

Transcripts from the Digital Marketing Sucks (Sometimes) episode:

Renia: All right, so welcome Crystal. Thank you so much for being here with us. We are doing what I am assuming might be my favorite episode of the season, cause we are here to talk about the most ridiculous, terrible things you've seen in marketing this year.

Crystal: Well, thank you for having me. Awesome to catch up with you and do these collaborative projects. I'm pretty excited, no pressure on making this the best episode or anything. But yeah, the man, the crazy shit that you see, and I didn't really prepare for this, but I think I'm going to have plenty to talk about.

Renia: Yeah, I feel like I have a list of things that are like very 20, 20 specific, like the stupid things that are happening around issues of the year, but then there are things that I'm just pointing out that are just marketing bad practices that happen a lot, right?

Crystal: Yeah. I mean, you know, a lot has changed, even when you and I first met a handful of years ago, back on a Wednesday in 1972, you know, marketing has changed a lot and as the world becomes more digital, like the fly by night marketers, I mean, you guys just zipped up your pants and decided miraculously, you're going to be a mar... It feels like that, that you just, you know, you just got done taking a poop and said, oh cool, I'm a marketer now. And I'm just going to start this business and start throwing half cooked spaghetti on a wall. Like I, it, it's crazy.

Renia: I think It's the purchasing of a Mac book pro

Crystal: Hey, Whoa.

Renia: Purchasing a Mac book pro makes, I, listen, I'm recording on one right now. But I think that in the people's mind, like the ability to purchase a Mac book pro now makes you a marketer.

Crystal: I would almost, I think, think the ability to purchase a Mac book pro and have iMovie makes all of us editors and future movie producers, thank you very much.

Renia: I'm gonna leave that one in your capable hands, because I am daunted by editing movies. I can sort of edit by podcast if I have to, but video, I'm not great at.

Crystal: I promise you, you could do it with iMovie. Okay. So maybe you are onto something. They intuitiveness of Mac book pros, make the... It's like buying a nice camera and saying I'm a photographer, right? No, you have a nice camera, you're not a professional photographer because you don't know all about the mechanics of your camera. You don't know about angles and sun and lighting and, I mean, there's a science to it, right? There's a science to marketing. So just because you zipped up your fly one day and said you're a marketer and you have a Facebook account and you know some shit about the internet doesn't mean you're a marketer.

Renia: Right. I think that's absolutely true. And I've been see... like that's been going on for a long time, but I feel like it's ramped up by like, I don't know how many decibels mattered too. But it's ramped up a lot, it's gotten louder here recently.

Crystal: Twelve, to 12. You guys turn

Renia: Twelve. up to 12. Oh, okay. So I just learned something. What is the significance of 12?

Crystal: Like 11 is a lot of times highest that the amplifier goes. So like bands like , credit that shit up to 11 and weeeee and you know, it's too loud. So you people, you, you people crank this shit up to a 12.

Renia: Okay. Fair enough. You know, what's funny is what I've seen a lot. I saw this a few years ago when I ran a bigger agency, but a lot this year, I've been seeing people that are like, you would think legit companies with like offices in Manhattan and shit, doing digital as if they were a 18 year old in their basement. Like, it seems like it exists at all levels, not just at the local business level, but even up into big agencies. This just misunderstanding of what digital marketing is.

Crystal: I have a theory for that, and I'm not speaking as the world's best marketer or somebody who thinks I'm above other marketers. That's not true at all. I think, you know, how many, how many guitarists does it take to change a light bulb? Well, one, but all the rest of them to say they could change it better. Right? Same with tattoo artists. And there's so many industries where people's own ego can kinda get in the way and I, just for some reason, I see this a lot in marketing is that there's, you know, if marketing were a pie, we could cut it into thousands and thousands of pieces. People don't wanna say, there's a lot of pieces I can't do or shouldn't do, because they're worried that they're leaving money on the table, I think. Or maybe it's pride,

maybe they don't want to say, I mean, but there's nothing wrong with sticking to your wheelhouse and having other, there's plenty of money to be made and there's plenty of pieces in the pie.

Renia: Right.

Crystal: Does that make sense?

Renia: It totally makes sense, but you're talking to, like to me it does because I only do by one little sliver of the pie and I, I don't tell people I can do the other stuff, because it's always a disaster pants when I do.

Crystal: Yeah. That is true. And, yeah for sure. I mean, sometimes you get partners to do the other work and things change there but, that's my assumption on why that happens. But I think, I think a lot of times it's a lack of transparent, it might be stupidity. I've seen some ads for marketing that cracked me the hell up. Are you kidding me? Like you, you really, you're gonna, you're gonna offer these massive search engine optimization plans to guarantee results with custom written blogs for a hundred dollars a month, \$150 a month? Are, what, you know, and I say it's stupid, but that's not polite to say because it's not true. It's unaware. People are unaware of the bullshit they're being fed in this industry.

Renia: Yes. So do you think the person that created that ad is unaware or actively a liar? That's always the question for me, is like, are you actively unethical or are you really unaware?

