

Ted Wright Podcast Body Transcript

[00:00:00] **Andy Murray:** Hi Ted, welcome to the show. It's a privilege to have you on today. I'm really excited about our conversation on word of mouth marketing.

[00:00:08] **Ted Wright:** Thanks, Andy. I'm glad to be here. Your reputation proceeds you. So I'm honored to be invited. Thank you.

[00:00:14] **Andy Murray:** Ted, you know what's really interesting to me is I just read a new article posted by Rashad Tobaccowala, an industry futurist and friend of mine.

[00:00:22] And he wrote, marketing is getting people to advocate for you, to other people. The most powerful form of marketing has always been word of mouth. Word of mouth has been, has become, Exponentially more powerful due to social media, new tools and technologies. Instead of marketing two people, we should consider marketing through people.

[00:00:42] Now I just happen to have with me the goat of word of mouth marketing, Ted. So how ironic is that? And I'm really excited about what we're gonna talk about, word of mouth marketing. Let's start by perhaps you taking me to that moment when you saw for the first time success in this. For a brand. And what was that like?

[00:01:02] And was that perhaps the PBR brand?

[00:01:05] **Ted Wright:** So it was, and so to go back to your bit about Rashad, so that showed up in my LinkedIn feed, like seven o'clock in the morning Sunday. And so I texted to him a meeting like, dude, you've gotta tell me when you're doing these. I'm like running around. Super excited.

[00:01:21] Rash Rashad is, for those of you who don't know him, he's a super senior guy and in marketing and he has always been wonderful about giving time to punks like me back when I was a punk and was just like, I got an idea and, he would give me an hour and we would talk. And he's been special to lots of people for a long time.

[00:01:44] I really did enjoy that. And it also shows, for me, getting to your point, Annie, it also shows to me like in the last 25 years where we've really

come for, so as you pointed out, the first time I ever went live with this idea of a word of mouth marketing was with a Pap Ribbon brand. And it was really great.

[00:02:03] A guy named Brian Kok was, CEO of the Pap springing company and he owned 40 some odd beer brands, and Pap was their least selling or close to their least selling it. Definitely not a profitable brand for them. And so I went down to make a pitch and I didn't even know what brand I was talking about. I was like, I got this idea and the idea was that broadcast is gonna decline in its ability to sell more stuff and it is gonna be replaced by two people who already know each other, talking about stuff that they love.

[00:02:38] One talking to another. And I didn't have, that was back when there was no data on this. There's no third already data on this. No one had really done this in a professional way for about 70 years. So I had all these historical examples and all these other things, and at the end, It. Brian looks at me and he says, all right, so look, so I get to a meeting about old Milwaukee and the TB campaign we're gonna put together.

[00:03:00] So I gotta go now. I have no idea if you're an idiot or a genius, so I'm gonna give you this many markets at this many months for this amount of money. You can take it or leave it and then we'll talk at the end of that many months. And I took the money and flew out to Atlanta and where my wife was living at the time and we were both living there and I said, Hey, we're on the way.

[00:03:22] And we were, and so PBR was our very first thing we did. And there was another great, a great internal partner there, a guy named Neil Stewart, who has gone on to do great things in beverage alcohol and is now doing awesome things back in his hometown of St. Louis, Missouri. And it was basically Neil and I figuring this out and the, the story for Pap is, it.

[00:03:42] Basically, a brand that sold so little that I couldn't tell you how little it sold all the way to dominating domestic sub premiums in the United States all off of the theory that. People will share a story as long as it has three particular qualities. It is authentic, it is interesting, and it is relevant.

[00:04:04] Or if any of your listeners out there like using acronyms, they can just say, Hey, if my story have air, so is it authentic, is an interesting and relevant. So Neil and I figured this out with some good research and just some gut cause nobody really cared about this brand at the time, the Pap Spring company.

[00:04:21] And turns out we were. So was and

[00:04:26] **Andy Murray:** it was great. So how did you do it? Tell me the secret, if you can, around how you got to the authenticity and authentic and relevance and make that happen for PBR r

[00:04:37] **Ted Wright:** What was the secret? All right, so the secret for pap, the little the interesting thing we got from there.

