



BRINGING BUSINESS TO RETAIL PODCAST
EPISODE TRANSCRIPTION



Salena: Hey there and welcome to this week's episode of The bringing business to retail podcast. If you have ever wondered how to match your copywriting with your branding and make sure that it all flows so that you can make more money get more customers and keep those customers hanging around. You're gonna love today's episode.. Now Lee Rowely is a 10 -year veteran sales copywriter but for the first six or so of those years he was pretty bad at this job. Then he stopped listening to all the copywriting experts and how they said that copywriting and marketing had to be done.

And Instead he spent 18 months developing a connection forging personal approach to brand marketing that nearly doubled his clients conversions and revenues. And that is what he's going to share with us today. So welcome to the show. Lee I am super excited because I love copywriting. I love branding and I love making more money so they are three of my favorite things.

Lee: There's three of my favorite things to do with. Yeah well thank you very much for having me on the show. We appreciate it.

Salena: No problem. Tell us why you were so crappy at your job for six years and if you were so bad at it why did you stick it out.

Lee: Well wow those are big questions there. So I started out learning copy; how to write copy for my clients the same way everybody else does. We're like OK hand copy the Dan Kennedy letters hand copy the Gary Hulbert letters, use these templates do things exactly the way they do. And you know it always felt really uncomfortable because it's like OK 30 40 years ago there wasn't that much going on that you could actually focus on an eight page sales letter. Yeah you know today things are different, not that the fundamentals aren't there. The fundamentals are still solid. They carry over. But how we do it today has to be different. It has to be more customer

focused and it's about getting into their world. But you know I didn't read; it to be a long time to really just break away from that because I got into this cycle of I can only charge so much because I look like everybody else. So I had a great copy faster, so I had to use templates so you know I never got anywhere it was this constant cycle of not making enough money and doing too much work.

So I finally just kind of hit a breaking point where I was like OK I'm going to continue doing this. You know I want to do it in a way that is authentic, in a way that doesn't make me feel like I need a shower afterwards or that I need house bath suit to serve the keyboard you know. And so I tried a lot of different approaches , and had a lot of failures which are great things because they're learning experiences. And I finally developed a system called Avatar Immersion. And you know what that really centers around is doing research on your audience whoever they are; whoever is buying your products and seeing what they say.

So if you go into a Facebook group for example, I had a client who was targeting people with rheumatoid arthritis.

So I subscribed to half a dozen Facebook groups and you know what I heard them talking about wasn't so much the pay, the aches to limited mobility. It was like the deeper sub level stuff like, I can't sleep at night an extension by that I can't sleep in the same bed as my spouse anymore because I'm tossing and turning all night. So our relationship is starting to become strained because of the rheumatoid arthritis. You know what marketer thinks of that you know if they go for the surface stuff. They go OK the aches and pains and stuff like that. But all these little details, if you can show them that you understand their day to day lives, then selling doesn't really become a hard thing regardless whether it's online or off line.

Salena: I recently was helping one of my clients write some copy for her packaging so she was selling a sports nutrition product. And so what we did was we literally did exactly what you say. We went into a bunch of forums. We went to a bunch of competitive sites and we read all of the reviews and what we discovered was for this particular product it was all about the taste. Everybody was saying it's great product but tastes very chalky or it's a great product but it tastes really bitter, and hers tastes amazing because it's got cranberry in it. And so that was the key

thing that we focused on was the fact that it tasted really good because every single review that we could read on everybody else's site was all about the taste. So the information is out there if you're prepared to go and look for it.

Lee: That's absolutely fantastic because if you had taken the time to do that then you probably would have focused on the same pain points that all of your competitors are.

Salena: Yes, that's the nutritional benefits of it.

Lee: Exactly they don't need one more person telling them they need more Vitamin X in their diet. You did a great thing. I did a page once for a company selling apple cider vinegar supplements little capsules. Yes. This was a blue million of those on Amazon right. They're all pretty much the same thing. So what are we going to do to differentiate? And I'm like mistake about this. I climbed up on my cabinet got in the back of the cabinet and got a dusty old bottle of apple cider vinegar, unscrewed the cabinet in front of my wife looking at me. What are you doing. I just took a huge swing of it. Oh. It tasted like crying.

Salena: Yeah, it's right as well.

Lee: Yeah it did. It did and man that hurt it was the dumbest thing I ever did. But then I had an angle and I went back and we did this guy's sales copy and just crushed it.

