

Experience This! Show Podcast

Hosts: Joey Coleman & Dan Gingiss

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Episode 103 - Adding a Little Sparkle Makes Your Experience Remarkable

[SHOW INTRO]

Dan Gingiss (00:05):
Welcome to Experience This!

Joey Coleman (00:08):
Where you'll find inspiring examples of customer experience, great stories of customer service, and tips on how to make your customers love you even more!

Dan Gingiss (00:17):
Always upbeat and definitely entertaining, customer retention expert Joey Coleman...

Joey Coleman (00:23):
... and social media expert Dan Gingiss, serve as your hosts for a weekly dose of positive customer experience.

Dan Gingiss (00:30):
So hold onto your headphones, it's time to Experience This!

[EPISODE 103 INTRO]

Dan Gingiss (00:38):
Get ready for another episode of the Experience This! Show

Joey Coleman (00:45):
Join us as we discuss major shifts in customer expectations, a not-so-average birthday celebration, and turning customers into raving fans.

Dan Gingiss (00:57):
Pivoting, celebrating, and dedicating! Oh my!

[SEGMENT INTRO - DISSECTING THE EXPERIENCE]

Joey Coleman (01:05):
Sometimes a remarkable experience deserves deeper investigation. We dive into the nitty gritty of customer interactions and dissect how, and why, they happen. Join us while we're Dissecting the Experience.

[DISSECTING THE EXPERIENCE] COVID-19 and the Impact on Customer and Employee Experience

Dan Gingiss (01:22):
Welcome back to Season Six of the Experience This! Show. We are so happy to be back with you and so excited that you are here for another season chock full of great customer experiences. Now, obviously the world has changed just a bit in the past few months...

Joey Coleman (01:42):
Understatement!

Dan Gingiss (01:46):
With a certain pandemic ravaging the economy, people's livelihoods, and of course their health. And new words and phrases have entered the lexicon like lockdowns, and quarantines, infection rates, stimulus bills, and there's even a coin shortage in the United States. And many companies have either shuttered their doors, or unfortunately probably won't live to see 2021. And entire industries have had to restructure and adapt in order to remain solvent, let alone competitive.

Joey Coleman (02:19):
You know, Dan we've also watched as the world has really grappled with important social issues like diversity and inclusion, which have affected how we look at hiring practices and changing customer demographics and even our political candidates. To put it mildly, there's a lot that's been going on since last time we all hung out together.

Dan Gingiss (02:39):
Exactly. And that is why Joey and I are so excited to be back here with you on the Experience This! Show, because if the past few months have taught us anything other than that, we each have the power to decide if we want to be part of the problem or part of

the solution,

Joey Coleman (02:55):

Hint! Be part of the solution friends be part of the solution.

Dan Gingiss (02:58):

It is, that customer experience has actually never been more important. Our customers are depending on us, more now than ever, and they're making future buying decisions based on their experiences with us right now. Some companies immediately got that and they pivoted to be more helpful and caring for their customers. Others kept plowing forward as if nothing had happened... occasionally checking a box by sending a copycat email, you know, the one: talking about their enhanced cleaning procedures and sending us to the CDC website.

Joey Coleman (03:31):

Oh geez. Yeah. You know, the reality friends is that those companies that have decided to take care of their customers during COVID-19 will have customers after COVID-19. Right? And the other thing that is going to stay the same,, along with the fact that great experiences work, they have worked, and they will continue to work, is that Dan and I are committed to continue bringing you examples of remarkable customer experiences that hopefully can, and should, inspire you to take action at your own company! We want to help you get more customers. We want to help you keep the ones you have. We want to help you by providing a regular little appetizer of customer experience delight - something to motivate you, something to get you thinking differently, something to get you to make the changes that will help your business not only survive going forward, but thrive going forward.

Dan Gingiss (04:24):

So in Season Six, we're going to talk about things like: innovation in the audio book industry;

Joey Coleman (04:30):

Launching a new Peruvian restaurant by sending packages in the mail;

Dan Gingiss (04:35):

The behind the scenes people creating experiences at sporting events;

Joey Coleman (04:41):

How to keep connected to the customers that used to come to your place of business, but are now staying at home;

Dan Gingiss (04:46):

Creating custom Zoom backgrounds for your best customers to use;

Joey Coleman (04:51):

Crafting analog solutions in a digital world;

Dan Gingiss (04:54):

The reasons why people stay loyal to brands;

Joey Coleman (05:00):

And so, so much more. But before we get into all of that over the course of the next season, let's start dissecting this COVID era experience.

Dan Gingiss (05:11):

You mean the 800 pound elephant in the room Joey?

