

PERSONALITY

PERSONAL BRANDING MAGAZINE

THE BRAND LOYALTY EDITION
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DECEMBER 2021

GET AUTHENTIC "AF"

HEAR FROM PHYLLIS STRAWDER ON HOW TO BUILD A STRONG BRAND BY BEING 100% YOURSELF

REAL AND RELATABLE

KRYSTA G DISHES ON HOW SHE GREW HER MEGA FANBASE OF LOYAL FOLLOWERS

THE DIGITAL
ENTREPRENEUR'S
CHRISTMAS
WISHLIST

5 SMALL TECH
CHANGES TO
ELEVATE
YOUR
CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE



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Editor's Note

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

We're at the close of another roller coaster year. Is it ok to add one year in a Covid 19 world as work experience? If you ask me, making it through another year of masks, sanitizers, and restrictions is an accomplishment in and of itself. It certainly has forced all of us to look at how we reach our audiences in even more creative ways. As we move into 2022, there are even more changes over the horizon.

I recently made a decision to change JBannister Branding's focus on working with beauty and self-care brands. As a trained Make Up Artist I have always treated my love for beauty as something totally separate from branding and corporate work. It took a pandemic for me to see just how many beauty businesses need branding and guidance on getting back on their feet. This will inevitably affect Personality in the future, so keep an eye out for that.

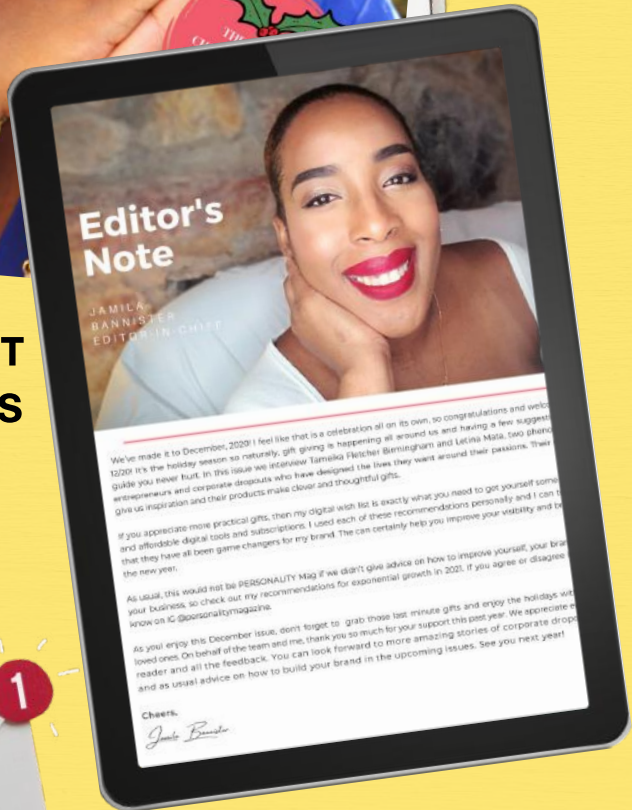
In this issue we take a deep dive into brand loyalty. We chat with Krysta G. make up artists and influencer to hear about how her vulnerability has helped her amass a following of over 110,000 loyal fans. We also chat with Ghetto Country Brandmother, Phyllis Strawder and learn how she gets authentic AF and teaches her clients to do the same.

As usual we share our entrepreneurs' Christmas wish list with you. This year's list is inspired by the theme of this issue, brand loyalty. We give our best recommendations on tools to help you drive delightful customer experiences, because this is where loyalty begins. We hope that you enjoy this issue and that you safe and happy holiday and new year.

Enjoy

Jamila Bannister





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5

SMALL TECH CHANGES TO ELEVATE YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Written by:
Jamila Bannister

Recently I made the decision to start focusing my brand strategy skills on the beauty industry. As I got started, I began reaching out to beauty brands through their social media accounts. While I got through to some businesses, it was surprisingly difficult to access several others. With many of them instructing you to “DM for orders” it got me thinking about two things. The first was: how exactly are customers reaching to these businesses to buy when they don’t answer the phones, respond to emails or respond to direct messages days after the fact? The second thing I thought about was how much brand loyalty is tied to positive customer experiences, which most times is initiated on social media. We all know what they say about first impressions. Our brand loyalty issue could not come at a better time. If you own a small business, keep reading because I’m recommending my top tools and tips to improve your communication. Tactics to ensure every brand touch point brings a delightful experience to the people behind those inbound requests.

