

Transcripts from the 6 Transformative Podcasts to Help Shape Your Strategy episode:

Renia:

What podcasts have had the greatest impact on our team this year? We'll share those with you inside this week's episode. We have been working hard all year long on the first four seasons of Small Stage, Big Impact. And we really wanted to share with you where some of our influences were coming from, both as we think of our work in marketing, as we think about how we show up in the world, and as we think about what we share with you right here on this podcast.

We only have two episodes left in season four and in 2020. And I wanted to bring this one to you as a holiday gift for those of you that celebrate holidays this time of year to really help you understand what influenced us and maybe give you what I think are some important things to think about as you shape your own marketing message for 2021. We'll see you inside the episode.

Welcome to Small Stage, Big Impact, where we are dismantling the idea that big is better by showcasing the wisdom, courage and kindness of tiny companies having a massive impact on the communities they serve. What does it look like to run a small company with kindness at its core? How can digital influencers break up with CRO marketing and manipulative sales hacks that compromise their values? What does it really take to shape a digital footprint with empathy, equity and accessibility at the center of the strategy?

These are the questions I've been asking myself over the past several years. In season four of the show, we're speaking to digital activists, upstart developers, bad-ass content creators, brave community leaders and even a few Instagram influencers to answer these questions and more. Hi, I'm your host Lourenia Carsillo. I'm a veteran SEO nerd, digital strategist and recovering know-it-all.

Over the past decade, I've spent way too much time feeling frustrated with digital marketers making excuses for their bad behavior. So we're here this season to help you learn how to do better at digital. No trip wires, sales hustles or soft closes required. Join us every Thursday morning for Small Stage, Big Impact season four, sustainable courage for leaders who want to do better digital. One of the things that I think that you will get from our podcast recommendations is how differently each person on our team thinks. And that, my friends, is not a defect, it's by design.

One of the reasons I wanted different people on our team and not just me to come in and give you these recommendations is because I wanted you to see how having other people on your team who are different from you, who are thinking about different things than you are, or experiencing the world in different ways because they come from a different background or have different types of privilege or not, it really helps you to understand more clearly what the world that you're putting your work into looks like. And therefore be more careful about our impact, not just thinking about what we intend to do but what our impact is going to be.

And as we've been talking about all season long, that is really important when it comes to your marketing because most of us start out with the best of intentions and then somewhere along the line our impact can get pretty crappy. And that's where we have this disconnect where we don't feel good about things.

So this first podcast recommendation comes from our business mechanic and operations director, Christina, and she is talking about how this year she's really grappled with some big issues around the industry we serve, around coaching and online training and this term that a lot of us think of as guruism.

Now, her recommendation is fairly controversial. It's from someone that I don't particularly care for this person, but I think it's really important to see the things that it brought up for her and to consider the issues that she is grappling with. And so I'm really excited to share her take on that with you. Let's listen to Christina.

Christina S:

My favorite podcast this year was actually not from this year, but I did listen to it and discover it this year. It's called The Optimized Mind. And the episode that really got me it's called The Authenticity Delusion. And for me, it was really affirming. I've been in the personal development space for over 10 years. And I had started to get to this place of feeling... I was starting to feel jaded and also like something just wasn't feeling right about the kind of communities and environments that I was in.

And what I was able to put together from this episode that was so affirming and just validating of my experience is that he was talking about how a lot of times in these communities it's all about, oh, I wanna drop in and I wanna be vulnerable and I wanna open and I wanna be my authentic, vulnerable self. And I wanna, you know, it's just there was a aspect of this that felt really... I felt like it was just kind of this emotional looping, looping, looping effect and what he's calling it is that it's really

like the cult effect in where a lot of these leaders and teachers what they'll do is they'll create this really vulnerable, open space, holding space for you. And then when you start to emote, then they're like, "That's the authentic you, that's the real you."

And then they'll just drop in this mind control stuff. And then it creates this kind of like cult-like guru and admiration of them in that community. And a lot of people kind of come out the other side and they're like, "What happened?" And they still have the same questions and they still have the same challenges and they feel like I'm doing all this work, why am I still not feeling like I'm enjoying life?

And I was asking myself those same questions. And so it was so validating just to hear, oh yeah, actually there is some kind of messed up about this. And so the idea is that there's no such thing. It's a very, very controversial episode and he's a very controversial speaker but it was this idea of there is no such thing as authenticity and all of those super-duper vulnerable holding of space moments, you have to be really cautious and really careful because a lot of it is wrapped around all of these power dynamics and and guruism and mind control and all that.