Joey Coleman (05:14):

You know, we've got to address it right early on, right folks. And for anybody listening, who's saying, "Oh my gosh, great, this entire Season Six is going to be about COVID-19!" No, no, no. It's not. The entire show is going to be what it's always been about: customer experience. But if we didn't take time, in this very first segment of Season Six, to actually address the elephant in the room, we'd feel like we were letting you down.

Dan Gingiss (05:37):

So I found two resources that I really wanted to share with our audience that I think will help to frame this discussion. The first is a study from our old friends at Sitel Group called "COVID-19 the CX Impact." And the second is a terrific article by the consulting company, McKinsey, you probably have heard of them.

Joey Coleman (05:57):

I have, once or twice.

Dan Gingiss (05:59):

called "Adapting Customer Experience in the Time of Coronavirus." And across these two reports, I found that a few key trends really emerged. And that's what I want to talk about in this segment. The first, which I think we all know conceptually, but are really seeing this happening at the speed of light, is the move to digital.

Joey Coleman (06:20):

And I think what you said about the speed of light is so true, right? Every company in January of 2020 had a digital strategy. Two

months later, that digital strategy was probably their only strategy!

Dan Gingiss (06:33):
Exactly. Or they, or it was ripped up and they had to rewrite it.

Joey Coleman (06:36):
Yeah, exactly. It's a new digital strategy!

Dan Gingiss (06:39):
So the CMO (Chief Marketing Officer) of Sitel, Martin Wilkinson-Brown,

Joey Coleman (06:44):
Great guy, great guy and friend of ours.

Dan Gingiss (06:46):
He is, and he said this in the report and I'm quoting, "The key coronavirus consumer trend is that increasingly a brand is judged by the strength of its digital channels when it comes to customer experience. Now, the Sitel study found that as COVID-19 forced stores to close temporarily and for people to practice social distancing or even stay home, consumers looked to digital channels to serve their needs. 76% of respondents said that they'd made online purchases for things that they normally would have purchased in person. But what's really important and interesting is that 57% said that they will continue this behavior once the pandemic ends. Now, McKinsey also found that, and I'm quoting again, "Digital adoption has grown strongly even among the most digitally resistant customers." And so its article came to a similar conclusion quote, "[i]t's likely that many customers who have converted to digital services will stick to them after the immediate health crisis is over. Companies who make this shift to digital and deliver superior experiences, have an opportunity to increase adoption and maintain these customer relationships after the crisis."

Joey Coleman (08:03):
Dan, not only do I agree with everything that you said, whether it's from the folks at Sitel or the folks at McKinsey, but we've experienced this in our own lives. We used to order some of our groceries online for delivery. Now we order all of our groceries online for delivery. I had never had the chance to really experience telemedicine before this, but ended up in a scenario where my wife Berit had something in her eye and we were trying to figure out whether we go to the eye doctor to get it looked at, but ugh - do we really want to be out like in a medical environment when there's a pandemic going on?! And so we called the eye doctor and they were like, "just text us a picture of what's going on." And we texted the picture and they texted back and they're like, "yeah, here's what it is, nothing to worry about. It'll be fine in about a week or two. And if it's not, call us back." Now, what's fascinating about that, and sorry honey for the HIPAA violation I just committed there, but the moral of this story being, not only are the companies that have a digital strategy that have gained customers during this time going to potentially keep those customers, but the customer's expectation for a digital solution is going to go up. I mean, I'm in a place where I don't want to go to the doctor, if we can solve this via FaceTime or texting photos. I don't want to go out and waste my time traveling from my home to whatever office it is, if we can do that electronically.

Dan Gingiss (09:34):
Yes, ladies and gentlemen, Joey has just admitted to the world that his wife actually has an eye.

Joey Coleman (09:41):
Well, you know, I try to be conscious of, uh, divulging other people's, I have medical professionals in the family, we talk about HIPAA a lot, I want to be a good consumer.

Dan Gingiss (09:50):
I understand. And you know, it is also created, this move to digital has also created different ways for us to evaluate companies. So for example Joey, I went immediately to curbside pickup for groceries and I stopped because after four or five weeks, I was tired of the groceries being wrong. I was tired of the order being wrong or of their being out of certain items. It became so frustrating to me that I ended up deciding to just go put on a KN-95 mask and go do it myself. I mean, folks, this has now been going on for multiple months, and so the move to digital has happened, it's going to stay, and your company has got to excel at it - otherwise you're going to lose customers to the competition. Let's move on to the second trend in the article, which was the move to home delivery. McKinsey says that home delivery has gone from a convenience to a necessity. And as Joey pointed out, this isn't just pizza delivery anymore. This is grocery stores, pharmacies, meal delivery services, even car dealerships that are picking up and dropping off cars at people's homes for repair and maintenance appointments. I had a bicycle picked up and dropped off for a repair and maintenance appointment. According to Statista, the grocery delivery app Instacart saw month over month growth of 218% as the pandemic began.

