

# Experience This! Show Podcast

Hosts: Joey Coleman & Dan Gingiss

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## Episode 119 - Using the Power of Nostalgia to Build Customer Connection

Joey Coleman (00:05):  
Welcome to Experience This!

Dan Gingiss (00:08):  
The podcast that celebrates remarkable customer experiences and inspires you to stand out from the competition by wowing your customers.

Joey Coleman (00:17):  
Each episode, we bring you a healthy dose of inspiring stories, funny interactions, and practical takeaways. Marketing and customer experience thought leader, Dan Gingiss...

Dan Gingiss (00:30):  
shares the mic with customer retention and employee experience expert, Joey Coleman, helping you to get people talking about your business.

Joey Coleman (00:40):  
So get ready, because it's time to Experience This!

Joey Coleman (00:49):  
Get ready, for another episode of the Experience This! Show.

Dan Gingiss (00:54):  
Join us as we discuss: why your branding may spoil the experience, how to use nostalgia in unexpected ways, and what your culture says about your customer experience.

Joey Coleman (01:07):  
Packaging, Listening, and Interviewing - Oh my!

Joey Coleman (01:13):  
We love telling stories and sharing key insights you can implement or avoid based on our experiences. Can you believe that This Just Happened?!

Joey Coleman (01:28):  
Welcome back to Season Seven. Woo! We are so excited to be here with you. You know, who would have thunk back when we started out with Episode 1 that we would be coming to you in Episode 119 seven seasons later?! We are so pumped and excited for this season. We've got some new segments, we've got plenty of new stories, some new features for you to get more involved with the show. Woo! Lot to cover, but we're going to get to that... Before we get started though, Dan, how was your holiday break brother?

Dan Gingiss (01:59):  
Well, thanks for asking Joey and great to hear your voice again. It's been a while since I've heard that melodic voice and great holiday season, as you may or may not know my birthday is on Christmas as well. So all the fun we had a great time and, you know, during the break, you and I also got to chat with our brand new partner for this season, Solvvy - The Next Generation Chatbot... And I'm really excited about this because I'll be honest, I started off as a skeptic on chatbots and having talked with Solvvy, I'm now much more excited about chat bots because I understand them better and I understand what they can and can't do. And that's some of what we're going to share with you, the audience during the season. And I think what will be a really cool segment,

Joey Coleman (02:49):  
Absolutely super excited for these Solvvy conversations. You know, my holiday was a lot of fun as well. We're settling in here in our new house in Iowa, which I'll be honest is a bit snow year and a good bit colder than it wasn't Colorado, but we had a great Christmas with less people than usual. Like I'm sure with a lot of our listeners had that same experience.

Yay, thanks COVID! But still had a lovely time. Although I must confess Dan, I had a bit of a customer experience snafu and I wanted to start things off on the show talking about it today.

Dan Gingiss (03:22):

Oh boy. So not everything was a holly jolly Christmas.

Joey Coleman (03:26):

No, no, it was not. And uh, to be honest, this is something we've talked about before on the show, but this time, this scenario showed up in a different way. So let me explain my incredible wife, Berit loves gifts and presents. If you were to look at the book, The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman and put her through the test, which we've done many a times, both. She and I have taken that test. She scores 12 out of 12 on gifts and presents. So I tried to surprise her with gifts and presents whenever I get the chance. And she's very health conscious and we're here in the Midwest now, and we've talked about farming and we have a family farm and I decided to order her an indoor lettuce farm. So it's basically a vertical garden with grow lights that lets you grow more produce at home, which is better for the environment. It helps keep our family healthy too. And I was super excited about this gift and really wanted to surprise her because she loves surprises, especially when it comes to Christmas, but I'd never ordered for this company before and kind of didn't know what to expect, but I signed up to receive the delivery alerts so I could make sure to sneak the box into the house. Cause I knew it was going to be a big box before she saw it.