[00:04:43] So remember, so this is 2000. So we're taking this thing over. So in 1996, a woman had written a book. Her name is Naomi Klein, and she had written a book called No Logo, and she basically was making the argument that people were less interested in branded goods and more interested in the actual empirical quality.

[00:05:04] And so what she was doing was she was basically at the very end of Yupp. So Yupe as a political movement really started in the very late seventies as a countercyclical movement to the era of disco and the sort of the malaise of the seventies. Jimmy Carter's famously referred to the American economies stuff in a malaise, and so people were just hungover from all of these other things.

[00:05:32] Yupp was showing up and Ypi was basically saying, Hey, we gotta get rid of this whole Woodstock. Everything's gonna happen and we gotta get serious and we gotta be, we are young and we wanna live in cities, so why of yuppy for young urban will Island in cities, and we're gonna beat professionals, so we're gonna be young urban professionals and instead of just being YPs, we're gonna be yuppies.

[00:05:55] So in 19 79, 19 81, 19 82, this is a big deal. This is a revolution, and what you saw was you saw a lot of brands that were old school about either being in England or being in the Upper Eastern part of the United States. Brooks Brothers, J Press, Mel Blanc cross luggage. All the rest he sinks. All started, people basically started buying these brands that were basically about professionalism.

[00:06:21] So what the other thing we know in the United States about all political movements is they eventually devolve into costume and silliness. So by the super late nineties, you basically had dynasty. Which was a television show where women took have big hair and they had a big shoulder pads. And it was everything that was going on was basically a mockery of what the original idea was.

[00:06:44] We're gonna be young, we're gonna live in cities, we're gonna be professional. Who can only argue against it By the time the late nineties shows up, it's, grs, it's Perrier, it's throwing up in your Porsche. It's it's less than. Which was a great Jay McCarney book on basically the end of this. So Naomi Klain wrote this book and she said, okay, I think this is changing.

[00:07:04] And so we went back and looked at history and it looks like every 20 years there's a new political movement for a new generation. And so Hipsterism. Basically was a political movement in juxtaposition to Yupp and Hipsterism had several very specific things about it. One, it wanted to reject things and it changed the two experiences.

[00:07:27] Two, it was very interested in any profession, anything that could, you could do with your hands. And three, it was celebrating those people who wanted to do stuff because they wanted to do it, not because they wanted to be seen. So along kind comes P'S Brewing Company, who at the time was like, Hey, our biggest deal is we want a blue ribbon.

[00:07:49] That's why it's called P'S Blue Ribbon. In the late 18 hundreds, Soni and I looked at each other and said, I don't think anybody cares about winning a bill of blue ribbon in Milwaukee in the 18 hundreds. What else can we do with this? So what we found is we found that this rear was being bought in dive bars because it's really inexpensive and is being bought by people who had.

[00:08:10] Hung out in those dive bars since the seventies. A lot of them, since they came back from Vietnam, as well as people in their very early twenties that wanted to get away from brass and ferns and cocktail culture, as by Tom Cruise and wanted to get something that they felt was more real because they were rebelling against their parents who were yuppies and they grew up in this life.

[00:08:34] And they're like, no thanks. I don. So the story I always used to tell is so there are a bunch of kids who basically thanked their parents for paying for four years of college by graduating, putting a bone through their nose, moving to New York City and becoming a bite. So that was who was a total rejection.

[00:08:52] So we're like, all right We have this beer and it's being bought in these bars that you're going to anyway, so let's go find these people in their early twenties who are doing things because they want to be doing 'em, not because they want to be seen doing 'em, and let's go ask 'em questions and let's go create community around that.

[00:09:10] And then Neil and I very specifically were really dorky, nerdy beer distributor. Collared polo shirts with the Pap logo on them. So we did not look like the guys who were all wearing tattoos and bones in their nose. But we would go to these bike messenger festivals and they would come and they would ask us.

[00:09:32] Eventually they would say, okay, what are you two natch doing here? And, but we were obvious, obviously too young to be natch, so we probably weren't, drug cops. So then they're like, so what are you doing here? I'm like, oh, we work for the Pap Brewing Company. And we told them what we were doing. It's we think what you're doing is cool.