Joey Coleman (11:17):
Yeah, well, it's a good time to be in the home delivery business. If there's an upside to the pandemic, it's if your business, like Instacart, was primarily built around home delivery, you experienced growth at a very accelerated rate. As you alluded to though, Dan, part of the challenge with experiencing growth at an accelerated rate is that things break faster too. And so I know Instacart had to go out and hire a bunch of new shoppers, there were a bunch of people who sadly lost their jobs and were looking for jobs and as Instacart, Amazon, and some of the other companies who were seeing an increase in business were kind of there to fill the void of people that were looking for jobs, the problem was, there wasn't a lot of time for training. And there wasn't a lot of time to necessarily make sure that that Instacart shopper, who was going to be going to the store and shopping for your stuff, although you were doing, you know, curbside pickup Dan so that was theoretically store employees, but the reality is there's, there's a learning curve on this stuff too. I think what's interesting though, is in this move to home delivery, we've had the chance as a society, at least here in the United States, and I think it's been prevalent globally, but probably accelerated here in the U.S. because of how long this

crisis has continued to affect the U.S. compared to some other countries who have gotten/done a better job - but we won't get into that! - the moral of the story being we need to make these shifts and customers want the convenience. They want to be able to order this stuff from home. And I think more and more consumers are realizing that the shopping process versus the convenience of having delivery just isn't always worth it. You know, sometimes it's nice and sometimes as you alluded to, you know, if you want to get the order exactly right, you want to go do it yourself. But sometimes it's okay if it's not perfect, if it's done. And I think that's kind of what has happened across a lot of these home delivery services.

Dan Gingiss (13:15):

Absolutely. So the third trend is a focus on safety. And this applies to both customers and employees. And I actually got to write a blog post for our good friends and show sponsors, Avtex.

Joey Coleman (13:29):

Woo hoo! Avtex!

Dan Gingiss (13:29):

So if you go to avtex.com and look at their blog, you'll see this post. And I'm sure you've heard of the famous psychologist, Abraham Maslow, who created the famous hierarchy of needs in the 1960s.

Joey Coleman (13:45):

It's such a nice little pyramid.

Dan Gingiss (13:47):

It's a great pyramid. And it's got five tiers of human needs ranked from the physiological at the bottom, which are the most basic needs, to self actualization at the top, which are the needs that are the most difficult to obtain. Well safety needs, which include both safety and security, are considered basic needs. And they're ranked just above literally, food, and water, and warmth, and rest.

Joey Coleman (14:11):

Yeah, they're right. This is the bottom of the pyramid folks. If you don't have your safety needs taken care of, it's kind of the case that nothing else matters.

Dan Gingiss (14:19):

Exactly. Which is why I am willing to predict here today, that "safety" is going to be the key word and key trend in customer experience in the next 6 to 12 months for sure. So Psychology Today Magazine noted that there are five elements to what is commonly referred to as "psychological first aid." And this is something that's often administered to victims of natural disasters and is equally applicable to the current pandemic. Now, those five elements are: (1) Help people feel safe, (2) create a sense of calm, (3) help regain a sense of control and self efficacy, (4) feed the need for social connection, and (5) believe in the power of hope. And I have to tell you, Joey, I kind of related to all five of these things right now.

Joey Coleman (15:09):

Oh, amen brother. Yeah. I mean, this is something that everyone needs and I don't think you can experience full feelings of safety if you don't have all of these things. Right?! And so I think there's an opportunity for everyone listening to look at your business and say, are we helping our customers feel safe? Are we creating a sense of calm? Are we helping them to regain a sense of control or self efficacy? You know, what are we doing to help them to feel like they can get a little bit of their power back? How are we feeding their need for social connection? How are we giving them a feeling of hope? You know, this stuff isn't just psychology mumbo jumbo that's meant for a Psych 101 course. These are actionable steps that have been proven time and time again, as it relates to human needs, that if your business isn't specifically addressing these, you're missing a big opportunity. And I think what happened early on in this crisis is a lot of businesses read this as, "tell them you're going to wear a mask and clean things up." It's like, okay, thanks that worked in week one and maybe week two. But as you pointed out, months later, you know, different people have different definitions of safety. Different people are experiencing different levels of calm. Different people want different levels of control and connection. But I think most people, still want hope. And that's where I think every business has the opportunity to make sure they're checking all five of these boxes.

Dan Gingiss (16:38):

Absolutely. And as with anything in customer experience, you have to start with your employees because if your employees don't feel safe, they're not going to be able to provide that safety to your customers. So everything has changed for businesses since March, and we know it can be overwhelming. The good news, I think for those of us focused on customer experience is that there has never been a more important time for CX.

Joey Coleman (17:03):

Never! In the history of customer experience, if you work in customer experience, this is the magical time - right now.