Did you check your email today?

If you have no other communication channel listed on your social media accounts, be sure to list an email address. Not just any email address, but one that’s functional, that’s synced to your phone and that you check regularly. Email is a universal communication touchpoint for business

Even as an outbound from of communication, email is one of the most essential communication channels in your business. It’s especially great in the Caribbean because the email marketing space is very underutilised. Think about it: can you list 10 Caribbean brands who email you daily or weekly? I can count on one hand the number of Caribbean based businesses who email me regularly compared to daily emails I receive from brands in the United States U. K or Canada. As much as your people want you to respond they want to hear from you as well, so ensure they can do that.

What’s your “link in bio”?

On most social media platforms, we’re subject to the “one link”. By that I mean, a single link in your bio that can lead to a website of your choice. But think about it, between your social media, your WhatsApp contact, your website or landing page, a single link just isn’t enough.

This is why link aggregators like Linktree and Flowpage are becoming increasingly important. It's smart to give your potential buyers or partners options for reaching out to you. As a small business owner, I understand that you are the chief cook and bottle washer and you may not see every single message that comes through or can attend to those messages immediately; but the person on the other side may not know this. All they want is to buy a product or to get in touch. Give people options so they don't feel hopeless when trying to get in touch if they don't hear from you in one place.

What about using automation?

If you haven't been using automation to help you manage all the incoming questions and queries, you are sleeping on a tool that can make your life a lot easier. Whether it's a specialised chatbot like ManyChat or the native auto responses on Facebook or Whatsapp messenger, wherever you're telling people to contact you, set up auto responses to help with your communication. People don't want to be given the silent treatment. They want to know that they have been seen, heard and most of all they want their products.

Where is your website?

If you have been in business for more than 2 years, I think it's fair to say, you need to get your website up and running. At this point, you should have a fair idea of the people you serve, the focus of the business and you should know your brand story, brand voice and know the vision for your business. If you don't yet know, we should talk...but I digress. Apart from being a major brand touchpoint, the purpose of a website is for your audience to get to know you, learn how you can solve their problems and most of all, learn how to get in touch. If you sell physical products, it is probably also your storefront. A website can single handedly solve four big challenges for you, especially as a small business owner.

Can't afford a website yet? No problem, get yourself a landing page. Sign up for a free account with [AWeber](#) and get your email marketing and landing page all in one. Customers don't care that it's not a full website, they just need some reliable way to reach you. Remember, good communication and great customer experience is the gateway to brand loyalty. A business that lives for the long term understands this and prioritises their customers' experience.

GIVE PEOPLE OPTIONS SO THEY DON'T FEEL HOPELESS WHEN TRYING TO GET IN TOUCH AND THEY DON'T HEAR FROM YOU IN ONE PLACE.

Can I book an appointment?

I've always loved a good diary, there is something about writing things down that helps information stick in my head. However, I know it's not practical to stop every hour to take calls and write down appointments and fortunately you don't have to. Technology has given us so many options to help us accept and manage appointments. This is especially important if you have a service business like a hair salon or nail salon where every appointment is potential income.

You want to have an easy system where potential clients can engage your business without you being present at every step. Tools like Calendly, Acuity or even TidyCal, which you can get a lifetime deal on over on App Sumo, are all great options.

Best of all, you will completely elevate the customer experience from the beginning of your service delivery. It's a small change that can produce big results. A calendar also gives you the opportunity to manage your time. You can balance your client work, your business operations, and your personal time. A balance which more entrepreneurs need.