Salena: Yeah.

Lee: Because we focused on that aspect of it that nobody else was paying any attention to.

Salena: Okay. So before we get into the avatar emerging tell us why did you stick it out for six years. If you really didn't like doing it and you felt really slimy in the process.

Lee: Okay well I'm going to be totally transparent here and this is not entirely business related. I have a daughter who had a rare genetic illness and she had a lot of health issues and I left my corporate job to start copywriting just because it was a way for me to be home with her. She passed away about the time you know I kind of had this little crack she was 10 at the time and you know after a fairly extensive stint through alcoholism it was finally like guess what kind of

brought me to this like OK what can I take away from this? Apparently I can't drink myself so I need to do something positive. So I looked at her life and how she always wanted people to shine authentically, to be their own approval to stand out. It's like she loved you no matter what. And she just never judged and I said well what if I can help people shine. What if I could help them not be templated, not be like everybody else but to bring their own authentic brands to the table through the words that I write and that I help them write. So you know that's the honest answer to the question.

You know it was; I just kind of had a breaking point there when we lost her and I just decided I was going to keep doing this it was going to need to be meaningful.

Salena: I'm so sorry to hear that. I can't imagine the pain my daughter's 10 actually right now. I'm currently sitting in her bedroom like a teenager sulky teenager because she can't have what she wants for breakfast. I can't even imagine what you must have gone through but this; I guess you took something which was just life changing and you used it to change your life and now you're using that to change other people's lives. So how did you; like how did you come up with these Avatar immersion theory? Formula? Not theory you can practice so...

Lee: I don't care we can go if you like. It's just I noticed that when I was looking at something involving some coaching groups because I also do what I call collaborative coaching which like teach people how to write their own copy. So it wasn't much of coaching groups at the time and I started looking at the things they were saying and noticed that my own marketing started evolving as I was noticing the things that were really going on in their lives. And I just sort of started testing with it with what if that's true and with other niches as well. So I got a couple of my clients to let me try it. I'm just like hey I'm going to go out on a limb here and try something weird and if it doesn't work we're out a week or so of our time. So they said, yeah ok, go ahead.

Salena: I'm one of those clients I'm like. Just give it a go.

Lee: Yeah. So this it's nice to have that level of trust you know so that we start to get some really good results. I just got text the other day from one of my biggest clients and he says, you know since we redid my website copy to be customer focused and to take me out as the hero so much. I've had a 40 percent increase in discovery call bookings so 40 percent and this is in two weeks

so you know I was really tickled with that and I'm loving to see these theories actually and go yeah, I was right.

Salena: Case study!!

Lee: Exactly.

Salena: So do you think that; you were talking about you've been in the industry now. So do you think that the I guess the proliferation of social media now; like I've been in this business for over a decade and social media was only emerging when like Facebook, Instagram didn't exist when I started out. And now you have a gazillion different platforms and everybody is 100 percent connected 24 hours a day. Do you think that, that is one of the key reasons that the whole; not the concept but the whole way that we structure our marketing has had to change?

Lee: Absolutely. We've learned to get all of our information in bite sized chunks. You know I mean that affects everything about your marketing you know and not even the winks of you know, if you need a thousand words to say something then say it but break it into a hundred and fifty word chunks with strong subhead lines to tell a story so that they can get the justice they're flipping through and going okay. Well you know and then they get to the bottom and go, if your sub heads have made a story then they go okay.

I want to go find out more now. So yeah that's what I found through the heat mapping that I've been doing for retail. If you're not familiar with heat mapping and essentially what that is, is a software that tracks what visitors do physically on your site. In other words where their mouse is pointing and what they're looking at so that you can figure out key areas to put your buttons and keep text and things like that.

Salena: Yeah we have. I don't know if this episode's gone live yet but one of our guests was telling us about it is fantastic being; pretty sure it is called Google A B testing and what you can do is Google will make a scan of a page for you and you can tweak it. So you don't have to be a code or anything like that. It's like a drag and drop. I know and it's all free and you can do some like A B testing on where your buttons go on you know on the home page and things like that. I

haven't tried it out yet but I was just talking to a client about it was like we need to try this. I think it sounds awesome.

Lee: Yeah it does.

Salena: Okay. But that's not your forte. Your forte is, you got a copy branding right.

Lee: Mm hmm.

Salena: Kind of branding with copywriting. So tell us a little bit more about how we dive into this avatar version and how do we bring that into our own branding and copywriting and make money in the process.