Dan Gingiss (17:11):

So since we can't solve every issue all at once, we believe that starting with the three main trends identified in this segment, which is the move to digital, the move to home delivery, and a focus on safety, that will help us stay ahead of the curve and ensure that we continue to serve our customers during a very difficult time and beyond.

[SEGMENT INTRO - THIS JUST HAPPENED]

Joey Coleman (17:33):

We love telling stories and sharing key insights you can implement, or avoid, based on our experiences. Can you believe that This Just Happened?!

[THIS JUST HAPPENED] A "Sparkling" Birthday Surprise

Dan Gingiss (17:46):

Before everything locked down, my family took our 14 year old son out for his birthday at his choice of a restaurant, and the guy's got good taste, he chose Fleming's Steak House.

Joey Coleman (17:59):

He does have good taste! I'm guessing my invitation might've gotten lost in the mail for that birthday celebration?

Dan Gingiss (18:05):

I think maybe you were on stage that night - that must have been it, yeah, I think you couldn't do it.

Joey Coleman (18:11):

Ladies and gentlemen, did you see how quickly my good partner, and friend, Dan recovered on that? Yeah. Yeah. Blame it, blame it on being on stage with the audience. Okay. That's fair. That's fair.

Dan Gingiss (18:22):

So let me set this up for you. So like I do often, I booked, the restaurant reservation on Open Table, which as you know, is a third party reservation app. And there's a spot in the, in the reservation, where it says, "are you celebrating anything?" And we said, yeah, we're celebrating our son's 14th birthday,

Joey Coleman (18:38):

Which let's be honest, anytime you fill that out, you always wonder, are they going to do anything with that?

Dan Gingiss (18:43):

Exactly.

Joey Coleman (18:43):

I've filled it out plenty of times where they might as well have said, you know, what's your horoscope for today, because it would've been about as impactful on the experience I had. Most restaurants don't seem to pay attention to that field the way they could or should.

Dan Gingiss (18:58):

Exactly. Well we walked in and told them our name, and the guy took one look at us and pretty much figured out who the 14 year old was.

Joey Coleman (19:06):

It's the hair, it was the hair wasn't it?! That was the only way he knew.

Dan Gingiss (19:11):

And the impeccably dressed maitre d reached behind the counter and handed my son a hand signed birthday card. And the outside of it says "Happy Birthday." And the inside says, "Thank you for celebrating with us. Best wishes from your friends at Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar." And then somebody wrote in, "and many more." And I was stunned because...

Joey Coleman (19:34):

You thought to yourself, "not only is this a great birthday, but we're going to talk about this on the show! Ladies and gentlemen, the show writes itself. Dan and I go about our lives and the show writes itself!

Dan Gingiss (19:45):

Exactly. And that's why we keep going and going like the Energizer bunny. So, I mean, I've celebrated a decent number of birthdays at restaurants and, uh, and I have never seen this happen. So he's, uh, he's walking us to the table and he kind of winks at my son and says something like, I can't remember the exact words, but something like, you know, "we're going to have something special for you after you, after your dinner." And it was at that moment, Joey, where I realized we weren't getting a slice of cake and a candle. Right. Because that's what you get at a restaurant.

Joey Coleman (20:16):

Because you don't set that expectation unless you're going to do something special.

Dan Gingiss (20:20):

Yeah. There's nothing wrong with a slice of cake and a candle. It's really nice, but it is certainly not unexpected.

Joey Coleman (20:26):

Nor remarkable.

Dan Gingiss (20:27):

Right. So we had a lovely dinner and after the dinner was over the waiter returned with a plate that had, it's a little hard to describe, but on one half of the plate, the chef had used cocoa powder and obviously a mold of some sort, or stencil, to write "Happy Birthday" in cocoa powder, which was super cool. And on the right side, instead of your typical slice of cake, was a box that had four handmade chocolates, each one in its own little section of the box, and coming out of the top was not a candle, but a sparkler.

Joey Coleman (21:09):
Oh, nice! Let's get the fire extinguishers folks. This is going to be a big one!

Dan Gingiss (21:13):
I'm telling you if that's the only, if it was a slice of cake and a sparkler, I think we would have all been impressed but the waiter explained to us that these are handmade by their pastry chef and you know, and they were amazing. Right?! And it was also a little bit lighter than a big piece of cake and all that.

Joey Coleman (21:33):
You each had a bite, basically, as opposed to seventy bites, which let's be candid, if you've had the pleasure of eating at a nice steakhouse like Fleming's, by the time you get to the dessert, usually there's not enough room left. Right?! You've had your steak, you've had your sides. It's been a filling meal.

Dan Gingiss (21:50):
So what I loved about this was, the presentation was amazing. It is one of these things, you and I talk about being shareable, right? I mean, what do you think my 14 year old son did, even for a guy like you, that's not particularly social media savvy, what do you think he did when this thing came out?