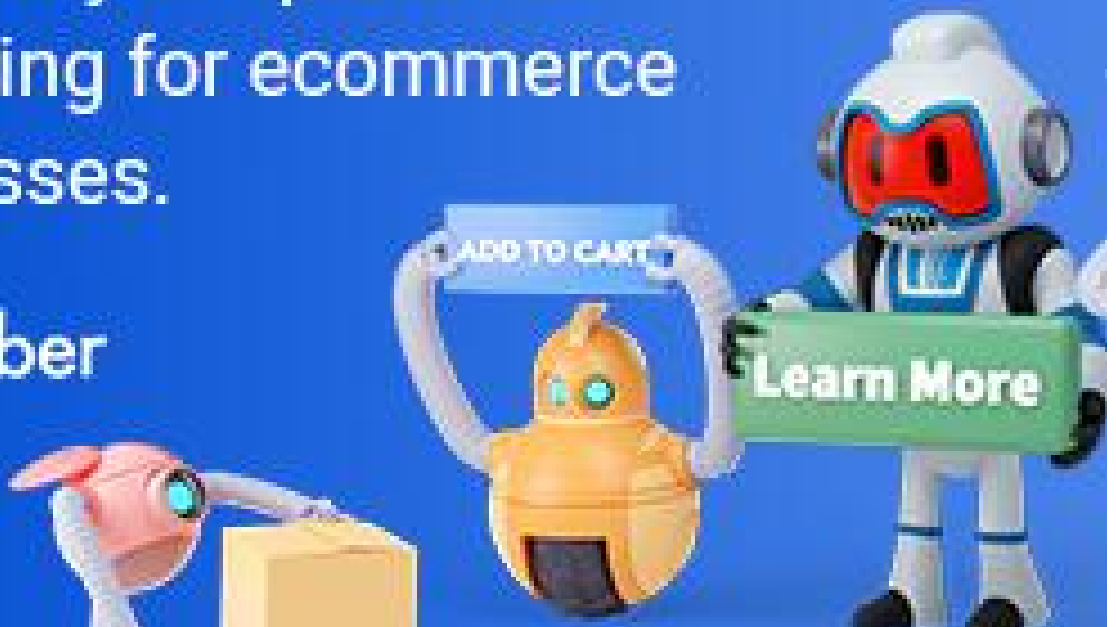
At the heart of branding is communication. Whether it's tone, personality, words, visuals or even silence you are sending a message. Customers walk away with a feeling and a perception when they engage your brand.

Your touch points could be the start of anything you want, and you get to control exactly what that will be. Loyalty begins with great experiences. It's easier to forgive a brand that was good to you but messed up, than it is for you to recover from a poor first-time encounter. You have the chance to set the tone from first touch, so make it count.

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Written by:
Maria Ransome

KEEPING UP WITH KRYSTA G

BRANDING MADE *Real & Relatable*

Krysta G is a makeup artist, influencer, and entrepreneur. Her life is just like anyone else's with one little exception. She has a collective following of 110,000 persons on her social media and thousands of people watching her daily.

When she joined Facebook in 2009, she didn't expect this to happen. As a new makeup artist all Krysta intended to do was hop onto a platform where she could freely share her progress with makeup.

Now thousands tune in to "Keeping up with Krysta ". What makes Krysta G different than anyone else?

Besides her inbox being flooded with over 500-1000 messages a day, in a world where social media is dominated by this illusion of effortless perfection, Krysta G is Real, Relatable and Vulnerable.

I sat down with Krysta to understand the impact her vulnerability and transparency has had on her and her brand.

The Power in Being Your Vulnerable Self

“People just got invested in me, almost more so than the makeup”, Krysta says with a hint of gratitude in her voice as she reflects her social media journey. She looks at me now, through her camera without a touch of makeup, beautiful and barefaced.

When you stay true to yourself life has a way of putting you exactly where you are meant to be. Krysta has always been interested in a million things and while she was getting her degree in Media and Communications makeup was her latest hobby. In fact makeup is what started her relationship with social media one that was meant to be strictly business.

“PEOPLE JUST GOT
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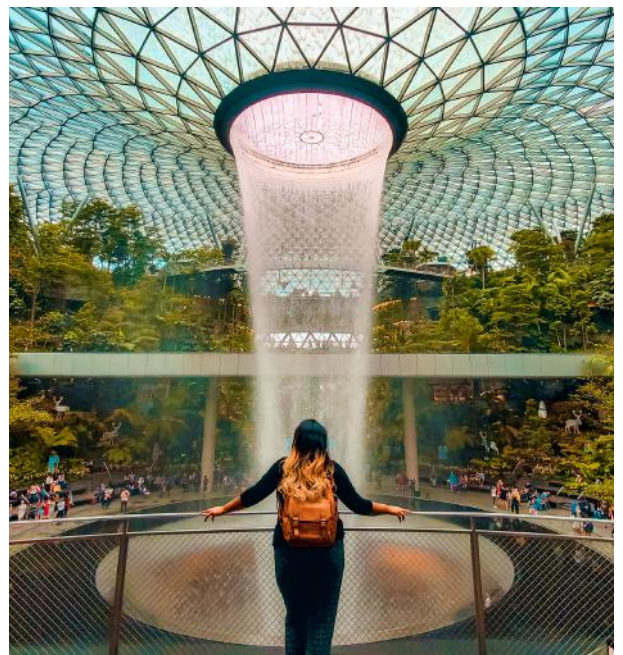
She started early in the game when social media was still evolving and platforms were making various changes. Her favourite platform to date is Instagram, which she joined in 2014 and ironically she thought would not last. It felt like a fad similar to the Vine or BBM phase. She had already built a bit of a following with her makeup but when Instagram stories emerged, one poll changed the way she delivered her content. “I did a poll asking if people cared about my life and it was an overwhelming *“Yes we want to see your life!”*”