Crystal: I hate to say this, but a lot of people in tech are actively unethical. They, they have to know they, unless they're really not, I mean, it could be that they think that's right, because the quality of work that they're doing isn't good, they may not realize how poor and unethical and bad content spinning is. They may not know the ship that Google will punish you for. So I don't, I never really thought about it, I'm glad you asked that, because now my brain is going with 50, 50. I don't, I don't know, but it's, there's one agency that's not terribly far from us that's just constantly spinning this bullshit. That's just bullshit.

Renia: Yes.

Crystal: Cause the people that are buying it don't know any better. I mean, how would you know, I mean, how would you know any better?

Renia: Yeah. I feel bad and I'll always wanna give people grace initially until they prove otherwise, but it's sometimes gets hard in this space. And I think like, I know

we're not supposed to give the number one first, but I feel like the worst offense of 2020 that I keep seeing is marketers treating this year like it's the same old marketing of last year or the year before that or whatever. Like just not putting any awareness into how things have and are shifting.

Crystal: Have you seen, I haven't seen that, that much.

Renia: Oh, okay. So remember that I am spending a lot of time in influencer land these days. So like with social media influencers and stuff where they'll like, they'll put their black lives matter, black box up, one day, or they'll put, you know, praying for everybody with COVID box, one day. But otherwise, it is entirely business as usual. Like...

Crystal: I see, I see what you're saying.

Renia: Yeah. Here's my planned content that we preloaded into our, our buffer, you know, six months ago, and nothing's changed.

Crystal: I definitely see what you're saying now. I think humanity has always had a problem with people pretending to care or caring just enough to get attention from it. Don't, you know, don't you say shit to say shit, right? Actively do something about it, in 2020 is, I mean, it's not just COVID and the economic effect, you know, where's racial tension, there's an abundance of crime against queer community, and issues for trans people. And there's, the political climate is so hard. And I think it's grossly negligent not to acknowledge that there are real issues and that people are suffering and that it's really important that you verbalize what you stand for. So I see what it's tacky, very tacky.

Renia: Yeah. So let's talk about that for a minute, cause I got into it with someone the other day about this I've asserted that I think that being vanilla about anything right now is a bad strategy, not just for marketing, but also for just being a human. Have you seen any, like, let's be positive, what good examples have you seen of how to handle this? Because I know people are afraid of pissing off their customers.

Crystal: That's a thing too, but I also realized my wife, for example, she's not afraid of upsetting anybody. She doesn't know how to verbalize the way that she feels. She's not a super social person, she's not a big social media user. She struggles to know how to articulate what she feels, like I do, she struggles to know how to ask somebody, how can I help you? So I think for a lot of people, they may be vanilla because they don't know. And I don't think it's a crime not to know something. I have an issue with, if you see that something's unjust plain as day and you choose to

ignore it, because it doesn't affect your world, by an extension you're kinda part of the problem is that...

Renia: Okay. I can see you really try not to piss anybody off with this so I'll be the one to make this statement.

Crystal: Honestly, I'm trying to process it because nobody asked me this before. So I'm really trying to think about it. I'm not going to criticize somebody for being vanilla. If you don't know what to say, you don't know what to say. If, you know, as a queer person, if you don't come out and say, yeey, queer people, I'm not going to assume that you don't like me or that it's a problem, right? You don't, if you don't say black lives matter, I'm not going to assume that you're racist. But if I see you participating or supporting people saying things they shouldn't be saying, or you have an opportunity to do or say something about it and you don't repeatedly, we may need to have a conversation, because you're letting it happen. So I think there's a difference between being vanilla, and a difference between saying I don't give a shit because it doesn't effect me.

Renia: Yeah. So that's a great point, crystal. And let's break this down a little bit so nobody misunderstands us. Because I think there's a difference between, and you tell me what you think. I think there's a difference between being vanilla and choosing not to speak out about a topic that you either don't know enough about, or don't have the right words yet for, and if you're holding people in your life accountable, and you're making sure that if you're a business owner, that your business is a safe place, that, that is fine. You don't have to say black lives matter, or I support the LGBTQIA community or whatever on social media. Like, you don't need to, I've been told I'm not supposed to use the phrase I was about to use. so you don't need to like pass the social justice Olympics on social media. And I think that's the mistake I'm seeing a lot of is people substituting, trying to pass that on social media with actually meaningfully doing something in their business.

Crystal: Gotcha. You and I are on the same page. I think our interpretation of what vanilla meant was different. So yeah, that's, we're definitely on the same page there. Like, cause some people go out and they kind of do the social justice thing where they throw everything out, all the hot topics, but they don't do anything about it, they're just saying shit. And I'm not saying that it's not good to say something, but I mean, words are just words. If I say, I love you, but I treat you like shit or I don't do anything to make you feel good, then my words have no merit.

Renia: Right.

Crystal: But when it comes to social justices or things in the world, right? If you, if, you know, if you just say, well, Walmart sucks, we get it, fuckin suck. Do you actively stop going there? Do you shop more with your local butcher? That so that, I think you, I think you and I are on the same page as it sounds like it, I think.

