



SuperFastBusiness Presents

The Future Of Ecommerce With Nathan Musson

Delve into the future of digital marketing and e-commerce.

The Future Of Ecommerce With Nathan Musson

by SuperFastBusiness



Nathan Musson

James: James Schramko here, welcome to SuperFastBusiness.com. Today, we're going to go into the future. We are going to have a look at what is happening with digital marketing, with e-commerce, and what we could expect in a few years from now. And to do that, I'm bringing a friend of mine who is what I would say, an e-commerce visionary. He has his own digital media agency working with some very large brands who have big

budgets. He's also got a genius creative mind, and he's able to put things together that other people might miss. So I want to welcome Nathan Musson.

Nathan: Thanks James.

James: So, you have got an agency. Your website is 123findme.com, and we're going to be talking about some pretty trippy stuff today. Some of the stories you shared with me are somewhat mind-blowing and pretty exciting. I want to start off with the concept of the store of the future. This one is an interesting scenario that is coming to a store near you. Perhaps you can tell us a little bit about what this e-commerce concept is.

The concept of the store of the future

Nathan: That's quite an introduction. One of the things that we kind of look for is try to find what's missing, what's different, what needs to be happening. We work with different software brands to understand what they can offer, and then we work with the brand itself to find out what kind of media they have, and what their users would like to see. And then try to put it all together so it works.

One of the ideas that you will see coming very soon is far more personalization. We're looking deeper into big data, looking deeper into their database, what the e-commerce platform, will it be Magento or the like has, and then enabling creatives like myself and like a bunch of other guys in the forum who can come up with interesting ways to show the customer at the right time what they're looking for.

James: OK. You mentioned the forum and I think you're referring to the [SuperFastBusiness membership](#) there, which is where you are member, and your actual journey to us talking is really quite interesting because from memory, you were in the very early ages of the online scene, and then you ended up with an e-commerce store, and then you were listening to a podcast where I appeared, and from there, somehow you joined the SuperFastBusiness community, and from that, you came to local meet-ups, and now you'll be speaking at [SuperFastBusiness Live](#) about e-commerce, and you're actually going to go through a case study of one of the most successful campaigns, which is probably implementable for most people sitting in that room. Would that be a fair call?

Nathan: Yeah, exactly. Late '90s, we started one of the first online recruitment websites. A few years later, we sold that to become Seek. Most people will have heard now of seek.com.au. Yes, ran a couple of e-commerce businesses selling toys. We were one of the largest resellers of racer scooters when they were in their hype in the mid-2000s. And then toward the end of that, we suddenly realized how things were moving. How things were changing. And I realized I didn't want to be the importer anymore. I didn't want to be a distributor anymore. I didn't want warehouses and logistic hassles.

Different countries have different issues. In Australia, moving things around was becoming a nightmare and very costly. So we decided to move out of that and I started to look out, what else can I do and use my skills. And one of them was looking at how you can take e-commerce and digital and creative nature that I have and put it all together. And we created 123findme to enable other people to find their story.

James: Right. So the important part there is you've been on trend the whole time and you created something in the very beginning and they got sold as a success. You rode the peak of the racer scooter craze; you've gone into the agency seeing at a time where there are more ideas and more questions out there than ever before. And now, big companies, even the gods of retailing are realizing they have to be doing stuff online and they have to do it well.

You're bringing concepts that are probably quite familiar with the Internet marketing community in some cases and just plugging them into a more of a dinosaur retail model, and they're blown away. Would that be fair?

Nathan: Oh, exactly. The things that we do daily as Internet marketers, your normal brand just only dreams of those. They go to different conventions every year, and they sit back and they go, "Oh, I'd love to do that. How can we do that?" And they just can't move fast enough. They're too restricted. So what they tend to do is they look for someone like us. Someone who can sit on the side, and come in, and throw in their two cents and go, "You know what, we can do this and this is how we can do it and you're going to look good."

James: Right. You basically journeyed from seat to success. You sat in [SuperFastBusiness live event](#), listened to what's going down in the internet marketing scene right now. You already had your e-commerce store

experience. You had a few contacts and you're a very good networker. And you've gone to these big companies and you've talked about some cool stuff.

Now, I want to get back to this store of the future. You said that they'll be using personalization. What does it actually look like?