Lee: That's absolutely. So the first step for my clients is to get absolutely clear on their story on their why. Yes. And if you don't know why you're doing it because... I'm simply saying earlier today, I can go to Amazon and buy 10 issues because I don't feel connected to you know to the guy down the street selling the same tennis shoes. I can't believe I've forgotten where they came from that quickly. But anyway that kind of symbolizes just you know if you don't make a connection they'll just go buy it anywhere.

The worst thing you want to do is be a commodity. I mean that's what I was as a template copywriter was a commodity, you know the only thing you can do is compete on price and that stinks.

Salena: Yeah. You got to have a lot of volume to compete on price and a big marketing budget.

Lee: But I have seen people stand out in just crazy markets that you wouldn't even think that you could really bring branding into the way... you know home remodeling, you know gutter cleaning, things like that. I mean I've seen a whole slew of people in the home improvement and renovation niche for a while. We were bringing branding into their sites and teaching them that look you can separate just by bringing your story to the table.

Salena: Have you seen lemonade insurance?.

Lee: Yes

Salena: Yep. They do a fantastic job I think bringing their their whole why and their branding into these really are very boring topic insurance.

Lee: Exactly. Exactly.

Salena: So once our clients get get the why down then we move on to your customers story which is the Avatar version. This is going into the Facebook groups and the YouTube comments and the Amazon reviews and so it's compiling eight facets of understanding, eight facets of connection which is basically just different buckets that you can pull from when you're writing your own about me page or a Web site home page or any kind of copy to promote your business online or off line. Brochures you can still pull from those little details like you and I were talking about earlier.

Salena: Yeah. So let me ask you about the; you're talking about creating their own story. What happens if you've been in business, it happened to someone the other day and I wasn't about 90 percent sure of the answer. So maybe that's quite a long time. And obviously when they started out the business was very different to what the business is now. And so when they started out their business was all about you know there was nothing in the market that had that. You know they were one of the first people to market that did this down. But now whilst they're a leader in their field there's loads of people. So the story's kind of changed a little bit. Well changed a lot. The whole market has changed, the demographic has changed. So which part of the story do you dwell on? Which part do you actually pull the relevant stuff from?

Lee: I would pull from the transformation from where they were when they started to where they are now. I mean I think that story has a connection in there you know to how you feel, the environment, the business environment around them. And you know the entire environment in total has changed and what they've done, what they've become to evolve with that.

Salena: OK. Good. That's what we did. We just kind of glow, we just mentioned the first bit and then we focused on where they are right now.

Lee: Ok. I don't have my sound effects set up where I give you a hallelujah.

Salena: Ok great. So for retailers who have been in business and they're thinking OK I know my story and let's be honest a lot of the story is going to be I really love this product. Sell our niche in the market, nobody was really selling it, or nobody designed it or there was nobody in my area selling it. So I open my store. I did my e-commerce site and here I am. How do you do for it like say you own something like a fashion brand. How do you differentiate yourself from the gazillion other e-commerce and Amazon out there who are all selling the same thing but you want the sales like you want to be, like what connection can you make if you are an independent, fashion boutique let's say purely online so that you don't even have a physical store where people can interact. What do you draw on where do you get that story from?

Lee: Well you know it's you pick a fashion boutique, you didn't choose to be a professional boxer, you didn't into choosing to be a skydiver, you didn't choose to be an attorney or a doctor or anything. You chose that out of a billion things. And there is a story of that and it's a matter sometimes of digging a little bit deeper and just; I'm a big fan of journaling really. And I've spent a long time on that why which brought me to the story I was telling you. I thought was you know you got to make sales now but keep in mind that was a several year process to really just get in that story. But the closer you come to it the faster it comes. But I found you know at least that's about the way that I've felt it for me. Unless you were just in business solely for the money in which case I really wanted to I'm not talking to you. Yeah. You know there's a deeper story there and it takes a lot of work to find it but it is worth it because then nobody can be you.

Salena: Yes. and this is what I always say to people when they go oh my god somebody is copying me like I get that all the time. Then no one can be you. And you know what maybe they'll take some of your customers but that's okay because they weren't really your customers, if they align with that person more than they align with you. Not everybody's going to like it. Not everybody is going to want to buy your stuff.

