably length so that who you are as a person, your personal life, etc, you can share as much of that as you're comfortable with at the same time, very important to maintain a private life. Information you just don't want online, don't want [audio breaks] two people in a room or maybe in a field in the middle of nowhere having a conversation. That's called privacy.

Jacob: Right. I totally agree on that.

Mari, if you want to verbally tell us where we can find you online. Of course, they can just Google you but maybe give us your website or the best place to connect with you.

Mari: Yeah, absolutely. So marismith.com, or facebook.com/marismith, twitter.com/marismith. As I do like to say, just Google me. Love to connect with folks.

Jacob: Thank you so much, Mari, for taking the time to be on the show. I know that people are waiting for you to be on this podcast and learn from your wisdom. I'm personally thankful for our friendship and our connection over the years.

Mari: Likewise, me too.

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.