And so I just was like cheering on with this episode and feeling really like, oh, that's why I didn't feel the way that I was looking to feel. And that's why I felt like I kept struggling even though I was doing all the work. And so it was just so validating, and that's why it's one of my favorites this year.

Renia:

It probably won't come as much surprise that one of our copywriters and the person who writes our show notes for this podcast every week, Christina Green, decided to use a movie about a bookstore owner as the analogy for her favorite podcast, which she chose from our own archives. And I love the way that she talks about why she chose this particular episode and the perspective of what companies who live by their values looks like for her as someone with a very different background than myself and many of the other people on our team. So I am so grateful and excited that she chose one of our own podcasts as her favorite one this year. And I will let Christina Green, our own show notes writer, tell you why.

Christina G:

My favorite episode this season was episode 41 titled "Why Neutrality is Bad for Business". And when I first listened to this podcast, I was reminded of the movie "Who's Got Mail?". For those who haven't seen it, it's a really clever romantic comedy starring Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks. And Meg Ryan's character, Kathleen Kelly, is trying to keep her small bookstore open despite competition from a big box bookstore that is owned by Tom Hanks' character, Joe Fox. At one point, Joe tells Kathleen that it's not personal, it's business.

And Kathleen at this point is a little high on cold medicine and she goes off on him. She says, "What is that supposed to mean? I'm so sick of that. All that means is that it wasn't personal to you, but it was personal to me. It's personal to a lot of people and what's so wrong with being personal anyway?" And then she finishes by saying, "Whatever else anything is, it ought to begin by being personal." And I think that we do a disservice to our customers when we try to leave the personal out of business.

We're supposed to help our customers get to know, like and trust us. And we can't do that if we insist on staying neutral on things, on issues that directly impact our customers. It makes me think of Target, of Chick-fil-A. Both of these businesses are doing extremely well even during the pandemic. And both of these businesses are very vocal on what their values are as businesses. And it makes some people mad, but it obviously doesn't make everyone mad since they're doing really well.

There's a phrase that we used a lot with our children when they were younger, we should probably still be using it with them, and it goes: people are more important than things. And I think that if as a society we learn to put people ahead of things, we'd solve a lot of the world's problems.

Renia:

What does creativity really mean? That's the answer that Liz, one of our newest team members, was looking for when she stumbled upon the favorite podcast that she's going to recommend this year from two just venerable very big stars in the marketing space. And I really appreciate what she learned about both creativity as a whole and her own and how she's brought that to our team just over the last several weeks that she's been with us.

So I'm really excited to introduce y'all to one of our new team members, Liz, with her recommendation for a podcast to maybe help you think a little differently about what creativity looks like in your own work as you go into the new year.

Liz:

So if I had to pick my favorite podcast this year, would have to be Donald Miller's Building a StoryBrand. I kind of stumbled across him when I was doing some professional development and really delved into the StoryBrand Guide and then his trainings that he was doing online. And so eventually it led me to his podcast. So that ended up being my favorite for the year. I learned a lot about marketing and how branding should be done properly and the consumer and so on.

But as far as my favorite thing that I learned, it actually was in a pretty recent episode with Seth Godin about how to become more creative even if you think you are. Donald starts the whole episode by talking about how he thinks that not everyone is creative and Seth Godin is on the opposite position. He believes everyone has the potential to be creative. So this really resonated with me because I have come into contact with this issue before where someone has not believed that everyone can be creative.

And I have the opposite opinion that I think it has to be developed and grown and fostered. So what I learned that was very valuable from that episode definitely had to be about how not only is everyone creative, but you can be creative in a different way. So I think one of the first things that comes to mind when we talk about creativity is creation of something as far as maybe like a artistic product or something that we've never seen before.

But ultimately, Seth uses examples like an administrative assistant. An administrative assistant can be creative in their field even though it seems pretty routine by decision-making. Something as simple as changing a schedule around and manipulating their system to work for what they need it to. Not everything is taught in a handbook, therefore the decisions that you make and the actions that you take, those are the things that can be creative and not necessarily the creative artistic way that we generally think.

Another thing is he talks about mindsets, how people can have the exact same resources and those who don't think about abundance, they just stay kind of stagnant. Whereas those who believe that they can do more and be creative, will do more and be creative because of that mindset. And also what I found very interesting was his idea of being on the hook. So when we think about being on the hook, it's often negative in connotation but instead it could be something as simple as owning the work that you create. So being on the hook and owning up to that

product that you creatively made. So ultimately, that would have to be my favorite episode and the favorite thing that I learned from Donald Miller's StoryBrand.