[00:09:47] We know a little bit about it. We just saw we come checking up. That's our job. And so the other thing that you find out is in marketing, there's a rule called reciprocation. So if you show the you love somebody, you as a brand expresses love to a group, and that group doesn't feel law to love.

[00:10:06] They'll become curious about you and wonder why it is that you're giving us love and they'll come and check you out. So in 2001, I always joked the only people who really had a lot of tattoos were people who had been in prison. People who were in biker gangs and members of the Yakuza, which is a Japanese dent.

[00:10:26] Really. There's not a whole lot of Yakuza in the United States, or unless there wasn't. But we would go to these tattoo shows where these tattoo. We're doing great stuff and we're basically taking Sailor Jerry and bringing in into today's world, and we'd ask 'em questions. They'd be like, that's so cool.

[00:10:42] My parents hate that I'm doing this. Everyone thinks it's weird, but you don't wait. Who do you work with again? And we tell 'em and they try the butt beer. And so we did that with bike messengers and people who were taking and customizing bicycles. And we did. Tattoo artists, and we did that with people.

[00:10:59] Turns out that Neil Stewart loves gambling in sports gambling, and somebody on E S P N heard about that. And so they called him one day at his office and just, he picked up the phone and he answered their calls like ESPN n Radio calling, can you get on? And so we're like, okay, let's talk about, let's talk about sports betting.

[00:11:17] Let's talk about anything that people are doing because it's very real. and they told two friends and so on. And the promise we made about the beer is

for a buck, it's pretty good, right? That was basically the promise that we made. And in fact, if you drink beer, especially if it's cold for a buck, it is pretty good.

[00:11:37] And more people told people and the story that they told matched the experience that they had. And in people who live in North America, the story you tell them matches the experience that you. They'll come together and they'll buy your stuff. Wow.

[00:11:51] **Andy Murray:** That's a great story. And it sounds like advocacy really has to live in the cultural context, and it sounds like you guys did a lot of ethnography and deep dive into the story of what's happening in culture.

[00:12:03] Real time and in depth of understanding, which I don't think most people would look at word of mouth marketing and connect those two components of how important it is to develop that efficacy in the spirit and in the context of the storyline of culture.

[00:12:19] **Ted Wright:** So thank you for noticing that Andy.

[00:12:21] Culture is critically important for us in that particular brand. . What we needed to do is we need to find something to tie it to. We need to find a story that was authentic, that was interesting, and it was relevant. We've worked with other brands before where that is internal into what makes them awesome.

[00:12:40] I'm just gonna brag on our threads out at Chipotle. Chipotle is amazingly great food. Like they only in any restaurant, they only have 52 ingredients, including salt and. They make and dub the food that you buy at a Chipotle they make, and 90% of it they, so as when we first joined them and know, we were helping them, nobody really talked about that.

[00:13:04] Nobody really knew that. And we're like, this is amazing. All of the home cooks, home chefs who work here at the office, were like, so the only difference between you making chicken tacos and me making chicken tacos with guacamole is that you just have 40 chickens on a grill and I only have.

[00:13:22] They're like, yeah, basically. I They're chopping this stuff. Average Chipotle opens up at seven o'clock in the morning, six o'clock in the morning, whenever they don't take their first customers till 11. All of that time is they're preparing the food, so not a part of the cultural context in there.

[00:13:37] Just something that was truly authentic. About them. And then the next question you have to ask yourself is, okay, who is that really interesting to?

It's interesting marginally to everybody, but who really is gonna care about them and how is that really relevant to things that they're trying to accomplish?

[00:13:56] So with PABs or JetBlue or Chipotle and any of these other things we've worked with, that's really the key. And that's, I think the understanding that everybody, hopefully, who's listening at this, takes away. It's not a thing you have to tie this to. It's what really is authentic about what you're doing?

[00:14:14] What is really interesting about it and that interesting thing. Who is it relevant to?

[00:14:21] **Andy Murray:** I love that. I love that. That's super clear. I want to challenge you a little bit because a lot of the brands you're talking about are, seem to be easy to love, easy to advocate for have you ever taken on a brand that might be, and this is a bit of a softball, so because I've looked at your website.