Dan Gingiss (04:41):

Oh, I think I know where this is going,

Joey Coleman (04:44):

Dan. I think you may be correct. Well, here's the scoop. So we're coming up towards Christmas. We're about two weeks out. I receive a message that the package was scheduled to be delivered on a Friday. I'm feeling good. We're going to have plenty of time to wrap for Christmas, but on Wednesday morning, keep in mind. It's supposed to be delivered on Friday. I come out to the kitchen to find Berit with kind of a guilty look on her face. Let me guess she had seen the present. Dan, not only had she seen the present, but the company who shall remain nameless here because it's not really there. Now it's debatable as to whether they're to blame for this, but I just hope people will think differently after listening this segment - the company had written their name in huge letters all over all three of the large boxes and it was painfully obvious that this was a home-based lettuce growing kit, given the branding.

Dan Gingiss (05:42):

I have to laugh twice. I think I've laughed. Actually. Number one is I I'm still back at the whole concept of a lettuce farm, which I think is outstanding. But if you asked me, "Hey Dan, take a guess what we're going to talk about in the first episode of 2021 it's not what it's not going to be. What I came up with

Joey Coleman (05:59):

And knowing you're a big produce guy, Dan, I got to say you can grow more than lettuce. Okay. But let's just say lettuce was the intention, the brand, there were some challenges.

Dan Gingiss (06:10):

All right, got you. Yep. And the other thing though that I was laughing about was you actually had the opposite experience a few years ago, I believe with a LEGO box.

Joey Coleman (06:19):

Yes, exactly. I regularly order from Lego and they go out of their way to ship their boxes blind - that is they ship them without any branding or labeling. Even the return address is impossible to decipher because they know that their products are often given as gifts.

Dan Gingiss (06:37):

I think that was Episode 56 of Season Three.

Joey Coleman (06:42):

Our loyal listeners will continue to be impressed with your rain man, esque knowledge of our back catalog of episodes. Dan, I guarantee. But yes, the fact that LEGO shipped the boxes blind way back in season three. And by the way, they still do it today because LEGO was another package that arrived at our house this Christmas and was a big hit. It shows that LEGO has thought through the trade-offs between promoting their brand and ruining the surprise when the package is delivered. Something that I wish this in-house, indoor, vertical farm would have done.

Dan Gingiss (07:16):

You know, I think this is interesting because I'm not so sure that the branding on the boxes does a whole lot. I mean, if you think about it, depending on the community that you live in, it might be sitting at someone's doorstep that, you

know, if you have any length of a driveway at all, you can't see from the street. And so unless you're trying to convince the mailman or mailwoman to, to purchase from your company, like, I don't think this is one of these cases where millions of people are seeing it. Now

Joey Coleman (07:45):

It's all about getting ups and FedEx drivers to buy more of your product!

Dan Gingiss (07:49):

It could be, I mean, I'm thinking two things, one, obviously the ubiquitous Amazon box, which you see a thousand times a day and almost any neighborhood, you know, that might be an exception. But I also, I wonder whether you know this, Joey, do you know that for years you were not allowed to have any branding on anything on any box shipped through the postal service. And that actually has changed. I have a feeling that Amazon ended up changing that, but for a while, if you, even, if you tried to reuse the box, for example, you had to cover up all the branding because the advertising wasn't allowed.

Joey Coleman (08:22):

Well, I don't exactly remember that whether it was allowed or not, I'll defer to your expertise on this Dan. But I do agree with you that there's kind of this healthy mix. And I know for example, Apple intentionally doesn't say Apple on the box because they don't want people stealing the boxes. Right? So I, and I also get that there's this fine line between if your packaging also shows up in a retail environment, you might want to have a boxed in a certain way because it's going to sit in a store and be visible. And it kind of almost becomes an in-store advertisement. But this company to my knowledge only sells online. And I just, I, you know, I'll admit I was a little bit bummed that the surprise was given up. Not because of me, but because of the packaging of the box. So what could this company have done differently? Well, I'm not saying that branding, your packaging is bad. In fact, when done properly, it's a great way to market and promote your offerings. However, if you think there is a chance that someone might purchase your product as a gift, especially around the holiday season, it would be a great experience to let purchasers choose their delivery packaging. Or if that's too logistically complicated, at least let them know that the package will be arriving with lots of external branding so they can prepare themselves accordingly. You don't want to be the brand that ruined Christmas. And there is nothing worse than creating a bad brand experience before the customers even opened the box.