Lee: That's so important and so hard for business owners you know especially when they're in that initial growth phase. You have to keep in mind because it's like everybody is a potential sale. No I'm a 1 percent guy personally. You know if one percent of the people follow my little pied

piiper stick you know, I'm happy because I don't need the other 99 percent. And I've got a chance no matter how specific your niche is in retail or anything else. It's the same thing.

Salena: I've got a really good analogy next time somebody says that to me. OK. So e-commerce sales, you're looking at around two to three percent conversion right. OK. So instead of the one percent you can quite statistically say, I'll just take the two to three percent because stats show that out of 100 people who know about you only two to three of them are going to want your stuff right.

Lee: Yeah that's right. That's my little that's perfect. Why dilute the message of the mission to placate the ninety seven or 98 percent who weren't gonna buy anyway.

Salena: Yeah they weren't gonna buy anyway. Alright. Now in terms of sales and maybe let's talk about capturing lost opportunities and lost sales. How do you think we can use copy branding to snag those customers, to get them to come back again. Or to tip them over the fence when they were thinking, I might buy it from you. I might buy it from the other person because it's five dollars cheaper.

Lee: I still love to use e-mail emergency sequences Those are so great especially if there's no real hard selling throughout the process. It's taking seven emails or nine emails and just really walking them through. Again that whole story driving home the benefits of hanging around really but not being pushy and not selling and that is a trust builder. You know it takes a little while for them to get through that sequence but you know if you're giving them free gifts all along the way or even tips or short videos. Who was it. Fabio on Fredericks that used to do some fantastic e-mail sequences where she would just do like a minute or two minute video every day and just a certain tip and then just to be able to keep providing that value. And she built trust very easily that way just because she was giving before she asked.

Salena: Yeah I love tips in like a re-engagement or an abandoned cart sequence because nobody else is doing that. But everyone else just has the hey we've got your stuff and you know we can't guarantee it will still be here tomorrow. Well that's great. But now that he has one tip to it which talk about fashion, his fashions where he used the most. You know he's one tip to decode your wardrobe in five minutes. I'm going to read that.

Lee: Yeah exactly. That's cool. So you can do that. I've not been as active in doing that on social media but I've seen some other people that have success with that and I keep my head above water. I plan on digging into a little more of that nurture sequence type stuff on social media as well.

Salena: So what would be the one thing that you would; when you meet somebody you just feel like you want to shake them and say if you just did this, like your whole business would turn around?

Lee: Get out of your own way. I see so many people that come to me with copy. That is all me-focused. You know it's just like... Did I tell you the Lincoln story.

Salena: No

Lee: I've done like three podcasts today so I apologize.

Salena: The story tells the story.

Lee: OK so so you know there's templated linked in messages right. You know they call they pitch and you can tell they're just cut and paste. Well this one and usually this one. It's just it gave me a headache because the first line of it in all capital letters with six exclamation points after it was we are experts. And I'm like; Oh I've been waiting for X for it thank you so much I don't know what you have let me know. Yeah no I don't know what they were selling because I deleted and blocked the guy. Get out of here you know and you can't do that anymore. You know we know everything. And you know nothing. Let us come in and save you save the day with our shiny cape and our Chinese spandex tights.

Salena: No one wants to feel like they're an idiot. Do they?

Lee: No

Salena: Like you want to know that you gave it a good try but there's better out there.

Lee: Yeah but no matter what nature and there are too many other options for you to be treating your customers like a credit card number. That just doesn't work anymore. People are wanting connection these days and that's what I teach my clients to do is build connection and trust. And let that turn into sales.

Salena: But you can't do it until you work out why you're really doing this in the first place.

Lee: Right. That's why I say you for your story your customer story and then you find the intersection between the two.

Salena: Yes. And so just to recap you think that the best place to go and find the customer story; let's talk about if we're purely online because if you're in store it's obviously not easy because you're having conversations with people. But if you are purely online you are suggesting things like going into Facebook groups, going into forums. I actually quite often say go and find your five best customers and look at them on social media. Like you know they may have their profiles blocked but you can still see some stuff about them.

Lee: Right.

Salena: So you might see that they've got some photos you can start to build a profile and then you can start to Oh wow, they like this. I like that there's a connection point.

Lee: Yeah exactly. That's a good point. I also like posting like what was going into a group and just posting something like, what was the book that made the biggest impact on you in the last month or something like that. Then you know you start seeing patterns of people talking about the same books and you go oh maybe I'll pick that up.