[00:14:36] Like almost an impossible brief like a vacuum sweeper a Bissell like it, when that brief came in, how in the world did you create advocacy around something that would seem so benign as perhaps

[00:14:48] **Ted Wright:** that, all right, so let's talk about, let's talk about in, in marketing every times. Oh, Ted, you, the sexy things are easy.

[00:14:58] I just had somebody call me and they bought an old school horror magazine that's super famous. If you love horror films, that is super sexy to you. I personally, all that stuff makes me ugi and make me stir up when I was a kid. I don't do horror movies. Halloween, all the rest is stuff. I cannot do that for very long at all.

[00:15:18] Not sexy to other people. So with this. What we said was CEO o was very nice. He had seen me speak at something and he's I got this sweeper, which is a very, at the time was a very small part of their business on a revenue-wise, but a very large part of their business history and also a very large art of their management.

[00:15:43] And so they had the board, at the board level, they'd had conversations like, you, we either need to sell a lot more of these or me to exit the business. And Mark Bissell still runs that and it's a family owned business. And there was some thought like, it's gonna be very hard to go to Thanksgiving consistently if I get rid of the thing, that, know, we need to make this work.

[00:16:01] Like how are we gonna. So what we did was we said, okay, so what is it that actually does what is awesome about this? Turns out it is awesome for a couple of different things. One of them is it's great for pet hair. And we're like, okay, check so great for pet hair. Now look for everybody who's listening to this.

[00:16:19] It's not like we just said, Hey, pet hair and Legos, we took a hundred things that it was good at doing and we put 'em on a board and then that's what I want everybody who's listening to do this. If you side, you think you're word, mouth mark is interesting. Here's how you do it. You take the thing that you're talking about that you wanna sell more stuff of to war people, and you take absolutely every aspect of that brand and put it on a big piece of paper or a whiteboard, and then you're gonna have between 15, 150 different aspects.

[00:16:52] Like I'm sitting here looking Andy, he has a very dashing beard, right? He's also, he is the king. He is the OG guy in shopper marketing. He's all of these other, he lives in northwest Arkansas. There's all these little bits and pieces. So we would take everything about Andy that we knew and then we would say, okay, cool.

[00:17:11] Or we try to get Andy to be more interested and interesting. . And if you're trying to move to northwest Arkansas, then we talk about northwest Arkansas. And if you're talking about shopper marketing, we talk about shopper marketing. And so for what we do is we take that 10 point valuation, authentic, interesting, and relevant, and we assign one to 10 for each of those 150 things for each one of the three different pieces.

[00:17:37] Authentic, interesting. In. So you're gonna get some stuff that's gonna score a six and other times, you know you're gonna get 'em to score a 30, your top eight things. That's what we practice with. So that's what we did with Bissell. So first of all, pet hair. Secondly, it is being most, and we, this was an accidental discovery on our part.

[00:17:56] I, my son was prime Lego time and I was messing around with these things at the house, and it turns out that they can suck up a Lego piece like nobody's business, but it also doesn't destroy it. So for any of the leg parents that are out, . If you suck up Darth Vader mini fig and destroy his red light saber, there's a lot of tears and there's a lot of replacement that's gotta go on.

[00:18:20] So this thing will gently move it, but it also picks up all the little pieces that she'll step on in the middle of the night. Other piece that we found about this was, it was a very. So the other group of people we went to is people

we like, okay. It's very portable. Who cares about being very portable? Ah, people live on boats and people who live in RVs.

[00:18:45] And so there's a ton of people that I'm gonna retire and Martha, get the rv, we're gonna go buy one and we're gonna treble and see the country. And there's a lot of people that do that. Like a lot. Like six, 700,000 people every. Are picking this up as a hobby. So we're like, okay, that's half a percent of America Times, plus all the people who love dogs.

[00:19:07] Okay, so that's 9% of America that are pet parents, plus all the Lego parents out there. So let's throw together this group. So then the next question to come to yourself is, now that we've figured out what stories you're gonna tell, the next question is, where do your people go? , where do they co-locate to use the very fancy H B R term?

[00:19:27] Where does everyone get together? Where do they co-locate and how do they share their information? So a co-location idea for everybody here is a church or a synagogue or a mosque. Every Saturday or Sunday these people are gonna be at that place. Come, come hell or high water to use the phrase that's where they're gonna.