Joey Coleman (09:57):

Just because you have required elements of your business doesn't mean they need to be, Oh, it's time to get creative, have some fun and make people sit up and take notice. Get your customers talking when you Make The Required Remarkable.

Joey Coleman (10:17):

I saw an interesting post on Medium recently from Tom Whitwell called "52 things I learned in 2020." Tom is a managing consultant at Flux in London. And he shared a fascinating list of learnings, including one in particular that stood out to me. Number three on his list, "the hold music you hear when you phone Octopus Energy is personalized to your customer account. It's a number one record from the year you were 14.

Dan Gingiss (10:44):

Well, first of all, octopus energy could be the best name of any energy company I've ever heard.

Joey Coleman (10:49):

It's an awesome name!

Dan Gingiss (10:50):

but I love the concept of personalized hold music. I mean, we did talk about hold music way back in Season One, Episode 6, when we talked about that one impressed even me, ladies, I'm going to double down and say that we also talked about hold music on our other show, Experience Points - the game show - and Scott McCain was our guests that day. And, uh, we, we showed a couple of different, uh, hold music, examples, but nothing personalized to the year that you were 14 years old.

Joey Coleman (11:22):

This one feels really special. So when I first saw this, I had to learn more. So I checked out the octopus energy website and found some cheeky messaging. And I say cheeky, because they're over in London that matched their creative hold music. Now this is how their about us page reads on the website. And I quote, "We're doing energy better for you and for the environment. The energy industry in Britain is ruled by a handful of complacent, dinosaurs, peddling, fossil fuels, pricing, trickery, and poor customer service. In 2016, octopus entered the market to disrupt the status quo with energy that's good for the planet, good for your wallet, and honestly, good for your soul. Since then, we've been picking up 30,000 customers a month on average, and now supply energy to 1.5 million UK homes and counting. To this day, 92% of our customers rate us as "five stars excellent" on Trustpilot. And we're the only supplier to be recommended by

consumer champion, which year after year, after a year, after a year.

Dan Gingiss (12:30):

Okay. Now I get the octopus joke because dinosaurs!

Joey Coleman (12:35):

There's a lot of fun and games going on.

Dan Gingiss (12:39):

It's outstanding! Gosh, where to start. You know, also I just love communication. I love words and how we talk to customers. And I do believe that every chance we have to communicate with customers in any channel is an opportunity to create an experience. That's why we have this whole segment called Required Remarkable because so much of our communication is required and we don't have to just make it boring. We can make it really interesting. And it seems like a, as they're saying that what they're doing is working because their customers love them. And let's recall people, this is an energy company.

Joey Coleman (13:16):

Yeah. That's the thing. This is an energy company and 92% of their customers rate them as five stars. Like we could just stop right there. I got to tell you, Dan, I wanted to become a customer of Octopus Energy and figure out how to make that happen - even though they're based in the UK, because I was so intrigued by this! Well, and then I tracked down this specific page on their website that talks about their hold music and I quote, shut up and hold me at octopus energy, everything we make starts with the customer. So what does that mean for hold music? Well, if we have your birth date on file, we'll play the song. That was number one when you were 14 years old. Keen to know what your octopus jam is? Just select your birth year below and we'll let you know, and then you can type in your birth year and it tells you what the song would be. And I love this and think it's a beautiful example of creating a required remarkable strategy that takes advantage of a nostalgia trend play.

Dan Gingiss (14:14):

Do go on Joey - say more about that...

Joey Coleman (14:17):

Well, I think, you know, as you mentioned earlier, Dan, we talk about this idea that there are required elements of your business, that you have the chance to make remarkable yet most businesses don't do that. We've also talked about in previous episodes, uh, this whole idea of a nostalgia play, especially for folks who are over 30 and as you get older, the numbers that desire for nostalgia increases even more that if you can reach back and grab something from the past and bring it to the present, it gives us warm, fuzzy feelings inside. And I don't know about you, but at about 14 music really started to play a different role in my life than it had before. And this idea of anchoring into some key songs that were right at that transitional period in life, I think is a great way to take customers of any age and bring them back to some really positive feelings around music.