Joey Coleman (22:06):
So given that he's 14, I'm guessing that he snapped it or tick tock'd it or did something where he filmed a little video and put it onto social while he was sitting there.

Dan Gingiss (22:17):
Nice work, Joey! You got the nomenclature down!

Joey Coleman (22:20):
Ladies and gentlemen, he can talk the lingo! Even though I'm not on the platforms - don't come looking for me, I'm not there. I just lurk. It's awkward. It's inconvenient. But I try my best.

Dan Gingiss (22:30):
But yes, he took a picture of it so that he could snap his friends. I took a picture of it because I knew...

Joey Coleman (22:35):
You tweeted!

Dan Gingiss (22:36):
I tweeted and I knew it was gonna make the show. But, uh, I think the lesson here, you know, you and I have talked about birthdays before and you told a great story a couple seasons ago about...

Joey Coleman (22:48):
Do it Rain Man! Do it Rain Man! What episode was it? I know you know

Dan Gingiss (22:51):
Oh - it was Episode 66 in Season Three.

Joey Coleman (22:52):
Yeah, see, ladies and gentlemen, you think we might do this research in advance before we start recording, but we don't. Dan is just a savant, not the idiot part - the savant part, when it comes to knowing our episodes. It's amazing! Yeah. Episode 66 - back when I was at the Gaylord Texan Resort on my birthday. Right? That's the one you're referring to.

Dan Gingiss (23:09):
And the whole thing that was remarkable to you, was that somebody remembered your birthday.

Joey Coleman (23:13):
Somebody who not only remembered my birthday, but they asked for my driver's license and my credit card to confirm, and the receptionist at the Gaylord Texan Resort actually looked at my driver's license, which has my birthday on it, and realized that she was reading the date of my birthday on the actual day of my birthday, and took the extra step to say happy birthday. And then, if you haven't listened to that episode, go back and listen, it's an oldie, but a goodie, they delivered a card that was signed by all the front desk staff and some of the other people in the senior management team to my room later that night along with some little birthday treats. So yeah, we all have birthdays, and yet how many businesses completely miss the opportunity to acknowledge a customer's birthday when they know what the birthday is?

Dan Gingiss (24:03):
Exactly. Exactly. There must be dozens of companies that know our birthday. Every time we've applied for any sort of credit or a credit card, or a mortgage, or whatever it is, they know our birthday.

Joey Coleman (24:15):
All the utility companies, every single utility company knows your birthday. They do nothing with it.

Dan Gingiss (24:20):

So use your customer data to improve the experience. I mean, another example that I remember, one of my favorites was, Episode 50 Season Two, where we talked about Chewie and the best customer service email ever written, that included a reference to the customer's cat's name - Roma. Right? And how, how much that touched her because they remember her cat's name and how personalized that was.

Joey Coleman (24:48):

Yeah. Everybody wants to make this harder than it is. Like let's, let's break it down a little bit, folks. Yes, you need to pay attention to gather the data, but then all you need to do is feed it back to the customer. What do I mean by that? You have to empower your employees to listen to the conversations they're having, to observe their customers in the native habitat, to investigate what's going on with the people who do business with you, to identify some of these key personal markers - a birthday, a pet's name, a favorite hobby, the sports team they root for, their kids' names, where their kids go to school, you know, their favorite place to go on vacation. The thing that you're tracking doesn't matter. It matters that you track it and that you use it. And I think that "using it" is where most businesses fall apart. I mean, we mentioned birthdays, most businesses that have a record of our birthdays Dan, don't actually acknowledge our birthdays. And I don't know about you, it wouldn't take that much to stand out when it comes to acknowledging my birthday, right? They could send a birthday card. They could send a little, they could make a little happy birthday video from their entire team where they just sing happy birthday, not to me personally, but then send that video to me so that you get to see all the people who are working on your account or working on your business. It doesn't have to be the same experience that other brands give. You can do something unique. You can do something special. And it's not that hard to stand out.

Dan Gingiss (26:18):

Absolutely. And that's what gets us back full circle to the birthday cake and the candle. The birthday cake and the candle is a lovely gesture, but it's completely expected. The handmade box of chocolates with the sparkler and the handwritten card? That's unexpected. So it's not about spending more money, it's just about being a little bit different and not doing it the same way everybody does it because you think that's what people want, but actually going the other way, and trying to do something unique so that you are memorable and remarkable.

[PARTNERSHIP WITH AVTEX] Coming Soon - to an Arcade Near You?

Joey Coleman (27:00):

Hey Dan, should we tell them?

Dan Gingiss (27:01):

I don't know... should we...

Joey Coleman (27:02):

Well, it's kind of a secret, but it's kind of a secret, but I kind of want to give them a hint.

Dan Gingiss (27:06):

But they told us to kind of keep quiet about it didn't they?