The concept of personalization

Nathan: One of the very things of personalization is that they already know who you are. They know everything about you, they know your habits, how often you come to the site, what you look at, what you buy, what you respond to, what you close, what you don't, everything about you. All they really need now is a cost-effective method to show you what you want next.

So in this concept of store of the future, I work with several large agencies as a futurist for them in their innovation course. So we sit down, meet regularly. And some of these are really innovative, interesting brands but they just need a couple of different people from outside to pull it together.

So, one of the concepts is you might shop at this particular clothing brand, and you always buy, you always look, you always open something of a particular color. So instead of their new season range coming in blasting new like every single person with their complete new range... Take like, one of Australia's great retailers last night, David Jones, they did their fashion show, we all got the magazine and the post, got all their new information, I'm like, You know what, I got all of it. Every single piece. Just smashed at me.

James: So it's not that relevant?

Nathan: No.

James: So how can you personalize this stuff?

Nathan: Once you start to understand how your e-commerce platform works, you have Magento; actually I've got a funny story that I'm going to share with you guys at the live event about Magento. It involves playing poker with their lead evangelist, which is really fun.

So how can you do this? You need to start analyzing and working out with an automation platform. So you don't have to think about it. You need to

write the rules, do the business intelligence, make sure that it's economical and the products get tagged correctly. Once you've got that in place, it's starts to self-run itself. Some of the brands that have got enterprise level automation and this might be something where you might pair it up with something like a Marketo. You can actually now dynamically change every landing page in your website with personalization.

James: So you might have the person's favorite color?

Nathan: Yeah, correct.

James: So they're looking at the purchase history, they can see what's being purchased, and they can make it more relevant.

Nathan: Exactly. Another large software vendor we work with is called NetSuite. Now NetSuite, they're a fabulous ERP. They know every single thing about the customer.

James: What's an ERP?

Nathan: An enterprise resource platform.

James: Thank you.

Nathan: It's kind of like what the big boys use. You need to have that to do your accounts, managing everything for the business. Now once you start using it, you stumble across a client who has something like this. The amount of information you've got available to you is fantastic. There's nothing you can't do for them. All you need to do is find out what are their pain points, what do their customers want, and then put it together for them.

James: Right. So you put together a big deal with them just by matchmaking some ideas to a challenge they're having?

Nathan: Yeah, correct. Software vendors are always looking to stay current. They're always looking for something more to the future. So I've been currently working with them on rebuilding their app store and making it more user-friendly, looking at the user experience and making it more futuristic.

A piece of software I work with comes out at Adelaide, down in South

Australia, and it's a 3-dimensional visual search tool. It's one of the most powerful search and display tools that you'll ever see, and hopefully, it will be working across all platforms very soon. I love it. I'm kind of like one of their evangelists.

How a 3D search tool works

James: So can you explain how that works? A 3D search tool.

Nathan: One of the key things with e-commerce is that we are able to display things in lists and grids. But in real life, we've got 3-dimensional view. We've got visualization, we've got periphery vision. We see so much more than what's just in front of us. And digitally, we've never been able to grasp that.

So what this tool does, they set about finding out how we visualize things and we learned that we see things, we learn from things 60,000 times faster as an image. And current e-commerce enables you to show things in a grid, which always has a bias. It shows you the top 3, maybe 6 things above the fold. Whereas, what we can do is actually show 24, 36, 48, 50, 60, 100 items in a 3-dimensional space that someone can make matrix style or minority report move in between, in and out of.

And you start touching on things (it's very touchy), the rest of it changes. So it adapts and changes based on a recommendation engine, and you use a profiling. Everyone who's running Magento right now will absolutely love it. There's a Shopify app, there's a Big Commerce app; it's growing rapidly.

Will it work offline?

James: Do you see applications for this offline? Combining it with things like cameras and stuff?

Nathan: Yeah, 100%. Thanks for that one James. One of the big things with store of the future is how do you share the dollar? How do you take someone from an online experience and move them into your store where you're paying for massive amounts of rent and wages and everything needs to come together? So what we look at is remove the device, remove the reason. So your customer doesn't need to think about where they are, what they're doing, what they're holding, what they're looking at, they just want to buy that item or they just want to know about that piece.