You know it seems like a waste of time to read a book just because your customers are reading it, but it gives you key insights as to what's going on in the world.

Lee: Yeah.

Salena: TV is good for it. Ask what they are watching? What's your latest being Netflix binge and things like

Lee: OK.

Salena: And then it generally is the same things over and over again. And just because I like Downtown Abbey doesn't mean they're all about drama right. It can give you an idea of the fact that if they all like this thing what is a connection that you can put together.**Lee:** You got it.

Yeah. It's again it's the one of the connections and is with tertiary connections. Things that have actually nothing to do with your product or very little. but you. But then you could say you know hey, did you catch the last episode of whatever.

Salena: Yeah.

Lee: You throw that in an email and they're like Oh no you know me more than I know myself.

Salena: Funny that way.

Lee: That's right.

Salena: Okay. Alright. We have been talking for a while so let's just go with one tip. One thing that people can do today that would potentially make them more money or get them to pull a customer back that was maybe on the verge of going somewhere else.

Lee: Revamp your about me page.

Salena: Oh that's a hard one.

Lee: Everything you say about you has to relate to them and put a call to action at the end of it for crying out loud. Some many people miss that opportunity it's just you know you've got this nice about page where we talk all the story and you make these connections and then you don't tell them to do anything. Book a call go buy something. Get on my list. Go. Go to my Facebook group. Just do something. And send your people there from your social media, from your e-mail, from wherever it is that you're staying in touch with them. And if you're not staying in touch with them shame on you. Because I used to not do that. That was my business.

Salena: So you know that's story for another episode.

Lee: Yes, another one

Salena: Do you have many pages of really hot; I have to say I can write a really good about me page for anybody else. But when it comes to your own, Oh my God I've actually just handed it over to my copywriter and said here's a whole bunch of stuff that I think we should talk about. And here's a whole bunch of stuff that our customers like and here's what I think the connection points are. Can you please rewrite it because when you're talking about yourself you feel like you've got to you know you feel like you have to you know you've got a big head. You try to talk about all of the great things that you've done and not boast about it at the same time and make it relate to them. But you've got to have the social proof as well because you don't have the social proof about how fantastic you are. Somebody else is doing when you shouldn't be. So I think the about me page is really difficult. So good call.

Lee: Yeah. That's usually the first place I start you know because you know I tell you really. Do I have a couple minutes?

Salena: You have a couple minutes. Yes.

Lee: Ok I will tell you a really quick story. If this lady ever catches up with me she's probably going to show up at my house with three guys named Vito. I don't know. But so she was a coach and kind of the metaphysical space.] And we were doing an about me page and we got it and I gave it to her. She called me up just yelling and I was like, what is it. She's like this doesn't represent me at all. Like OK. Let's see if we can figure out what's going on here. Like can you give me an example and she said, you didn't tell them my favorite color is blue. And I went...

Salena: Because they don't care.

Lee: And I'm like, how is that germane to whether or not they hire you as a coach?

Salena: Yeah.

Lee: What's important to me, okay. But you know the type of coffee I drink is important to me but nobody else cares.

Salena: Yeah.

Lee: So really making it about them and making it relevant.

Salena: Yeah. I mean you could use the coffee thing if you know that your people are coffee snobs. You could put that in there right.

Lee: Yeah. Absolutely.

Salena: But if you don't know for a fact that they are coffee snobs then maybe just let it go.

Lee: Yeah absolutely. Yeah.

Salena: You know we get that all the time.

Lee: Yeah. Absolutely.

Salena: Did I hear correctly that you may have a download for us to go and grab.

Lee: Absolutely I will send the link over to you after the show and if that's ok we can put that in.

Salena: Okay. And what would be inside that download?

Lee: Well you're going to have the first chapter of my avatar immersion in the book.

Salena: Awesome. I think a lot of people are sitting here going I kind of get the concept. I need a little bit more. I need to dig a little bit deeper. I think that little tidbit will be enough to get people started and hopefully if they're interested they can grab your book and read more about it. Speaking of which if they want to know more about you and maybe work with you. Where can they find you?

Lee: Very easy. <http://leerowley.com/>

Salena: There you go. Yes. We'll put a link to that into the show and also into your data. Thanks so much for sharing this. I think that so many people get stuck with how to connect what they do with what the customer wants. I think you've given us some really great tips on how we can join

those two things together. Use it to build those connections to build our own brands and to make money in the process. So thank you so much.

Lee: Thank you for having me on