Renia: Yeah, I think so. And I think, I think sometimes we don't value the, saying nothing at all is a choice. Like if it's, for instance, it's Monday or Tuesday, if you're listening to this in real time, the announcement came out that justice Thomas and justice Alito, really threw a giant wrench into whether or not same sex marriage was going to be safe in the United States. And that day, like, I pulled every other type of content I had going up down because as like, this is the only thing that matters right now. There's like there's, yes, there are tangentially, there are lots of other things that matter, but like, me trying to promote a course or whatever doesn't matter today. This thing needs attention. So it's not that you necessarily have to put out a post about that thing if you don't know, I did because I'm a Supreme Court work. That's my jam, I know a lot about the Supreme court, I have been studying it for 25 years, like, I had something to say about that. But you don't, like you don't have to put out a post about that. Just maybe don't post your course promotion thing on a day when the whole country is grieving or something like that, you know, like, just be quiet and listen.

Crystal: Have, have some sensitivity to what other people may be feeling giving the current climate or context is what you're saying. right?

Renia: Right. And knowing your community, like my community, that's a thing that most of the people in my community would be really dialed into, versus if you're dealing with retirees in the villages, maybe they have no idea, I don't know.

Crystal: You out guyed me, and I'm pretty gay. I'm like grand marshaling, a pride parade in the middle of Los Angeles, farting, rainbow glitter, I have a wife gay. You outgayed me, cause I didn't even know that happen one day.

Renia: I was not intentional, I'm a Supreme court nerd. That's why I don't...

Crystal: I got outgayed. The gay of the , on the podcast got outgayed, so...

Renia: I'm never gonna live that one down. Now I'm going to be in trouble.

Crystal: Oh, you're not in trouble. I think it's fantastic trouble, I'm so sorry, my queer brothers and sisters, I didn't mean. But see, I didn't, I didn't say anything cause I was, I'm so over politics, I was happily grossly unaware, ignorance is bliss, ignorance but

then, now I'm thinking, Oh, I wonder if all of my other peers are, but that's, see that's the thing as there's always, I didn't say shit, I'm so sorry, I didn't even know.

Renia: No, this is not, this is not a contest. I'm a Supreme court nerd, so I read all their briefing things when they come out. That's why I...

Crystal: But I had to make a joke of it because you gave me the perfect segue, but it really poses what you were just talking about. So I'm kinda glad that you said that. What do you think, or do I think, is the queer community gonna look at me different being somebody who's usually vocal and active and a part of their community, that I didn't even know? Probably not, but I think that's the kinda thing you're saying is at least have some kind of awareness of how it's gonna look and how other people are gonna feel. Cause I didn't know that, now I know that, and I'm like, wow, can they undo our five, six years of marriage? Like, you know, you gotta think about that.

Renia: Yeah. It's a big questionmark right now, that was what my big rant was about, that we need some constitutional amendments, if any of us that are gay/lesbian.

Crystal: But that makes your audience, right, a lot of people being in that community, when they find that out, they're gonna have the same concerns that are now running through my head, thanks Renia.

Renia: Oh, shit Don't get bad news on podcasts y'all.

Crystal: Just ignore, we're, well, I make everything funny cause I'm just that kind of asshole. But yeah, like how, what are these people thinking? Our marketing right in sales are very meshed together and people, we do things and we buy things when we're influenced, we may not be influenced to buy your \$59 course or buy your new book or go try your new steak dinner at the restaurant, because we may be really fixated on a specific cultural issue or social issue. So I see what you're saying is, if it's important to you and you think it's important to your audience, don't be afraid to verbalize it. Even if you don't know what to say, and you don't necessarily wanna say, Oh my God, I support this, just at least acknowledge the people that might be struggling, right? Is that kinda what...

Renia: Yeah, completely. So let me ask you, since I feel, I like struck out twice.

Crystal: That joke I made about you outgaying me and how gay was, that was gold. So let that was fantastic, that was the highlight of my day.

Renia: Alright, awesome. So tell me what you think the, what's the worst marketing thing that you've seen happening this year?

Crystal: I mean, outside of just bullshit snake oil campaigns y'all, I mean, I see it all the time where people just, it's COVID I get it. A lot of us had changed, we lost money, things happened, people lost their jobs. You can't just become a marketer overnight, stop trying to sell bullshit packages and super cheap, don't pretend to be a master web designer if you just learn how to throw a couple files together for a few hundred dollars and you desperately need money because of COVID. Or at least be honest and transparent about that, say, hey, I don't have a really high level of skillset, this happened to me, it was really hard, I can do these. That's what I don't see is the transparency. I'm not gonna fault you for not, I mean, I'm not an Albert Einstein, but be honest about what you're offering people. Don't, you're not offering them gold, you're not offering somebody a Ferrari for the price of a Pinto. This, we gotta be honest about what, and that's the scariest stuff I've seen is those super misleading, like you said, I don't know if they're just being unethical, or I don't know if they're just grossly unaware as the provider. That's fucking scary.