[00:19:48] So we found that out for Lego parents, for people who have dogs and pet hairs around in there to that environment and RVs. And we went out to those places and we just shared the story and people like, oh, that solves a problem for me. That's so great. Y'all just, I cannot even tell you how many people, RV people that are out there, but my most famous one ever, this man, this woman retired, he had, she, they both worked uh, as on an auto manufacturing factory and auto manufacturing line for 30 years each.

[00:20:23] And they had four pet cockatoos and they put four pet cockatoos and the two of them into an rv and they were driver outta the country for five years. So you can imagine with a couple of birds, there's all kinds of mess and feathers and all the rest of stuff. I'm positive that Bissell has sold over 10,000 sweepers just from this woman telling everybody who also travels with birds.

[00:20:47] Oh my God. When we started this as you brought it up, Andy, we would, we were not thinking. Cockatoos and an RV that sort led us to crazy success, but, and it totally worked right? They were happy. Sales increased dramatically. So for everyone's listening, here it is not, is your product or service sexy? Is it who is your product or service?

[00:21:14] Sexy? To who is it important? Who is gonna care. That's the key. Ev. Look, we live in America, right? There's 320 million of us. There's people out there who love the TV shows so much that they name their children Walker and Texas Ranger. So it is not that they're not fans of whatever it is you're doing.

[00:21:35] The question is how can you get to them and how can you share your story in such a way that they immediately get what's interesting and relevant to that, and you give them an easy path to purchase.

[00:21:48] **Andy Murray:** Yeah. Ted, you're describing a process that is much more forensic and excavating and digging through to get to real truths.

[00:21:57] That is a bit different than perhaps how some marketing brands try to market through influencer marketing as we know it today, where. It's finding a person on TikTok and giving 'em some products and hopefully lightning will strike in a bottle and it'll blow up for them at some point.

[00:22:12] And there's nothing wrong with that. It's not a good or bad approach but as you describe it, the work of creating advocacy feels different to me as a marketer then the work of just, building an influencer program. And do, are they different? Same. And how

[00:22:26] **Ted Wright:** do you. advocates have three particular personality traits that drive them.

[00:22:31] They like to try new things because they're new. They'd love to share stories, and they're intrinsically motivated. So influencers are different. Influencers are people that professionally have made a decision to go out and build an audience and then go to brands and say, I have this relationship with this audience.

[00:22:51] If you pay me, I'll talk about. Now there is some integrity, quote unquote just from the influencer of marketing, they talk about integrity brands. Like I would never talk about something that I don't love. So just so everybody's listening knows this, that is actually fundamentally not true. You could actually pay somebody enough money where they would talk and say, and do anything that has been well pro both in Siri and in React.

[00:23:20] Where I'm excited about advocacy is the other great thing about advocates versus influencers. You rent an influencer. You earned an advocate. So once you have earned your advocate, until you break covenant with them,

until you decide to make a bad product or you're, You don't use Strawberry WAA anymore.

[00:23:45] You do some other flavorings like island like strawberry Rabo, so I'm leaving Snapple or whatever it is that you do. They will stay with you forever until you break the covenant. And the covenant you have made with them is we as a brand are gonna do this and this is why we're gonna do it. You have fallen in love with the brand for whatever reason, but it's based on what they do and how they do it always.

[00:24:10] And so you're gonna stay. Until that story changed and right? That, you saw that in the American car. I The reason that the American car industry changed is and really died and was supplanted or changed radically and got a lot smaller and was supplanted by other people, is that car manufacturers had made a deal with people.

[00:24:32] Say, this is what the car is, this is what we will do. It delivered on all those promise. And then when the world changed and they needed a different promise, American car companies were like, ah, we made money for 50 years, making sure this promise is true. We're gonna keep doing that. And nobody cared about that promise anymore.

[00:24:51] It had become irrelevant, so authentic, interesting, and irrelevant. That air thing keep coming back to that always.

[00:24:59] **Andy Murray:** Ted, one of the reasons some marketers might prefer focusing on influencers, although it's not an either or thing, is that marketers love measurement, right? Money follows metrics and the ability to get attribution for that investment with influencers is more easily tracked, I would suppose then the measuring the outcomes of an advocacy program.