Joey Coleman (27:10):

I know we're not supposed to be talking about it just yet, but I want to talk about it just yet. Even though it's not here yet. It's coming soon.

Dan Gingiss (27:15):

All right - perhaps a little tease.

Joey Coleman (27:17):

Okay, it's big. I'm excited about it. Are you excited about it?

Dan Gingiss (27:21):

I'm actually super pumped. Joey.

Joey Coleman (27:23):

I'm super excited about it. I haven't been this excited about something probably since, uh, hanging out in the arcade playing Gauntlet.

Dan Gingiss (27:31):

Oh, you mean Galaga right?

Joey Coleman (27:33):

Oh, Galaga too! Gauntlet is a separate game. Galaga? Fabulous. Nice reference. But Gauntlet? Pretty awesome too. Because when you played video games, what did you get?

Dan Gingiss (27:43):

A whole lot of fun? I don't know what the answer to that question.

Joey Coleman (27:46):

Oh my gosh, so great. You did get a whole lot of fun, but you also got points.

Dan Gingiss (27:49):

Ohh! Points...

Joey Coleman (27:52):

Leaderboard. Leaderboard! Who's up?! Who's got the points?! Who's got the high score?! There's going to be a chance for a high score...

Dan Gingiss (27:58):

Joey - what were your initials when you got on the...

Joey Coleman (28:01):

CJC baby? Yeah.

Dan Gingiss (28:02):

Oh, CJC. Yeah. I know this is going to surprise you, mine was CUB.

Joey Coleman (28:07):

Oh, shocker. I love it. I love it. Okay. So here's the thing. We can't talk a lot about it, but here's what we can say. Our amazing friends and partners at Avtex, not only our sponsors of Season Six of the Experience This! Show, which we so love them for being our loyal partners on Experience This. But we've got a new thing coming. It's not here yet. It's coming soon. Not going to tell you when! But it's going to be here before we know it.

Dan Gingiss (28:34):

I'm going to give them one hint, Joey.

Joey Coleman (28:36):

Okay. One hint.

Dan Gingiss (28:36):

I can't help myself.

Joey Coleman (28:38):

Okay.

Dan Gingiss (28:38):

Here's the hint: not only will you get to hear our voices, but you're actually going to get to see our handsome faces.

Joey Coleman (28:48):

Ooo lah lah! Well, at least Dan's handsome face. My face will be on the screen - not as handsome as Dan, but what can you say? It will be an experience and there might be some points. All right, stay tuned. There's more coming.

[SEGMENT INTRO - BOOK REPORT]

Joey Coleman (29:00):

We're excited to give you an overview of an important book you should know about, as well as share some of our favorite passages, as part of our next Book Report.

[BOOK REPORT] Fanocracy by David Meerman Scott and Reiko Scott

Dan Gingiss (29:12):

For our first book report of Season Six, I wanted to highlight a new book called "Fanocracy." And it is written by David Meerman Scott and his daughter Reiko Scott. Now David Meerman Scott is an entrepreneur and keynote speaker and I had a chance to see him at the Inbound Conference and then didn't, I couldn't, because I had some, I think I had a flight delay? And so I missed his presentation. I was really bummed.

Joey Coleman (29:40):

You must not have been flying on Delta! David's a great guy though I gotta tell you. I've had the pleasure of being at the same events David has been at. He's an amazing human being and this is a great book.

Dan Gingiss (29:49):

Yeah. He's a great speaker as well. Because I did get to see him at Social Media Marketing World and he absolutely blew me away. So he's a great speaker. He's written 10 other books. I think he's most famous for a book called "Newsjacking" and also "The New Rules of Marketing and PR" and he actually wrote an entire book of marketing lessons from the Grateful Dead. And you'll hear in a second, when he reads the overview of his book, that he has been to many, many, many Grateful Dead concerts. So he wrote his latest book with his 26 year old daughter Reiko on Fanocracy or how to create raving fans. And I have to tell you the first thing that impressed me about this book, the forward was by none other than Tony Robbins, so you kind of figure like, alright, this is going to be serious here.