Renia: Yeah, it is. And it's frustrating for people who are doing like, real marketing work, where like for a long time now, it's gotten better for copywriters than it was. But for a long time, after penguin and Panda made \$5 articles, not a thing anymore, people still expected to pay five, 10, \$25 for a 2000 word article. And it made it really difficult for agencies doing the right thing, or copywriters doing the right thing, or just trying to eat, you know, to make a real living, because the expectation of what it costs to produce that was so off kilter. And so there are circumstances where your budget is a Pinto, right? Like you're a brand new business or something like that, where you might hire a guy that doesn't have very much experience to set up something that, you know, isn't perfect, but only costs you \$150, and it's a Pinto that you can drive around, metaphorically, right?

Crystal: Everybody's honest, and it works for both parties, then I support that fully. I just think it's beyond scary when there's so many lies. And then if you don't even know if those lies are blatant. Like, what's worse than somebody being a sneaky liar? They're completely stupid and don't know it.

Renia: Right.

Crystal: driving yet Pinto into a cliff, of fiery burning cliff. That's, that's terrifying. That's terrifying.

Renia: And so if you haven't, if you don't have experience in digital marketing and you think you'd like to try it out, just FYI people, there's a lot of hiring happening in this field right now because it's exploding, and it is one of the fields that even with COVID, a lot of the companies in this world have not seen the impact that other

industries have. So like, I've hired six people this year, like you don't, you can get a job, an entry level job in the field and learn the skills that you need a lot easier than most industries right now, I would say, and most of them are work from home jobs, which I used to think was a good thing, but I'm getting a little cabin fever.

Crystal: And I'm definitely seeing, especially with young people that, that's, young people with kids that can't afford, God bless them, or whomever, bless them, that can't afford childcare. That's kinda, the thing is work from home. So, I'm aware that some of these people and their positionings, occurred out of desperation. So I'm not tryna sit here and say, I'm smarter than you, or I'm better than you, or, you know, shame on you, you have weapons of mass destruction. I'm not saying that, I'm just, if it is the need of desperation, I mean, you can always contact somebody who's in marketing and say, look, I wanna learn, I could do virtual assistant work while you teach me, we can make it affordable. Like I'm a huge believer in honesty. Just be transparent and honest about your shit people. I don't see why that's so hard.

Renia: Yeah. I agree. I was talking about this today in my, in here I go with that, in my Instagram. I was... I was like, just maybe your pictures, maybe less concerned about your pictures being good and more concerned about them being true, would be great.

Crystal: We just talk about your little pit like, who are all your little gal pals in that picture that you posted? I'm like who, who are all these ladies?

Renia: So unlike some people who have lots of token people in their pictures, those are all clients or past clients. So...

Crystal: That's awesome though. The trans like the, the transparency there, it's real. It's like real life Renia with, like, those are real life people, that's not Photoshop. Like she say...

Renia: They are real people. Yes.

Crystal: Your people, like in the same picture. We haven't seen that since CO... I'm not actually calling it the COVID virus anymore, just so you're aware, it's the Karen virus, the KRN 20. That's what I'm calling it because it's brought out the Karens and the Kyle's of the world, like, you know, on and off the court, in marketing, side of marketing, that's my

Renia: There's something I didn't know until today, crystal, that you can laugh at. I didn't know, Mike Pence's wife's name was Karen, and I read this article about the debate, if you're listening to this in real time, the vice presidential debate was last

night. And I read this article about his wife Karen, and I was like, stop, his wife's name is really Karen?

Crystal: I feel so bad for him, I know so many Karens that are not Karens, and I feel...

Renia: Oh, she is.

Crystal: I'm sure she is. And then I know some Karens and I'm like, Holy furniture, this bitch is Karen. Like, cause I feel like something about this year has brought out everybody's Karen. Like it's kind of, it's kind of hold up, that's scary too. Is that the Karens that are in business right now that, you know, how do you, how do you feel, because you're a very vocal person about what you believe in, right? Everybody that knows Renia knows, everybody that knows Renia knows what Renia is feeling and knows what and who Renia stands behind. So like what do, you are very vocal person and you are a supporter of people wearing masks and having courtesy and like keeping their distance and stuff. How do you handle it in public when somebody is just being an ass wipe and won't wear a mask and gets up in people's space, do you let it go?

Renia: I do. So I do not. Now I should just disclaimer, my mother and stepfather are both nurses. My stepfather works in an ICU that has lost like quadruple the number of patients they normally do on a weekly basis over the last eight weeks. So I am not here to play. Like it's people very close, I have the experience of people very close to me that I love are at real risk every day for people's stupidity. So it's not just existential for me. So I am pretty willing to be like, is it well, for example, I went to a meeting at a client's office on Tuesday, I walked in with a mask, no one else was wearing one, and I very politely said, I'm not comfortable being here if y'all don't put your masks on. So they all put them up, they were grumpy about it and they may have thought less of me for it, but, I'm willing to take that risk.

Crystal: Renia, and it's you're right. Both have our mother, her mother is extremely immune suppressed. My mom's still recovering from the brain tumor and has kidney and stuff. So that's, that's what we're concerned about. But I asked you that because you're always passionate about what you believe in. You're a great example of what somebody should look up to if they're trying to understand, how do I do that better? What frustrates me about the Karen's of the world is they're so emboldened about a lot of things that aren't that important. And they won't, they won't show that same passion to the things that matters. They won't show that same passion within their business, right? They'll overlook, they'll overlook, you know, how sensitive things are right now, with minorities, right, With black people, with trans people. But they'll have a fit if you ask them to think of other people in a fucking Walmart.