[00:25:20] So what do you, how do you think about measure. And for brands in terms of measuring the impact of advocacy how granular can it get and what are your thoughts?

[00:25:30] **Ted Wright:** So I'm gonna get really dark and negative for a second. I'm just gonna quote two felt goods that are flow down from the a and a somewhere between half and 80% of all of those metrics that you get from influencers are.

[00:25:45] Like they're false, not oh, I misunderstood something. No, they have a server named Andy and a server named Ted, and they're blinking back and

forth and they're counting that and telling the brands that they're, these conversations. The World Marketing Association, which I was unfamiliar with, but it's everyone that's outside the United States that so they belong to, says that for criminal organiz, Digital attribution fraud is their number two money maker.

[00:26:15] It may in, by 2030 it may pass illegal drugs. So if you think of all of the narcos cartel stuff that you've seen and the money that you, that we've heard piles and stacks, and you, we gotta have a warehouse for this. All those criminal organizations make almost as much, if not more money doing digital fraud.

[00:26:38] Than they do selling drugs. Yeah,

[00:26:41] **Andy Murray:** no, no question. It's a big problem. And it's a misleads a

[00:26:44] **Ted Wright:** big problem. Yeah, a hundred percent. So for what I say to people is look, and this is a non particular, speaking, particularly to our friends in the startup world, you've raised \$8 million, 10 million and Sadie is definitely gonna need her \$50,000 back.

[00:26:59] Eventually you are gonna trust. Criminal organizations and their fake digital stuff that everybody says is out there, that's who you're gonna trust. Or let's take another this thing you're how stop you're working for a brand. I'm gonna be the brand manager for, I'm just gonna pick something.

[00:27:17] Orville Redenbacher, I need to pick anything. You're gonna trust your career because you told somebody in your organization, give me this money. I'm gonna do this With that money and sales are increase, and you've got all these digital metrics that are going and sales don't increase. They're looking at you brothers and sisters, they're now looking at themselves.

[00:27:38] But like you said, you made us a promise. An implicit agreement that we're gonna go do this thing as opposed to all the other things we could do, and we're gonna get more sales. And you don't. So there's nothing wrong with digital. We have clients all around the world. They use digital all the time. We are supportive of that.

[00:27:58] We're happy for that. It's not negative. You do need to watch the facts. And the facts are that the attribution. For digital is super suss. It's super suss, and so you have to be careful. Now, let's talk about attribution for word of mouth. Let's go now, let's get less, more bright and shiny and unicorns and rainbows, and let's talk about what's what works.

[00:28:24] Everybody who's listening to this has a media marketing mix that you use. She like, I got billboards and I got fsi and I got this and I got that and I got the other thing. And I figured out how, I know how effective billboards are, how effective my Super Bowl commercial is and how effective this. And once I know that I'm gonna rationalize and I'm gonna spend my budget in the way that I'm gonna get the most out.

[00:28:50] Word of mouth fits right in there. Just whatever your media marketing mix, I just happen to know that it Fitz, because I got nine people who work at Fizz and that's all they do. And there's a great guy who's way smarter on the measurement side than I am. His name is Ed Teller. K E L E r. Ed started doing the measurement side of word of mouth about 18 months after I started doing the actual, doing the word of mouth, like throwing campaigns.

[00:29:17] Super good. Super smart. He is the. Go look at all his stuff on the technical aspects of how to measure all of this. When anyone says it's, you can't measure word of mouth. What they mean is it's harder to measure word of mouth. Is digital. If you camp on top of an api, you can watch the little things flow in the digital river.

[00:29:39] **Andy Murray:** Yeah. And I've always felt a more precise measure isn't a more perfect measure. And the idea that you can get some precision through a digital lens doesn't necessarily mean you're measuring the things that matter most. In your case it's gonna be more econometrics, market mix, modeling a longer view.

[00:29:55] This isn't about short-term performance, this is about how you build a brand over

[00:29:59] **Ted Wright:** time. Yes. And since you've mentioned performance let me just say so I'm famous now. At least when the office, you both, I always say performance marketing is neither discuss. And that's a little hardcore cuz there's nothing wrong with doing that.