Two thoughts juggled in her mind. “1) It could be to ‘maco’ or 2) They genuinely like me. Who knows, let’s see how this goes”, she says.

Krysta was willing to put her life on display despite what people might think. A true test of vulnerability. She is known for not holding back her opinion especially when it comes to products she’s spent money on and doesn’t shy from discussing real topics, like stigmas around home ownership and renting.

A few Instagram stories later, Krysta was no longer just a makeup artist. She was a home décor enthusiast, a food lover, a person dedicated to finding the perfect vacuum or that girl who is passionate about a mopping solution.

Watching Krysta feels like watching a friend. People saw the many dimensions that made Krysta the person she is, and they liked it. “I have a lot of my followers tell me they specifically come on Instagram not to see any other story but to see mine, everyday. I feel very honoured that people actually look forward to hear from me. I feel a little bit like a reality show but that’s okay.” she says.



Building a Connection with her Followers.

Krysta's biggest following is on Facebook, and she is quickly growing on Tik Tok but Instagram is where she feels safest. Instagram allowed her to connect with the followers that mattered most to her, those that really cared about her content.

"On Facebook, how they curate your content- if you follow me on my page and you comment on my post, all your friends who do not follow me will see my post and your comment. They may not be interested in what I have to put out there and they may say "Oh God boy, she annoying" because my content is not for them." She says. " But on Instagram, you have to follow me to see my content, I mean my profile is open but you have to come and specifically look for me to find it and I think because of that, it curates my audience to those who relate to me and appreciate what I put out."

'She's learned that it is not a numbers game and it's not about vanity metrics but about using the platforms to connect with the people who really understand and care about you and your brand. "I think at first I was always about the numbers and how to get more followers." admits Krysta. "Let me do a giveaway to get more followers and things like that and now I do giveaways to appreciate my followers. It is such a different mindset I have towards people." I wanted a bunch of people who could trust me the way that I could put myself out there and trust them."

As her platforms grew, so did her career in makeup. Many may not know that she did a lot

of free work when she first started. "Any exposure that I could have gotten, I took it. It was long and hard and a lot of it was for free but it paid off in the end," she says. She went from charging \$20.00 doing eyeshadow makeup under a UWI tent to getting professionally paid in 2009-2010.

She took the time to truly learn the ins and outs of the craft so she could then teach makeup. She also took time to learn about different products and understand what people needed and what people were looking



" I WANTED A BUNCH OF PEOPLE WHO COULD TRUST ME THE WAY THAT I COULD PUT MYSELF OUT THERE AND TRUST THEM."

for. Leading up to the launch of her brand, she would go on lives and do makeup tutorials weekly on Facebook.

Being an avid consumer, Krysta always had a knack for marketing and branding ,and creating her own brand seemed like a natural transition for her. When it came to her products she did a lot of research, knowing what she likes as well as what her customers may like. She wanted to products that were high quality, and that she would genuinely use, not just because her name was on it.

In 2019 she started her makeup line, which began with lashes before she branched off to lipsticks, eyeshadow pigments and hair masks. She now has a few products under The Krysta G Collection which is not limited to the cosmetic industry, she even has a health product she swears by: Ashwaganda.

"I THINK THE ONLY REASON MY BRAND WAS SUCCESSFUL IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS BECAUSE I HAD A LEVEL OF TRUST WITH MY AUDIENCE"



Thanks to her followers Krysta knew investing in her brand was a risk worth taking. "I kind of started my own brand because I knew I had the support and because I knew that people trusted me. I think the only reason my brand was successful in the first place was because I had a level of trust with my audience", she says.