Renia: I feel you on that. So I want to say first that I have a tremendous amount of privilege to be able to not take anybody's bullshit, in that like 10 years ago when I was, or even seven years ago, when I was not particularly financially stable, the stand that I take about certain things may not as been. Because I was a mother of young children, I may not have taken such a hard stand. And in fact, there are a couple instances where I did take a hard stand where I paid a really heavy economic cost. And I'm not recommending that people who are in that danger zone do that necessarily. Because it's, it's one thing for me as a white heterosexual, you know, gender conforming female, who owns her own company to say, I do these things. It's another if you don't have all those privileges. So I don't wanna make anybody feel pressured, and I would not have realized that years ago. But the other thing is, we were talking about tattoos before we started recording. And the reason I want the bullets dripping from the quail is because there's this quote about saving your bullets in your gun for the things that matter the most, that I really love. And I think of it as like, I have a handful of issues that are so core to what I believe is humane. It's just being a good human, that those things I will not compromise on. Even if that means we can't do business together or we can't be friends or for me, it has even been, I can't see you as my family member, I'm going to have to love you from afar. But there are a handful of those, it's not everything. And you will never see me like fight with a waiter about the way my food came out. That is not going to happen.

Crystal: articulate it that well, what I was saying, we've all seen those viral Karen and videos. You're willing to lose your job and look like a complete jackass over stupid racial quotes or your food in a restaurant or a mask in a gas station or something completely, that you're willing to have all this negative impact over that, versus something that changes lives and really matters, is kinda the point that I was making. I would never encourage anybody to do anything that would affect their ability to support their family. But the battles that some people choose to fight are so like, that's really what...

Renia: I have to figure they're emotionally stunted. Like that's the thing that I always think of som... Is like, I'm able to be the way I am because I've done a lot of personal work. And I always, this is on my good days when I'm being compassionate, recognizing that when someone behaves that way, it's because they're in a lot of pain and they don't know how else to process it.

Crystal: It's also scary because really, when people get really passionate, they do a lot of things on impulse. I mean, a lot of marketing is kind of impulse decision making, right? We have people impulse shooting people and impulse calling people awful things that you can't take back, that will be on the internet forever. And we have people doing impulse things, I mean, that's terrifying too. I know that that's not a

scary marketing thing, but it's a very scary 2020 thing, and we somehow kinda got segwayed onto that.

Renia: I think it all kinda goes together though, because the people who are doing those kind of things are also doing their work out in the world, as you know, in their businesses and their jobs. Some of the worst behavior that I've seen in that arena come from, now for me it always, I'm, you know, I'm on a kick right now about white dudes in marketing. I've labeled it bro marketing in my head.

Crystal: Bro?

Renia: Bro marketing. Yeah. Because my kids watch, I think the guy's name is Pewdiepie that has like the bro...

Crystal: He's not even a good game kids. Oh, all he plays is for... Children. Re... Now I'm sad.

Renia: You need to teach, you need to teach my children because I can't even with the game in YouTube, I don't get it. So I can't teach it to, I can't teach them about it.

Crystal: It's not even, I'm sorry, Fortnite lovers, It's not a good game. Okay. But go ahead and...

Renia: They are not even allowed to play it. Like it's blocked. They're not allowed to play it because it's so damn addictive but...

Crystal: It's all addictive. Stimulus is addictive, Social media is addictive. But okay, I over choice in gaming streamers. And I apologize for the, for we, we can continue.

Renia: Okay. So, but anyway, he has like, it's like the bro collective or something like that and it feel like they represent the worst bullshit on the internet, including by the way, the New Zealand shooter actually named him in his manifesto, like he was one of the people who influenced him.

Crystal: You do know that the, the gaming community, right, cause you know, I'm huge in the gaming community, is extremely divided because there are gamers, people like me. And like you, if you were a gamer who say, we like gaming, and if you'd like gaming, we like you, and you can game what you like to game. And then there are people who are disgustingly toxic. They're swatting people, do you know what squatting is? They are swatting people. Lying to law enforcement, having SWAT teams show up thinking that there are weapons and narcotics in a house,

people are getting killed, they're bullying people to kill themselves. Like there are some awfully,

Crystal: Holy shit. horrible horrible toxic people. There are particular people who got kicked off YouTube for attacking. They said find every woman gamer, find all the things that are ugly with her, call her net like, don't get it. It's so disgusting. Everybody who's listening Who's a gamer is totally gonna understand like this bro thing that you're talking about . And if you're not, it's a very real thing. There's something that's really toxic. I don't understand what it is if they forget that it's not reality. And like when you turn the call of duty off, you're not like we're not, we're not in that world anymore. You know, we don't call people those names online.

Renia: Are they, are these all the guys that are in the what's that group that like, thinks that women owe them sex. I feel like it sounds...

Crystal: Awful. I don't remember the name of it, but there's a lot of that kind of mentality. It's some gamers just, I don't know, I don't get it. I mean, but they've got, it's almost like a cult, right? You've got these clans, if you will, these professional gamers that are so influential and I'm kinda convinced that drama sells and that being asshole makes you more money and gets you more following and they just sell out and it gets, I'm not, I'm not surprised to hear what you said about the shooter. I didn't know that, but I'm not surprised.