Dan Gingiss (15:13):

Agreed and nostalgia, I think always plays it's, it's personalized in and of itself. We obviously all feel nostalgic about different things, but music is something that brings people together and, you know, the 14, I'm sure some report told them that 14 was the ideal year, but I think you're right, that you know, that somewhere in your teenage years is where you really start connecting with music. And, and you remember those, those songs and, you know, Joey, I couldn't help, but notice that you and I have the same birth year. We do. We do. I'm born at the beginning of the year. You're a little youngster, you're born more towards the end of the year, but I think it'd be, uh, I wonder if any of our listeners could guess given that you and I were born in 1973, what the number one song was when we were 14?

Mystery Singer (16:05):

Never gonna give you up, never gonna let you down, never gonna run around and desert you!

Joey Coleman (16:14):

Oh goodness. How about that? Who would have thought that two jokers like us would get to have the number one song when we were 14, be the song that is infamous on the internet?!

Dan Gingiss (16:25):

Fantastic. Love it. And it certainly that that song gets me home in every time and singing out loud. So I, I think it would work if I were waiting on, hold on. I also love the fact that I just want to go back to the fact that you said the website started with "Shut up and hold me!" And you know, I mean, I said before about the "I'm On Hold" song, my first experience ever with that song, I literally felt like I didn't want the conference call to start because I wanted to hear the end of the song and think about how different that is from the feeling you normally have when you're on hold. And so, yeah, obviously ideally, no one would be on hold ever. But given that, that does seem to be a fact of life playing a song

that, you know, the person's going to be rocking out to is a great idea.

Joey Coleman (17:15):

Absolutely. You know, friends auditing your customer touchpoints and looking for ways to enhance them is always a good idea, but it seems particularly timely at the beginning of a new year. You can get some fast wins. You can instill a sense of creativity and really start things off on the right foot or the right note as one might decide. So take some inspiration from the fine folks at Octopus Energy and go find ways to make the required elements of your business more remarkable.

Joey Coleman (17:50):

Almost everyone has interacted with chatbots, but all too often, it's been a bad experience. In MythBusters - presented by Solvvy - we explore a common myth about CX chatbots and see how the right technology can create a positive experience, every time.

Joey Coleman (18:17):

Today's myth about chatbots? Chatbots aren't smart. Have you ever had the chance to ask a chat bot, something that you think is a very simple question and you get a response like I don't understand or try asking again, that's my chatbot robot voice, by the way, this is not only frustrating, but it leaves me feeling like I'm wasting my time. And as a result, I ended up desperately seeking a human.

Dan Gingiss (18:42):

Now while there is a myth that chatbots aren't smart. The reality is that modern chatbots are intelligent. Chatbots are now using N L P - an abbreviation for natural language processing, which also allows a chat bot to interpret a customer question along with the intent behind it, regardless of how it's expressed in a chat.

Joey Coleman (19:05):

For example, you might not have received a package that you were expecting, maybe something special you ordered for Christmas. If you were to type in, I haven't received my package yet, or even more specifically, my indoor lettuce farm is missing modern chatbots like Solvvy interpret the intention you have to track or locate your package. The chatbot then guides the customer to the right place to do this. Fast resolution, a happy customer, no support ticket necessary!

Dan Gingiss (19:34):

Now that sounds like a much better customer experience. It is about time that the technology started to understand what I want. Even if I don't say it as clearly as I could. We'll learn more about advances in chat bot and support automation throughout the season.

Joey Coleman (19:50):

That's another myth busted. Thanks to our friends at Solvvy - the NextGen chatbot.

Joey Coleman (20:00):

Have you ever found yourself saying, "I wonder what Dan and Joey would think about this situation?" Well, guess what? Now you can know, just tag us on social or message us through our website with a customer experience, scenario, a question or anything else you're curious about, and you'll get to hear our answers. When you Ask Us Anything.

Joey Coleman (20:27):

We are super excited to introduce a brand new segment this season here in season seven, doing things, new friends called ask us anything.

Dan Gingiss (20:37):

Similar to the famous, ask me anything - or AMA - that started on Reddit in the ask us anything segment of our show. Listeners submit a scenario, question, or topic for Joey and me to discuss, but the topics will all be customer experience related.