So by using different pieces of software that bring it together, we can now create a store of the future where you might receive an email or look at social or find on an influencer's website the same information you're going to see as you walk past a billboard or a digital sign in your local shopping center that starts to pick you up on an iBeacon or something like that and it changes. So one of the stores, they've got a 30-square meter screen. That's 6 meters by 5 meters.

James: What would that be in feet for our Northern American friends?

Nathan: Massive. (both laugh)

James: 20 feet, probably.

Nathan: It's 30 square meters, so what is it, 1.6, no, 2 feet a meter?

James: Let's say 3.

Nathan: 3 feet?

James: Yeah, 3 feet a meter. You're talking huge.

Nathan and James: 18 feet by 15 feet.

Nathan: Giant screens. Now these things, we're going to pair up, or we can pair up with Xbox Kinect, with facial recognition that at the moment can pick up if you're an adult male, female, a teen male, female or a child male, female. And the content can dynamically change to show you what you might be interested in.

Of course they can put, you know, preferential treatment on there for advertisers so that different brands come up and this is sponsored. And by using Kinect you can actually reach out and pretend to, actually try to touch the product, and it will come alive, and others it will come forward...

James: Just like when you're playing those games.

Nathan: Yeah, exactly.

James: You can reach into it.

Nathan: Yeah. If you haven't got an Xbox, then get one, because they're pretty cool. The Wii games with a remote, just picks up what you're doing

and it sees you. So these kinds of stores, they want to help you find what you're looking for but then take you inside, because you don't spend money standing out front.

Don't tell customers what to do

So they work with a brand, Procter & Gamble, and they did a massive research project late last year that actually unveiled to them that their clients, the people who buy their products, their face creams, don't actually want to know that it's a three-piece set and you buy item one, two, three and your face looks awesome. They actually want to go to the shelf and know that they need to get three pieces but kind of put it together themselves but has that little bit of their own personalization to it, and not the market or the brand telling you, you know what, because you got this, you are this, this and this.

James: That sounds like it touches on the idea of with remarketing, people don't want to get a sense that the marketer knows far too much about them and that's a bit staker-ey. So people like to draw their own conclusions or customize or feel like they have some say in it, even though they're being completely maze run into the end conclusion in a way.

Nathan: Yeah, definitely. I have a little phrase that I love, called "Psyche triggers." So it's kind of like psychology triggers. So we match that up with behavioral traits. So we find trends, and then we overlay them with a bit of psychology to work out what's going to cause that person to actually enjoy this experience? What can we do that's going to help them think, "Damn, this is awesome! I love this," so that they really do enjoy shopping with you, learning with you, entertainment with you, informing with you.

James: Can you think of an example of when you had that feeling?

Nathan: Actually kind of scary, I had that just last week, and it was with a bank.

James: (Laughs) Well, I can kind of relate. I was surprised to see a surfboard on the wall at my local NAB bank. And I thought, well, that's kind of a step in the right direction. And they have iPads all around the place. They were trying hard.

They do try hard

Nathan: They will do. Banks especially will do, because you know, CommBank can do. They all know you; they all want to know you more. When was it, it was late last year, the family and I, we went off to Africa. We did safari there and traveled around for a little bit. Day 1, we landed in Dubai, and it's like, I don't know, midnight or 1 a.m. because most flights land at about that sort of time.

My credit card didn't work. I was like, "Aww. Three weeks, what are we going to do?" And I'd forgot to turn on international roaming. And I was screwed, because there I was in Dubai Airport, the Cigar Humidor room, I love cigars, and I spent about 10 minutes in there. I hid from the family, and I snuck in there and I found, I bought myself, I selected my box. This was the box I was going to enjoy over the trip.

And I went to the checkout to pay, dropped the card, and it was going, bomp, bomp. (Gasp) I glanced up, just happens my family walks past, I'm like, "Oh, quick honey, throw me your card so I can buy these." She's like, "Oh, yeah, of course." As most of you probably know, your wives don't actually like you buying a box of cigars.

James: I have never bought a box of cigars.

Nathan: So she had no idea what I was purchasing, she was just happy to help out because we're on our first day of holiday.

So last week, I just happened to I've got a client who works at a business at Sydney Airport, and I walked in through the international terminal and my phone buzzed. And there was a message from my bank that said, "Hey, travelling overseas? Click now and we'll activate your international roaming on your credit card." So I was like, wow, I wish you would have done that for me about 4 months ago.