Renia: So that's interesting. So I want to draw a distinction here then about my Bro Marketers. Bro Marketers are not violent, at least in general, that I've ever seen. What they are more along the Banes Up is like, everybody look at my yard and my Ferrari and YouTube can make a million dollars a day, if you pay me 1995.

Crystal: My God, I was going to bring that up later, too. That another scary thing I see is all these, you've all seen them folks. It's a little paid ad and you click on See more and it opens up to like 59,000 words that you have to refresh youtube or you have to refresh Facebook for like 90 minutes to read it all I'm talking about. And it's "formula to success", which is just 59th, 149 million words that just spell, bullshit. And then it's this low cost thing, and it's gonna, yes, yes, it's a mentality. Those people, those people are everywhere. That crazy, you've got the crazy people that say, I can sell somebody snake oil and make a lot of money. And then you have the crazy consumer psycho, Oh my God, Tony Robbins is gonna fix my whole life for \$29 and 90 minutes.

Renia: Do you wanna talk about the most manipulative fucking marketing in the entire world? Have you ever been to a Tony Robbins event?

Crystal: No, but I had it in a networking group that I ran, I had somebody contact me and said, we wanna come in and do this motivational speak. I didn't know what it was going to be like, they were part of the Tony Robbins team. I thought it was going to be, like there's some, there's some, I have a leadership...

Renia: There's some legitimately great stuff, yeah.

Crystal: So when I first joined BNI, you were a mentor to me and there was legitimate teaching, learning, coaching things happening. These this guy came in and it was like, okay, there's bits and pieces of neatness, but this is like riding a horse scope. You're going to have a good day today, you're going to have a bad day today. Today's going to end with why. It's like, fuck, are you serious? This is copy pasted, bullshit.

Renia: Okay. It gets worse crystal. So I went to unleash the power within in 2017 maybe. Somebody gave me a ticket, I was super excited because Tony Robbins is legitimately one of the top three best speakers in the world. I have a huge goal to want to be a great speaker. All I gave a shit about was seeing him speak. Okay? And that part was amazing. But they turned the room down so cold that like people are wearing like parkas to manipulate your nervous system. Keep the music up really loud to manipulate your nervous system, do this for three days. And then on the fourth day, try to pitch you a \$20,000 program. And Oh, if you say you can't afford it, they provide you with their own financing, right there at 30% interest.

Crystal: Las Vegas learned how to manipulate before, before we had, before we had social media, let's be honest, Part of marketing is a form of manipulation, but the word manipulate doesn't always mean a negative or bad thing, it means I wanna attract you, right, I wanna engage you, I wanna hold your attention, I wanna make you feel something, right? You would agree that that's, that's a thing that you and I are scared of doing long before we had these things in your face and it made it easier, the genius people at Disney world, Tom Canela, met him? Awesome guy, and whatever the hell genius at Vegas, dude, they mastered the art. There is nobody better at influencing and control than those people, Vegas I never...

Renia: Have you never been to Harry Potter at universal.

Crystal: I've been to univer... I haven't been on the ride, no.

Renia: Have you been, well, you've been in Diagon alley.

Crystal: No, I don't. I don't know anything about her, I never read them, I never saw the, I don't know anything about that.

Renia: Okay. I'm gonna be on the wrong side of the whole internet and admitting that I described JK Rowling being wildly problematic, I love the Harry Potter books. Okay? I grew up with those books, but that's the point here is Diagon Alley is the most immersive marketing experience I have ever been in. Like, it is nothing, but then trying to sell you expensive garbage the entire time and you buy it all because it's so freaking cool.

Crystal: Then we need to go and about it is what I mean. But that's, that's, that's marketing, right? That's influence that's social, that's that's politics, that's business. This is what, that's what we do. I mean, it's...

Renia: So what do you think of this distinction, crystal? Cause I'm playing with this. If you buy a thing and a marketing person has influenced you to buy a thing, however way, with a video, with an ad with copy, whatever the thing is, right? With a want of why one selecting show, you know, the, but you feel good about the purchase. Not just in the moment, but over the long term. Like, I spent several hundred dollars when I went to Universal. I don't have any regrets about that, it's one of the highlights of my, I might've been over 30. I wanted to say young life, but I wasn't really that young. So like I recognize that I was being manipulated. I don't really care. It was awesome.

Crystal: I, several hundred, I could go into the damn star Wars store, what is it, is it Disney Springs? Is that the?

Renia: Yes. Yeah.

Crystal: So under the star Wars store, several hundred? Honey, I could spend, but if I didn't have a wife that kept me being a 13 year old boy, 24/7, I would have \$20,000 of Star Wars Lego sets glued together and hanging from every room house. Okay? I would have 50 billion Funko pops. Okay? Of over, and I would have zero, zero fucks to give about spending the money on it. Because if you're into it, let yourself be manipulated, if you'd like it and it brings you happiness. The manipulation I have a hard time with in the marketing industry is when it's not transparent when it's conniving, when you're lying, when you're selling simple shit that somebody is not gonna get, like a gap...