Building Brand Loyalty

I ask her if she believes that her openness and vulnerability has created a sense of brand loyalty. To which she says yes. "I did not realize the kind of influence I had in that department, until about 2-3 years ago," she notes.

"I know I would recommend things but I never followed up to see if people went and bought it.

But when I started to do more promotional work and I recommended something, the responses I got were insane." She recalls her birthday party, where she posted and tagged all service providers involved because she was happy with their service. One person called her shocked as they received 1,000 new followers due to Krysta's post.

Krysta acknowledges this influence she has, attributing it to her commitment to transparency and honesty with her followers. This is a focus she will not compromise. "I love my credibility, not just as an influencer but as a person. I literally cannot stay with a straight face and say something is so good and it's crap." She has always been very transparent with her followers when it came to products and PR packages.

"I think that I had that level of trust with my followers and I knew that if I were to put my name on a product and effort into making a product, they would genuinely believe that it's good because in the past, when Krysta said that it was good, I bought it and it was good. They know that I am very truthful and there is no way in hell that I would stick my name on a product that I don't genuinely believe in." Her brand was one of the things that helped her stay afloat during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Krysta makes it a mission to post on her stories every day and her DM's are always filled with messages. "Honestly everyday I get about 500-1000 messages. And I respond to all of them." The messages would vary from business advice to personal topics. "I make it a mission to just post a few stories a day. Because honestly, if I don't post for a day straight, people message to ask if something is wrong." she says.

"It was just a period of my life where I didn't have time for social media. It was a period in my life where I didn't have time to do anything, I didn't have time to think or breathe."

There came a time in her life where something was wrong. The week her son passed away.

"It was just a period of my life where I didn't have time for social media. It was a period in my life where I didn't have time to do anything, I didn't have time to think or breathe." She says.

Last year Krysta gave birth to a son named Ezra. He had an enlarged heart and faced a lot of health complications. He didn't make it past two months. Krysta recalls the trauma she experienced that week before he passed away. Prior to him experiencing complications, Krysta still attempted to share life with her new born baby.

She wanted to post content that would relate to the portion of her following who were also mothers. "I posted things about him- I didn't actually post him but I did things about him like my little prep station, some of the things I bought for him, so that all the mummies out there can relate." she says.

"When he got "sick", I don't like to say got sick but he had episodes where he couldn't breathe. We started to go to the hospital and I stopped posting frequently because we were in the hospital and we were in the wards for about two weeks." She notes the importance of stepping away from social media when needed, giving yourself a moment to breathe and taking time for your mental health. Not everything revolves around social media all the time.

While Krysta stepped back, people wanted to know what was going on, if she was okay, and that they knew her son was in the hospital.

The week before her son passed away she didn't post anything at all, giving social media control to her brother. The next time she posted was a few days after her son's funeral. Krysta received over 15,000 messages, to which her brother replied to as many as he could.

“The support was really overwhelming and I wished I could have personally gone out and received all that but I really wasn’t in the mental health space to go out and deal with everything.” she says.



The Dark Side of Vulnerability

Her experience with her son, showed her just how invested her followers had become in her life but it also showed her how cruel the other side of social media could be. While she lives on her life openly on screen, people attack her hiding behind theirs. From being called fat during her pregnancy to people chastising her for celebrating her birthday after the death of her son, she has heard everything and anything. “I remember, after he passed, people said the meanest things.” She has gotten used to people judging and criticizing her every move, a downside to opening up your life online.

I ask her if there is anything she has ever regretted posting, to which she quickly replies, “Not, really.” “I live my life pretty much as an open book” she says. “But I am not stupid. I know when there is a limit to what I can share. Because I do see a lot of young, impressionable women that are getting into this whole influencing thing and they overshare and then they get themselves into a predicament where they can’t pull themselves out. And I think that they just didn’t know their own boundaries and what they should and shouldn’t share. But I think that my life is pretty transparent enough where I can share as much as I do, without it harming me in anyway. I still have to be selective about what I put out there, because it’s not just about my image and my views but also my safety.”

She also admits to openly sharing her shortcomings, fears and failures with her audience.