Joey Coleman (20:54):

Now, part of the credit for this segment goes to Tony Amante Schepers - the Director of Operations, Customer Success, and Customer Experience at OYO USA. Tony recently wrote an article on LinkedIn about the importance of sharing your company culture as part of your interview process. And he tagged Dan and me to get our thoughts on the subject. Now let's be honest. Tony's a great guy. We appreciate him and tagging us always good to tag Dan. First on the socialist friends, he's the social media expert gets stuff out there on the socials for Dan, if you want to tag me as well, that's fine too. But long story short, we saw the article and we thought this would be a fun way to have a new segment on the show.

Dan Gingiss (21:36):

Agreed. So it worked Tony! Let's give you a brief overview of his article. It was called "Four steps to sharing company culture during the interview process and why you need to." In the article, Tony shares research that the number one reason, someone stays with an employer is culture. And the number one reason, someone leaves an employer is culture. He goes on to define company culture as quote the day-to-day way things get done, how coworkers communicate with each other, how they communicate to the client, how often leadership mingles with, and if they listen to those lower on the totem pole, the frequency in which wins are shared and celebrated company-wide. And the way in which losses are treated as learning moments, not slaps on the hand," unquote.

Joey Coleman (22:26):

Tony notes that while there is certainly a lot of churn in the marketplace, when it comes to employment right now, quote, "What will keep an employee present once the pandemic and lockdown ends is the employer valuing the hire from day one." And by "day one," what Tony means is from the start of the interview process, he believes that quote it's vital to show how company culture operates, how a business communicates internally to accomplish daily tasks.

Dan Gingiss (22:55):

Tony outlines the four steps to sharing company culture as follows: (1) Get an internal pulse check by surveying employees about how they rate internal communication and then sharing that broadly across the organization and with new hires. (2) Try out new modes of communication videos, social media, et cetera, show the world, the business and the faces behind it.

Joey Coleman (23:20):

Number three, conduct a culture fit interview, giving job candidates, a brief personality test to see if their approach to problem solving will be a good fit for your company culture. And number four, share how teams talk be transparent in the interview process about how employees use things like Slack, Microsoft Teams, email voicemails, happy hours, all hands meetings, et cetera. So now that laid the foundation of Tony's hypothesis, that culture really matters and that you should show that as part of the interview process, what do you think about this Dan?

Dan Gingiss (23:56):

I love the idea because the culture is one of the things that's really hard to suss out as an interviewee, right? If you think about it, you're going in, you're talking to people, their job is essentially to say nice things about the company. And so if you're doing your research, you're probably looking at sites like glass door, or you're calling somebody who used to work there, or what have you to get the real scoop because the front that companies put on is, you know, might as well be put out by the PR department with no offense to PR departments, because it is always so positive. Right? And then you get there and it's like, Oh, well, you know, you didn't tell me this part. I'll give you a real life example from my career Joey. I know, you know, this one is I signed on to be the head of global social media at McDonald's and it was not until my first day of work that I learned that in McDonald's culture, the United States is not part of global. That might've been something...

Joey Coleman (24:58):

Such a mind opening experience!

Dan Gingiss (25:00):

Yeah. I mean, I, it might've been something that would have been cool to discuss in the interview. It never came up. I didn't know that the company was divided into domestic and global and that global meant everything, but the U S but man, that was a real eye opener on day one. And I think that, you know, the cultural things, like, I mean, he mentioned Slack. For example, I was at a company, a late stage startup was my first ever exposure to Slack. I fell in love with it. I loved it. My emails were much, I got much fewer emails during the day. It was a great way to communicate. But man, if you've never used it before, that might be something that's scary or

Joey Coleman (25:42):

Or if you have you used it like I have and you didn't like it... If I found out after I got on the job, that it was a Slack shop that everybody was using Slack, no offense to the great team at Slack and what they've built. I would not be super happy about that because it's like, Oh, on top of fitting in, I need to fit in, in the way that you're fitting in with the technology tools. And that was the one I really liked. You know, I liked all the examples that Tony gave, but that one in particular I thought was a great way to give people exposure. Like maybe let them see, not only that you use Slack, but what are some of the chats? What are the things that people are saying? I think channels is the phrase that they use in Slack, you know, invite them to your happy hour, invite your interviewees, to come to your happy hour and see are these the kinds of people we want to hang out with.