Renia: Why are you manipulating people's pain.

Crystal: Yes. Don't cause people more pain. Don't pray, don't pray on people that don't have a lot of money and are desperate to make big life changes, which I see that a lot in these gigantic Facebook ads and these Tony Robbins kind of that to me

as I would, I would never take a project like that because I, I think that to me it matters. I'm not saying that you're bad if you do that, but I think who you're manipulating and how and how they feel about it. That...

Renia: Yeah, I think, all right, I'm think I'm willing to say this. If someone is offering to make you a millionaire for \$20, there's something wrong. Like the, if someone really can make you a millionaire, it's going to cost more than that. Like as someone who is...

Crystal: millionaire.

Renia: Right.

Crystal: I mean, they just... Could you? They didn't get, they sold you a fucking dream and a book. I'm sorry, I would rather have my Harry Potter wand and my star destroyer Lego set. I mean, wouldn't you? That's yeah. I totally feel you, there is, it's, I don't agree. It's scary, When you take advantage of people wanting more and you sell them this idea that's totally fake.

Renia: Yeah. And that said, I've seen that on every end of the spectrum. So on the same token, there's a lot of people in the online marketing space out there selling 15, 20, 50,000, I even saw \$100,000 masterminds to people who can't necessarily afford it, telling them they're gonna teach them how to do whatever thing it is. And I feel, I also feel like that is wrong. That they're like, there needs to be some processing of whether or not the person has the capacity to spend that money and reality about what it's going to take to get there. Like I know one person who really wanted to get into the marketing world that paid \$15,000 for this program that, essentially it basically, like this has been a few years ago, but I basically told them like, go to a UPS Store and get, Google my business, get like boxes that look like real addresses and then buy up domains like SpringHill tree service or Hudson Tree Service and point them to those addresses and then go back to other companies and try to sell them back, the leads. That's not ethical. Like, and this person was not trying to be unethical. This person legitimately thought this was the way that it worked. And I just made me like, cause they could not on any level afford that amount of money for that thing, and also ended up doing something wildly unethical.

Crystal: To pop, I mean, you get popped for black hat, SEO. You, if you think good marketing is expensive, you can't afford what happens if somebody fucks it up. Honestly, I found a guy, this girl that I know, we're in the same industry, but we're in different spaces, We do different things. So we keep in touch very regularly, we're friends, we work together sometimes. She was very upset and contacted me because there was somebody claiming a bunch of her clients and her project and

her work, trying to take credit for it so they could charge top dollar to do work. Shit like that is, that's scary, right? The fact that for a marketer, people could copy paste the words we use, right? You and I both love to write, it's gonna happen. It probably has happened where somebody is like pruu, you know, now it's not Renia's is it's theirs or they'll rip it. It's, I mean, it exists in all spaces, but that's scary. That's a scary thing that happens in marketing.

Renia: Yeah. There is some content that I wrote 10 years ago that I happen to know has made hundreds of thousands of dollars for two not to be named people because we wrote it as a group, even though I wrote it and then they conveniently took my name off it.

Crystal: I mean, when it comes to power and money, I was just thinking about that today. If you find loyalty, hold onto it and reward it because I don't care how, I don't care if you have Jeff Bezos, fuck that guy by the way. I don't care if you have Jeff Bezos money, you cannot buy loyalty. You cannot buy ethics.

Renia: Yup.

Crystal: Find those people that are in your tribe that have the ethics and have the loyalty that you're looking for. Hold on tight to that shit. And if you offend them a little bit, look, people are gonna love you, love you. You know, it's, it's okay. You just, you gotta be yourself and if you feel the need to stand on a soap box, that's okay. Unless, unless you're wishing me harm or you're trying to hurt me, I'm, I'm gonna love you.

Renia: Yes.

Crystal: I mean, unless you're a shitty shit and you try to hurt somebody else, and then I might shank you, but...

Renia: Okay. So let's, I do want to give people a cheat code. Like if you're new and you're listening to this and you're thinking, and I don't know where people are when they're listening, but if you're newer or at things and you're listening to this and you're thinking, I wanna be honest, but if I'm completely honest that I'm brand new, people are not going to hire me. Here's the cheat code, and you tell me what you think. This is the cheat code I always use. I call it "an alpha offer" or "an alpha program". So it's not like, I'm brand new at this and I have no idea what I'm doing. I'm like, this is the first round, y'all can get in at the ground floor in my alpha offer, it may be a little messy, I always put that disclaimer in there like, with learning this, it may be a little messy, but instead of saying "I'm a beginner", say it's your alpha offer.

Crystal: Yeah, I mean, Thought of words that mean the same thing, it's just worded differently. I don't like to use the word cheap, but if you use the word inexpensive, it's still means it's cheap, It doesn't cost a lot, but it doesn't quite have the negative connotations that someone may assume. So I absolutely love that idea. Don't go saying, you know, I've never really done this before and it might be shitty, so I'm gonna give you a good deal. Say I'm, I love the id, I love the term alpha by the way. Absolutely love that. Right? It's just you go in and be honest and say, look, I'm building up my portfolio, I'd like to make a few offers out there that are exclusive, I can only take so many at this time, and I'd like to give you a really good deal. I also love the idea of you saying, it might be, it might get a little messy if you're, if you're willing to be a little patient with me and to let me grow and working with you, I will give you a really good deal. I think that's fantastic. We should, we should be doing that more. We should have more transparency in these things.