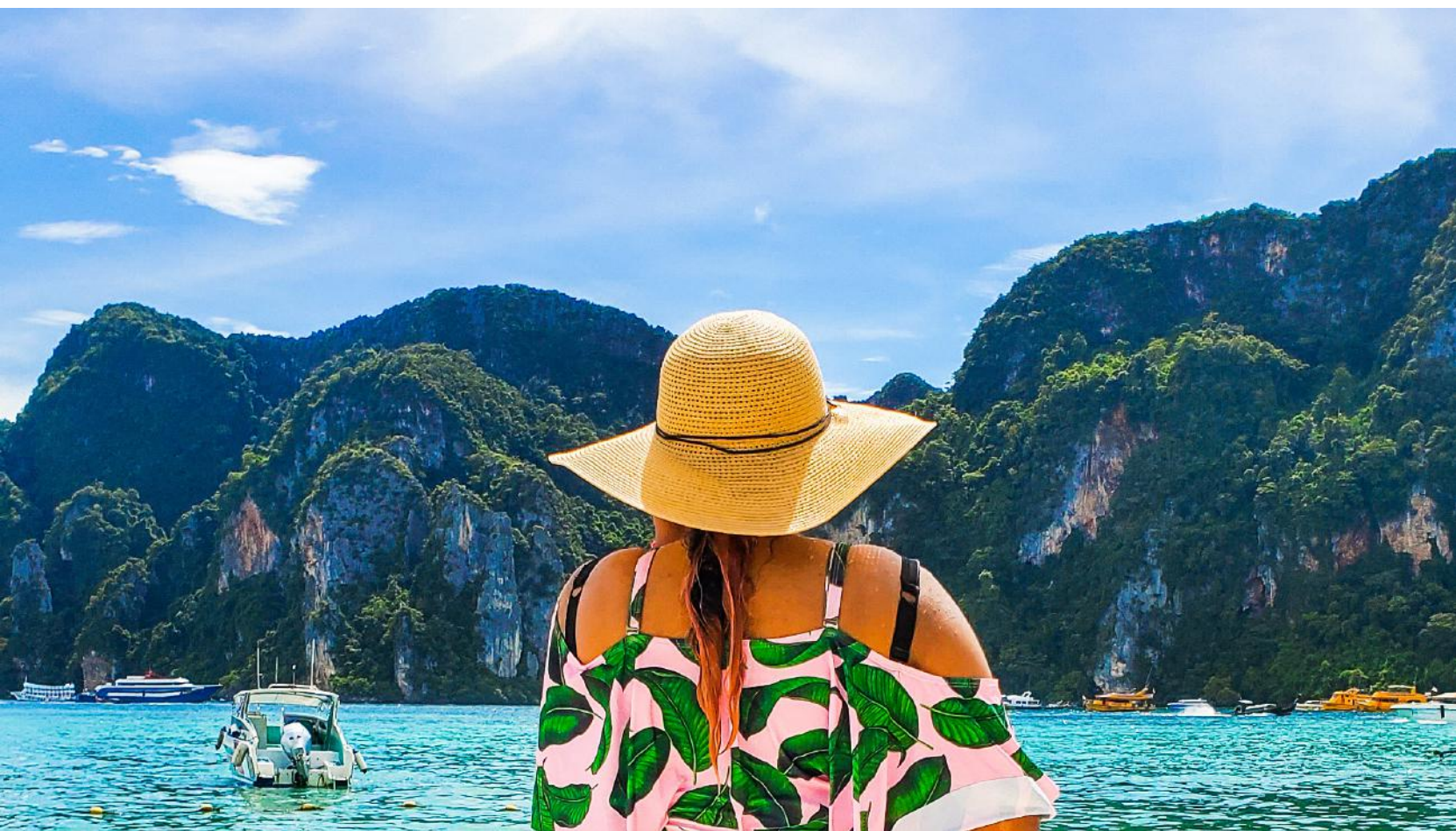
As for dealing with the keyboard warriors hiding behind their screens, Krysta acknowledges that you can’t please everyone. She’s also not afraid to clapback at those who say mean or untrue things to and about her. You can try to hide behind your screen but Krysta won’t let you.