[00:30:15] But at the end of the day, Run something all the way out to the nth degree. You run into the Andy Murray slash Einstein quote, which is sometimes you measure things well, but they don't make as much difference as measure things that are much harder to measure. And that's what you should do. And you were talking about attribution, and Einstein was talking about dark matter, but it's both the same.

[00:30:38] It's hard to measure those things, but those are the things that both. And we know that there's no CEO, there's no CMO that anybody knows who doesn't say word of mouth is even right number one, number two, or number three driver period. For all of my sake. You're up Arkansas. I would say that the Walton family built Walmart on having a story.

[00:31:01] It was about low price and making sure that they lived up to that story. And one person told another and they told two friends and so on. And every time they opened up a store, particularly in the early days when Sam was doing this, he was outside of markets where there wasn't as much of competition.

[00:31:17] And he rolled in and said, y'all, there's no reason why we can't have low prices. Here we are, we're Walmart. I put my name on it. I'm Sam Walton. Come shop.

[00:31:26] **Andy Murray:** Yeah, for years, Sam resisted any kind of marketing. He felt the prices and customers did the talking. Because of ab, absolutely because of word of mouth and what that meant.

[00:31:36] You're spot on from that standpoint. So Ted ratings and reviews I'm understanding from the surveys I've seen that it's like number two or three decision making factor for people considering brands. How do you put word of mouth alongside ratings and review?

[00:31:53] **Ted Wright:** So ratings and reviews are in fact some people's enjoyment and how they spread their word of mouth, right?

[00:32:02] They're just writing. So if you're interested in word of mouth, the trick you have to have in your mind is to not worry about the tool and worry about the outcome. So if you have a bunch of people that are like, oh my gosh, I love this so much, I'm gonna go make a TikTok. Fantastic. Celebrate their TikTok mix.

[00:32:22] They're gonna go on LinkedIn, they're gonna tell all their friends, they're gonna go write reviews on Amazon. You want that? And for people who talk about, oh, there's lots of fake reviews and whatever, right? So let's just be super clear. The human brain is the best decision making engine on planet. , even with all the chat bots and everything else, and they're looking more and more like people, but they don't look like fake people.

[00:32:49] They look like real people, and they're getting more and more real. I pause it that it takes somebody about half a second to figure out that a review is fake. If you really know the thing, it's not hard to tell which ones are fake, so you only care about the fake reviews being a. If you're just counting the number of reviews or what the stars are, so I could tell you for a fact that there's nobody here in North America who thinks, three stars is basically it's trash.

[00:33:20] Because even though Amazon has a one through five star system, nobody really believes the ones, and people only believe about half of the fives. And so when the average on Amazon is like 4.3, then you know that's a. And so people are looking for the B'S and the A's, and so they're reading the nuances. And it depends also for those of people out there who really care a lot about reviews.

[00:33:44] You want people to really write. It's a three-part review. You want people, the best reviews out there, or people that start off a lot, Hey, this is me. This is who I am in my life right now. I'm 42 and I have a 12 year old and a nine year old. Okay, Greg. And we went to this hotel in Hawaii and had a great time, and here's what we did.

[00:34:05] So if you're 23 or you're 30 and you're getting married, you stop reading when you said 42 and got two kids like, oh, don't care anything more about how they love that place, because nothing they said is relevant to the experience that I wish to. So first part, say who you are. Second part, say what you liked about it.

[00:34:28] And the third part that makes it really authentic to people is what's the hack like? Oh, and when you're at this hotel, make sure you go and see James the bartender, cuz he makes the best. My tie on mount. And you're like, okay, it seems like they really went there. And so that little nugget gives an aura of authenticity around everything else that you wrote.

[00:34:52] Yeah, that's

[00:34:53] **Andy Murray:** great advice. That's great advice to go listen and learn. It's also, I think, sometimes helpful to look at the one reviews for if it's your brand and try to understand what is going on that you're not getting the word of mouth, cuz people will tell you if they're advocates, they'll also tell you when they're not happy with something.

[00:35:09] **Ted Wright:** They will. So here's a line that we like use. No one complains about something that they don't love. That's right. Love that. You just

don't. So take those complaints very seriously. Mercedes-Benz, roadside assistants. Since you stranded my wife for three hours on Friday we will be having a chat.