James: Nice. I actually email my rep at the card company and tell him where I'm travelling, and I haven't had an issue with that.

Getting customers into the store

OK, so back to the store of the future. We got the screen here, it recognizes us, it knows it's the weekend, it's showing us weekend stuff, it's got our

favorite colors and all that sort of stuff, how does it get us in the store?

Nathan: There are a couple of different ways. It's kind of a tough one. What you need to do is find out a way that entices people. I love gamification. I know all us guys over the years have played different games, and you kind of get into it and then you know, it's late at night and you think, oh, I'll finish up, but you just get to the next level, and you think, oh, I've just won this, I'll stay and I'll keep going.

James: There's be some psyche triggers happening there, I'd think

Nathan: There are a lot, match them up with your behavior and you've got a winner. Just look at Angry Birds. And there are all those silly games on your iPhone that you just can't stop.

So one of the things that's going to work really well is how do you take someone's simple purchase and entice them to come into store. And this is one of the things that we're going to talk about at your event. I think it's something worth coming to here.

James: Right, so at the event we're going to be talking about the hotel loyalty program that you put in place, and how you used relatively straightforward technology that we have. Probably sitting here, I've got the tools that you used for that.

Nathan: Yeah, you do.

James: Or more. I've got more advanced in my little home studio, here. So not massive tech, but combining some Internet marketing ideas with some basic tools with a real business, got some unbelievable results, really, and you're just going to lay down a case study for us.

Nathan: Yes, we are. James, this so true, it is one of the simplest things that anyone in the room can do. What you need to be is, you've got to think bigger. You've got to think more than what is on offer. These guys, they get pitched ideas all the time, so you need to take something that is part of the business process, and reinvent it for them.

Show them how that by adding a little bit of personalization, a little bit of face time with the camera, and some really simple software, you can actually build a personalized video campaign that the person sees 5 days out before they come and stay with you so that after they see three or four

messages they know so much more about your hotel or your business or your service or your products, that when they get there to pick up their item, stay with you or eat in your restaurant, they are just so much more into you.

So be bigger than your shopping cart. Be bigger than your platform; be bigger than what you're offering. Just look outside, look further than what you're currently seeing.

Quick recap

James: It's cool, Nathan. All right, so just a little recap here. We've talked about why this is important to understand the future of e-commerce. We're speaking to a futurist such as yourself, because we can see if we combine a little bit of imagination with some automation and some tools and software that are available in most cases off the shelf, if we start matchmaking a little bit, if we can think how we can combine things, then we have some pretty remarkable packages that people will pay big money for. If that's what floats your boat, it's a very lucrative field to be in.

But more importantly, if you happen to be a business consultant serving businesses both offline and online businesses, or if you happen to be an e-commerce store owner, then this information should be helpful for you. Hopefully, we've opened up your imagination a little bit, and you've got some ideas about what things you can do and how that might impact your results.

What to do

And the action step from this podcast, what would you say would be the prescription for someone to take action on right now to get maximum value from listening to this message?

Nathan: Go and find yourself a customer. Find yourself a customer who thinks bigger, who wants to think bigger. You need to have someone, you need to have an advocate, you need someone who can take this journey with you.

I've been very fortunate, one of my best customers; we've been working together since 2009. He is happy with an 80% good idea to go with. You need to find one of those so you can do your learning, you can grow

together, share together, and then you create your packages to build from that to sell to others.

James: Right. So you do your minimum viable product, you get a success story and then the world can open up for you. The exact same idea can work on any other business. Like the idea of collecting someone's email address, way back in the day, someone thought of it.

Two people I can think of who definitely in their own area started independently doing it was Jonathan Mizel and Dean Jackson. Both thought of the idea of capturing an email address and building a database automatically. And that idea could take off and be applied to so many other websites, as we know now, it's standard practice.

So thanks for sharing these ideas with us, Nathan. I think it's very exciting to delve into the future of e-commerce, and I know when we start seeing these things roll out, we'll be able to go, "I remember this guy Nathan talking about it years ago on that SuperFastBusiness podcast."

If you're interested in Nathan Musson, go and check out 123findme.com, and come along to SuperFastBusiness Live, and meet the man, the myth, the legend.

Nathan: We're going to have a lot of fun. You are going to love it, there will be something for everyone in the room, and we will blow your mind. Thanks, James.



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