Joey Coleman (30:36):

You gotta love that! You got to love... Tony's a great guy and has a great message, and I loved that David's book started out with that. You know, one of the things that I saw that was connected with the book and I actually saw a video of it, which really helped to bring it home, is David went around and he asked the 20 Democratic candidates for president the same question. And the question was this: "Besides your work and your family, what are you a fan of? Now, the reason he asked this, and the reason he says

"besides your work and family" is because most people, when asked, "what are you a fan of?" their default answer is going to have something to do with their work or something to do with their family. But what David was trying to get to is, what are the other things that make you tick? What are the things that make you human? What are the things that make you special? And I say he asked the 20 Democratic candidates. He also says in the video, he went to a rally for Donald Trump. And he was going to ask, President Trump the same question, but the President didn't take any questions, so he wasn't able to ask the question. But he did share video from the Democratic candidates that he asked and a couple of interesting things came out from this. Number one, the variety of answers. Uh, the difference between how some candidates tried to dodge the question, or maybe pivot it back to one of their talking points. But the one that stood out to me was Kamala Harris. And when he asked her this question, first of all, she lit up like a Christmas tree. She was so excited about her answer and started talking about her love of jazz - and particularly listening to her father's albums of Miles Davis and John Coltrane. And he actually shows video footage afterwards of her continuing the conversation with him after the event and it's clear that he's hit a nerve. And what I loved about this is, when we find the thing that someone is truly a fan about, they LOVE to talk about it.

Dan Gingiss (32:29):

Absolutely. And I love the word passion as well, which she clearly showed in this video and which the other respondents talked, used passion, as they were about the thing that they were interested in. And I'm going to give you about 30 seconds to think about this Joey, because I'm going to ask you as well, but for me, the thing about "what am I a fan of" has always been this, I mean if you ask anybody that knew me in high school, the first thing they'll tell you is he's a Chicago Cubs fan. And it was just part of my being and something that also I would light up about every time I'd get to talk about it. And I think it's so important to have that thing that isn't about work, and isn't about family, although you can enjoy sometimes your hobbies with work friends and family friends, but it really is about what other part of your life just gets you going. And so for me, it is the Chicago Cubs. How about for you, Joey?

Joey Coleman (33:24):

You know, what's interesting Dan, as I think about this question, and I want to be clear, I'm not trying to dodge it, the answer has kind of changed over time. You know, when I was growing up, I remember being very, very into space and space exploration. And then when I was in college, I went to the University of Notre Dame, I was very into the Fighting Irish and to the Notre Dame Glee Club who I sang with and I know we've shared on the show before, and we've even had a singing episode on the show, you know, you and I both have that common love of singing. But I think if you were to ask me today, what is the thing I do outside of work and outside of family that I absolutely love it's actually takes me back to something I was a fan of when I was a kid that has kind of been reintroduced to me as an adult via my kids, and that is building with LEGO. I love building with LEGO and I love doing it with my boys, and I'd be lying if I didn't say sometimes daddy works on the set when they're asleep!

Dan Gingiss (34:20):

You put a few pieces together? I love it!

Joey Coleman (34:21):

Just a couple, you know, not so much that they can tell that I advanced the game significantly, but occasionally I enjoy building my own... I don't know what it is... It's, it's the creative nature, it's seeing a finished product in fairly short order, but yeah, it's a fun way for me to have some play in my life, which I think when play and passion meet, it gets really exciting.

Dan Gingiss (34:42):

That's awesome. So as usual, we have asked the author to share with us an overview of the book in his own words. So here is David Meerman Scott talking about his new book with his daughter, Fanocracy.

David Meerman Scott (34:58):

Over the last few years, I noticed that the pendulum has swung too far in the direction of superficial online communications at a time when people are hungry for a true human connection. So I started talking about that with my daughter Reiko - she's now 27 - we started about five years ago having this discussion. And I said, Oh my God, I'm such a Grateful Dead geek! I've been to 75 Grateful Dead concerts, 804 live music concerts in my life. And Reiko said, "I know Daddy, I'm a massive Harry Potter fan." So we got to thinking about how so much online is superficial and it bugs the hell out of people. When you get on an email list and you get a constant set of emails, or someone connects with you on LinkedIn and tries to sell you something, and yet at the same time, we're fans of the things we love. So Reiko and I spent five years researching this idea of "fandom." Our thesis is that fandom is something that any organization or any person can create. The same ideas that build fans of the Grateful Dead and build fans of Harry Potter, can be achieved by any organization. We found examples of all kinds of government agencies, nonprofits, B2B companies, software companies, consumer product brands, doctors, lawyers, dentists that have built fans. In fact, we found a government agency that has over 50 million fans. You can be walking down the street in any city in the world and not be surprised if somebody is walking towards you wearing a t-shirt with a NASA logo. NASA has 50 million fans. There's no question after doing the research, which became our book "Fanocracy: Turning Fans into Customers and Customers into Fans" that my daughter Reiko and I learned that anybody can build fans and in our book we have a prescription for how anyone can do it.

Joey Coleman (37:03):

I love it. You know, when I hear the reference to his daughter's love of Harry Potter, I have to admit my boys are just starting to get into Harry Potter. My boys are seven and four and we're reading the Harry Potter books out loud at night to them. And the idea of someday writing a book with something that my boys love, co-authoring a book with them, is really appealing. The other thing I want to point out is that mention of NASA. I actually had the pleasure of working with NASA on a project years ago and it's actually, when I list out my bio of companies I've worked with, it's one of the ones that the most people react to. And I think he speaks to that, in the sense that they have 50 million fans. If you are associated with NASA, people are excited about that. And so I think what I love about the book and, you know, David highlights this in his overview and it really can be found in the pages of the book, is, when you can connect with people on something that they're a fan of, or their fandom, it creates a different level of connection.