[00:35:28] And it's really because she loves her car and we don't want to get rid of it. But you can, you can't leave her hanging for three hours, on, on a major interstate. You just can't do that. So you will be hearing from me with a couple of words of advice.

[00:35:42] **Andy Murray:** Oh, my word. I can't wait to see that one.

[00:35:44] Please send me a copy of that review. Will you? . So Ted one of the key audiences of this program are students at the University of Arkansas, especially in marketing, and I'd love to get your perspective on what you might suggest to students who are gonna be entering the workforce in a marketing space on how they might learn more about word of mouth marketing.

[00:36:07] Because as there's no discipline in the. Typical university on word of mouth marketing on its own. But it's such an important element to understand. And so any thoughts or suggestions on how they may upskill themselves prior to entering

[00:36:21] **Ted Wright:** the workforce? Sure. And so let me start by saying, whoop pigs.

[00:36:24] Sweet . There you go.

[00:36:26] **Andy Murray:** All right. You just got a lot of

[00:36:27] **Ted Wright:** likes outta that window. I'm sure. , first off you go. If I had my Razorback hat, I would wear it. All right, so here's where you got, if you wanted to find out about word of mouth. There are a lot of free, there's a lot of free stuff out there.

[00:36:39] Seth Goden wrote a wonderful book called Purple Cow, and Seth basically makes the case about what is remarkable and have that there is another book we talked earlier about. A guy named Ed Keller, he wrote a book called The Influentials, and that takes you through the math side of this. There's a lot of free access to information on the Association of National Advertisers, also known as the a n a, and that is different from the ama everybody.

[00:37:11] So a n a on the absence up. And finally everything that we know at Fizz we put on our website and it's all. So if you are just interested in word of mouth, there's case studies all over the place and if you basically type in word of mouth marketing and you'll find a lot of stuff if you want to further there, you also put fizz in there.

[00:37:33] You'll find five or six case studies. You'll find 10 or 12 third party articles that have been written all great New York Times, wall Street Journal just about word of mouth and how to get it done. There's also a lot of speeches, so I give some speeches. There's another guy named Jay Bear who gives a lot of speeches on this.

[00:37:51] Our speeches are recorded and then people put 'em out there. So I would think if I was a student, if I put it in three or four hours, I could learn enough of the basics to know if this was gonna work for something I was interested in, or I just wanted to keep it in my bag of tricks when I joined John Tyson over at Tyson Chicken or whatever it is that I'm gonna do after you were serve Arkansas.

[00:38:11] Yeah. Excellent.

[00:38:13] **Andy Murray:** Excellent. Okay. That's super helpful and I appreciate you sharing that. Ted, thank you so much for spending time with me today to give me and our audience a much deeper appreciation for. Not only the importance of advocacy and how brands can be intentional in building that, but you've also then outlined a bit of the science and the practice behind it, which is much deeper than I ever imagined.

[00:38:35] Deeply appreciative for your time today. I'd like to know, for those that wanna know more about what you're doing, what's the best way for them to get in contact?

[00:38:45] **Ted Wright:** So the easiest way to find me is getting that little Google thing. If you just write Ted Wright and fizz in your search bar, you'll find me everywhere I am.

[00:38:54] If you wanna follow me on LinkedIn, I'm there a lot. And then our company is called Fizz, F I Z, and we're at fizz core.com. F I Z C O R. Dot com. And I'm glad for anybody to stop by and see what we're working on. It's, we always try to have fun now.

[00:39:09] **Andy Murray:** You know what? It's interesting.

[00:39:10] Speaking of word of mouth, I found you through word of mouth of a friend of mine Sean Womack, a friend of yours, who put me in touch with, he's gotta meet this guy and what they're doing at Fizz. And I did some research and found. The story's fascinating, and I was just so appreciative to have you come on because it's such a timely topic.

[00:39:28] What's happening with TikTok influencers r ratings and reviews, you cover the gamut of that space and have been for many years. So again, thank you for joining us and I hope to see you soon.

[00:39:40] **Ted Wright:** Andy was great to be here. Thank you so much and I look forward to seeing you again in the near future.