Dan Gingiss (26:32):

So, by the way, we have a very, the old segment we have not used in a really long time. It might even be in retirement. We're going to have to pull it out. It's called "Agree to Disagree!"

Joey Coleman (26:43):  
Aww - bringing us back!

Dan Gingiss (26:43):  
We're going to have one about Slack, Joey, because I love Slack. I love it. Yeah. And I think we should have that conversation. So that'll be a future episode. Thank you, Tony. You are just continuing to contribute to our show. But you're right. The happy hours, the meetings, even what people, how, how people dress. What's appropriate and not in terms of, you know, a lot in startup culture, there's things like ping pong tables and, and snacks and all that sort of thing. And you get used to some of that stuff, but then it's also, you know, you switched to a more traditional company and that stuff all goes away or things like open seating that's become that, that pre COVID was becoming so popular. That is something personally that I never particularly enjoyed. I always liked having my own space where I can put a picture frame and you know, my coffee mug and stuff like that. And, and having to just show up and pick a cube every day was very unnerving to me. So I do think those are all things that are very relevant to culture. And then obviously what's not being said here is that when employees are happy, when they like the culture, when they enjoy going to work every day, that then gets projected onto the customers and customers can see when employees like where they're working. I mean, I always like to give the example of when you walk into a fast food restaurant and a, and that person behind the counter, it looks like you're interrupting their otherwise pleasant day by wanting to place an order.

Joey Coleman (28:12):  
Yeah - "sorry for interrupting you!"

Dan Gingiss (28:15):  
Yeah. That gives you a good sense for what it's like to work at that company.

Joey Coleman (28:18):  
Absolutely. And I think the parallel, some people might be listening to this saying, well, wait a second guys, how does this connect to customer experience? Well, and as we talk about a lot on the show customer experience and employee experience are two sides of the same coin. I think when you think about the culture of your organization, that absolutely spills into your customer interactions, and you want to make sure that a new employee is going to get the fit. They're going to want to understand how you communicate. I mean, go back to the earlier conversation we had in this episode about Octopus Energy. If you're a buttoned up straight laced, you know, traditional, conservative, corporate business person, you're probably not going to fit in well at a place like Octopus Energy. That's my guess, just based on the language they use on their website. So I think at the end of the day, there's a real opportunity to preview what it's going to be like to be an employee as much as possible. Because if we can get folks to understand before they start the job, what the job is really going to be like, there's a much higher likelihood that it's going to be successful for everyone, not only the employee, but for the folks that are inviting this new employee in.

Dan Gingiss (29:33):  
If you'd like to submit a question, a topic, or a theory about customer experience that you'd like us to discuss as part of our next, ask us anything segment it's pretty easy. You could just tag us on social media like Tony did or visit ExperienceThisShow.com, go to the contact page and send us a little message with your question. And Hey Tony, we're going to send you a package of surprise and delight for asking our first question and well, we might do it for the second, third, fourth, fifth, and 20th questions too. We look forward to answering more of your questions throughout this season.

Joey Coleman (30:11):  
Thanks for joining us for another episode of Experience This! You are the best listener ever!

Dan Gingiss (30:17):  
And since you listened to the whole show...

Joey Coleman (30:19):  
Yay you!

Dan Gingiss (30:21):  
We're curious... Was there a specific part of this episode that you enjoyed the most? If so, it would mean the world to us if you could share it with a coworker, a friend, or someone that just loves listening to podcasts!

Joey Coleman (30:31):  
And while you're in the sharing mood, if you felt inclined to jump over to iTunes or wherever you find your podcasts and write us a review, we would so appreciate it. And when you do, don't forget to let us know as we might have a little surprise for you!

Dan Gingiss (30:47):  
Thanks again for your time and we'll see you next week for more...

Joey Coleman (30:49):  
Experience!

Dan Gingiss (30:51):  
This!