Dan Gingiss (38:06):

Absolutely. And, and we talked about it in the last segment too, about finding that one thing that personalizes the experience for your customers. And often times, that is something that they're a fan of. And it's no surprise that a lot of business gets done on golf courses, for example, right? Because people are fans of golf and they love playing, and it becomes not just a sport, but really a lifestyle, a religion almost. And everybody has one. And once you know it, you have this automatic conversation topic that you can have with them, even if you're not particularly well versed in say jazz, you at least can start a conversation with somebody and you know that you're going to kind of reel them in because you're going to, you're going to see them light up as Kamala Harris did when she was talking about it. So we also like to do something really cool here on the show, which is that we ask our authors to share with us their favorite passage from their book. And then Joey and I are going to share our favorite passages. So here again is David Meerman Scott reading his favorite passage from the book.

David Meerman Scott (39:19):

As we discussed our experiences over many nights across the dinner table, we began to consider the ideas that you will now find in our book. It was a sharp reminder to both of us, that hobbies and passions don't disappear as soon as one is steps into adult or professional life. We both agree that the myth of unyielding professionalism can obscure our genuine connections. That's why we chose to write this book. Exchanging texts about television shows or comic books has gotten daughter, Reiko, through study hours that extended far into nights that would have otherwise felt endless. And father David, has forged deep lifelong friendships with those who are as passionate about live music as he is. To love things outside work is to make meaningful connections with likeminded people. To achieve the success that comes with developing passionate fans of your business, fandom culture is necessary. Yet there's another important reason to understand these ideas as we said earlier. Exposing ourselves to people who share our interests, leads us to live a happier life. And when you can introduce your fandom passions and bring in others who are completely different from you and they become fans, you create an ideal environment - a place where great things happen.

Dan Gingiss (40:44):

So I also selected my favorite passage, which I'd like to read now, and here it is: "The fundamental ingredient for true fandom, meaningful and active human connection, demonstrates a shift in the way a company relates to its customers. A true fanocracy mobilizes people to think, feel, and act together with a helpful, positive force during difficult times." Now I love this for so many reasons. Obviously the human connection part we've said it many, many times on the show, to quote our mutual friend, Bryan Kramer, "It's no longer B2C, or B2B, it's H2H - human to human. And especially during a time where we're all stuck at home, we're craving human interaction. And I love the piece about it being a helpful, positive force during difficult times. As I noted earlier in the show, we're all either part of the problem or were part of the solution. And hopefully out of this difficult time comes some good.

Joey Coleman (41:48):

You know, I think connection is always powerful and all too often, we talk about connection with our customers, but my favorite passage actually dives to the other side of the equation, that is, our employees. And in a chapter called "Develop Employees Who are Fans," David writes, "Passionate employees are excited about you and their work and they are eager to tell others. People who feel trusted and are allowed to make their own decisions, become passionate about their company. Passion can become a habit." I think whenever we are considering customer experience, we need to include employee experience in the same conversation. And as we think about developing fans of our brand, it's important that our employees are fans as well. And I think the way to get into creating a fan-like relationship with your employees is to look at ways you can be fans of the things that they are fans of, and vice versa. And as that connection builds your employee experience builds your customer experience builds, you will have more fans - both internally and externally.

Dan Gingiss (43:00):

So pick up "Fanocracy," the new book by David Meerman Scott and Reiko Scott on Amazon or your favorite bookstore, and while we'll be featuring a number of other awesome books this season, we always want to hear about the books that you're reading as well. So please feel free to drop us a line. Our email addresses are so easy: joeyc [at] joeycoleman.com, dan [at] dangingiss.com. Let us know what you're reading, because maybe it's a book that we haven't gotten to yet, and we'd love to feature it on a future episode.

[SHOW OUTRO]

Joey Coleman (43:36):

Wow. Thanks for joining us for another episode of Experience This!

Dan Gingiss (43:41):

We know there are tons of podcasts to listen to, magazines and books to read, reality TV to watch. We don't take for granted that you've decided to spend some quality time listening to the two of us.

Joey Coleman (43:50):

We hope you enjoyed our discussions and if you do, we'd love to hear about it! Come on over to ExperienceThisShow.com and let us know what segments you enjoyed, what new segments you'd like to hear. This show is all about experience, and we want you to be part of the Experience This! Show.

Dan Gingiss (44:09):

Thanks again for your time and we'll see you next week for more.

Joey Coleman (44:12):

Experience!

Dan Gingiss (44:12):

This!