Renia: Yes.

Crystal: Now if I work with somebody and teach them how to use Yoast, I'm just teaching you how to use Yoast. This does not guarantee that you're gonna be good at SEO or even be good at writing content. Okay? Let's, let's be honest, right? I mean, you're super good at that. You never mislead people and you're doing just fine.

Renia: I will say I learned that because I think in my early days, I thought I could do anything, it took, I did have to, I say sometimes I'm a recovering millidal, I did have to humble myself a little bit.

Crystal: I think anybody that's listening to this that has a certain level of intelligence, which I mean, a lot of freelancers and a lot of entrepreneurs have. We also are a little bit crazy to go and hang our own shingles, but when you're intelligent, you're used to knowing information. So sometimes you get used, I don't think it's a bad thing if you're used to knowing a lot of things. Some people are right pretty frequently. It's not a bad thing to be somebody who's right frequently. I just think sometimes we get a little big for our britches and then we stop learning.

Renia: Yeah.

Crystal: Don't realize that we still need to learn. We always need to learn.

Renia: That's actually, I think the biggest error that I see in this industry above all is people learn some stuff in like 2012 and then they quit.

Crystal: They, Oh, they quit learning?

Renia: Yeah.

Crystal: To me in my mind when you're saying like that bro thing, that's where my mind keeps going, is like, that's kinda like where my old white straight dude thing is in my brain, you know everything and you can't get them out of this loop of... It's, I think, I think being confident is phenomenal. Especially if you're a woman, you should absolutely be confident and just tell every guy where they can put it if they don't believe in you. But I think arrogance and cockiness is gross because it implies to me that you're not willing to learn anything. Whereas if I'm confident, I'm confident because I know what I know. But I also know I have the capacity to learn and know more. And if your assumption is that I can't teach you anything and you're not listening to me to help, you're listening to me to respond.

Renia: Partly a confidence though, right, and crystal, like the way, I think the reason I can be confident about things, at least personally, is that if I don't know something, I'll say one of two things, I'll say, I don't know, like find somebody else who does, or if it's something I want to learn about, I will often say, I don't know but I'll go figure it out and come back to you. Like the conversations I've been having about what to do for people who are hearing impaired online, that came from a conversation with a client that was like, I wanna do these things, which one is the right one? I'm like, I don't know, but I'll go figure it out and report back to you. That's like, I think true confidence is being able to admit when you don't know the answer.

Crystal: Yeah, I feel like, just like everything is so s... Let's, stop me because I love psychology. And I really don't want to take this down a 40 hour rabbit hole. But I think, interactions with humans, there's all kinds of stupid human tricks is what I like to call it. We think we need to know, especially if we're a business owner and we're in a position where somebody else is offering to pay us for something. Maybe we feel like we need to know more because we're women, in tech industries. But I think the natural response for a lot of people is I have to know it or I can't possibly be wrong. But I think, if you get through it, cause I used to be the same way too, where I was like, no, no, no, two plus two is five, no, I know it's five, I know it's five. No. You know, having gone through that growth process and getting the self awareness, I go, Oh, you know what, I think you are right, two plus two is four. And there's a mistake, it's something that I did, let's work that out. So I assume it's a mental thing where we think. We need to know, I watched this, I don't remember what it was, but I was fascinated by it, and they stopped people, random people in the street and ask them the most absurd questions. Nobody's gonna know the answer to this ridiculous shit. Like, hey, do you know how many tic-tacs are in a ticktack jar? And people were like, Oh yeah, fi... So many people out of their ass because they didn't wanna be caught with a stranger on a TV show, not knowing the answer. That's powerful, but that's

kind of scary if you think about it because we talked to all these providers, how do you know they're not just pulling answers out of their ass. That's scary.

Renia: I totally get that and I would love to see that. Cause, and for me, you know, I ended up figuring this out because for whatever reason, and I really don't know why, people tend to do what I say. So if I tell people to do some

Crystal: You don't know why?

Renia: I really don't, I'm like, why are y'all listening to me? But if I tell somebody to do something that I don't absolutely know is going to be the right thing, it's my fault if it goes wrong. So like, that's one of those like, with great power comes great responsibility. People are going to do what I say, so I better not lead them down the road.

Crystal: Intentionally, sometimes, unintentionally someone down the road. Sometimes you have the best of intentions and sometimes the other person doesn't put the work in or do the rest of the research or, I mean, you know, Tony, there's gonna be that one guy out there that Tony Robins works for because he busts his ass every day.

Renia: Thank you so much for being with us. And we will link to your show in the show notes. So if you all want to learn some more from crystal, she has some great episodes on her YouTube show that you can go out for and watch.

Crystal: Thanks so much for having me. Let's do this again and you come on my show again. It's always fun.

Renia: This is always fun. Yes.