Renia:

So I really enjoyed hearing from our team about what they were thinking about and listening to and where they were being impacted as we created our own podcast over the course of this last year. And I am an avid, slightly addicted, possibly, podcast consumer. So for me, it was really difficult for me to choose. And it really helped me to think about some things outside of my own podcast bubble that my team was listening to and thinking about.

And I wanted, as I go into sharing my favorite or the episodes that have made me think of other shows the most this year, I really want to say that this is kind of, I think, collectively for many of us where our minds and our hearts have been as we deal with global pandemics of racism, global pandemic of COVID-19. Like, it's no surprise that some of the podcasts that have most impacted me this year are related to some of these issues. And what I will say is this is not new for us. And so it's really been a deepening of the work for me, and that has been really special this year.

And it's gonna come as no surprise if you've been listening to this show for any length of time that my favorite podcast this year comes from one of the superheroes of my own world, Brene Brown. If you don't know, or maybe you've been living under a rock, Brene Brown launched her Unlocking Us podcast this year. And it's had a huge impact on me as her work often does. And she did an episode a couple of months ago with Sonya Renee Taylor, the author of "The Body is Not An Apology".

And that episode talks about, first of all, opens really vulnerable with a conversation about Sonya being, or excuse me, Brene being misattributed a quote that was actually from Sonya. And the way that they navigate that is really beautiful. Watching someone navigate a screw up in such a public way was boy, a beautiful lesson for me this year and something that I really needed to see, both as it was happening online and in the way that they talk about it on the podcast. But what really struck me in this episode, the reason that it is my favorite of this year is that this idea that, I don't even wanna call it an idea, this truth, that we cannot be in union with others trying to create a kinder, more liberated, more just world until we have fully accepted and fallen in love with ourselves.

This is such an important concept that I did not fully embrace until this year. I don't know, maybe in the future I will look back and say that I hadn't fully embraced it

even this year because I feel like I am rooting and blossoming at the same time around this particular concept more and more every single day right now. And so I really want you to go and listen to this episode especially if you are a business person, which you probably are if you are listening to this podcast, and think about how your own relationship to your body impacts the way that you show up in the world in your work. Sonya's words on this podcast and the way Brene draws her out are so not only revolutionary, but important in this moment for each of us to understand.

And that's why this is pretty much my favorite podcast of the year, among many really notable things I listened to this year. I do also wanna point out a couple of other podcasts that have had a big impact on me. One is not a single podcast, but a new show by some of the very smart engineers and dev people over at Google called Search Off the Record. And it really gives you a glimpse into what's happening as Google develops their algorithms and things like that that has been enlightening to me and reminded me that the people behind this SEO thing that we all sort of worship at in this world are actually humans too.

And it allows me to see their vulnerability and to see the humanity inside of this very inhuman thing that is a search bot. So that's been pretty cool for me this year. And then one other podcast, it comes from my friend and colleague, Trudi Lebron and her partner Weeze, on this show That's Not How That Works. They did an episode, I think it was early this year, although I'm not completely sure about the date, on decolonizing professionalism that has really impacted the way that I think about my team and how they work, how we show up for each other and how I expect them to show up in the work.

So if you're thinking about how to break capitalism's harmful shit inside of teams, I highly recommend listening to this episode with Trudi and Weeze on decolonizing professionalism. Those three podcasts are really the places where I've had the most impactful movements in my thinking this year. And it's helped me really to better articulate what we are doing here as we think about marketers making the world and how we contribute to making that world a kinder, more liberated place. And they've also helped me to root into my work with more confidence and ease, because I am better understanding why certain things didn't work for me.

So I'm not beating myself up anymore and instead allowing myself to create spaces for our clients and for our employees and for everyone that we work with that are different from what the world tells us a lot of the time we should be created. So in some ways, these shows this year have set me free and I hope that they do the same for you. If you're listening to this in real-time, it's Christmas Eve of 2020, and it probably looks different for us than it has ever before for most of us. So I would love

to just give you a big virtual hug and say thank you for being with us this year. I don't know what the world is going to look like over the next few months, but what I do know is that listening to my team talk about what has impacted them over this year as we created this episode together, has really reminded me that we're here for it and that if you show up open-hearted with as Brene Brown says, a strong back, a soft front and a wild heart, we really can build the world that we wanna live in.

So happy holidays however you celebrate, whatever you're celebrating this time of year. And we will see you one more time this year next week with a celebratory episode that I am very excited to share with y'all. Thank you for listening to Small Stage, Big Impact. If you enjoyed the show, please show your support by reviewing us or rating us on iTunes and follow loureniac on Instagram. This helps others seeking to do better digital to find us and support the movement. For full show notes, transcripts and resources mentioned in the episode, visit us at realignyourstrategy.com. Thank you for listening. We'll be back next week.