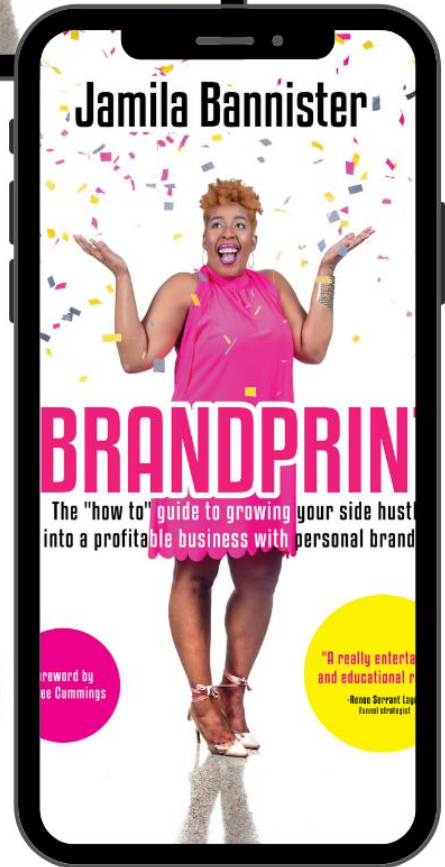
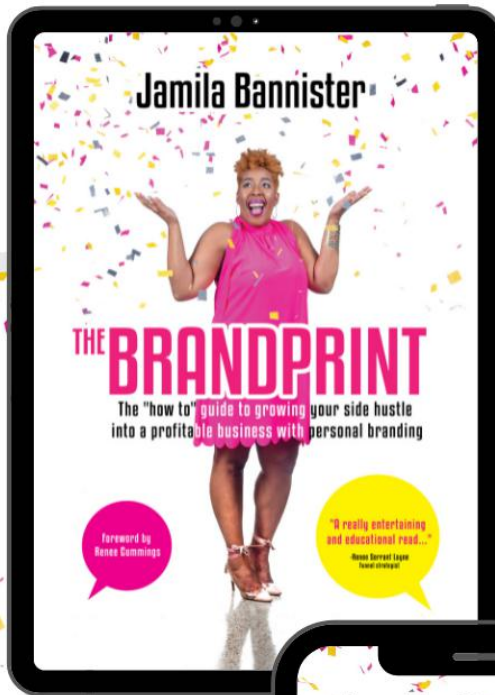
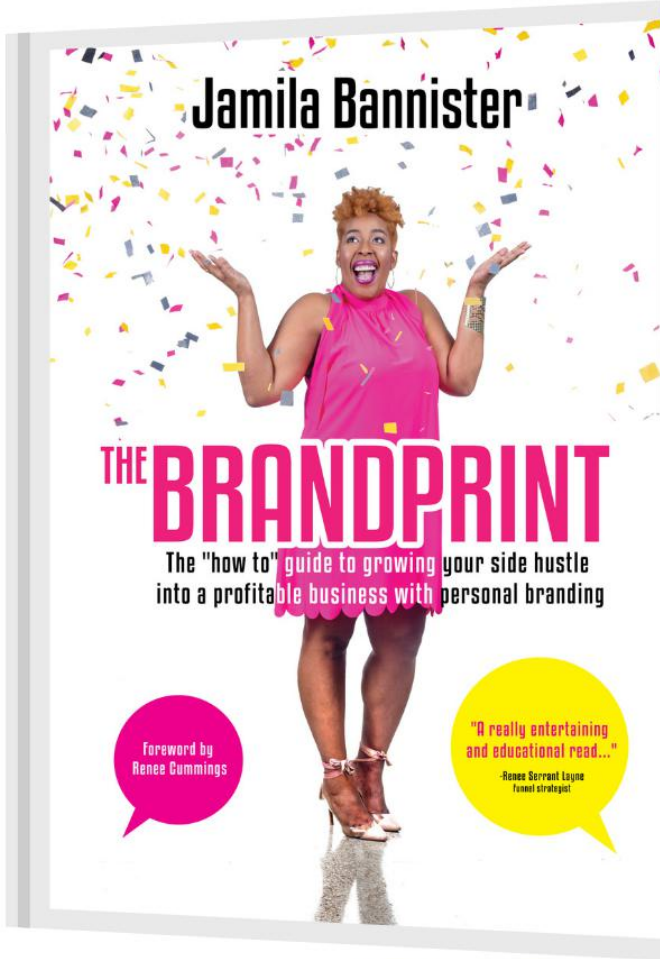
“I LIVE MY LIFE PRETTY MUCH AS AN OPEN BOOK. BUT I AM NOT STUPID. I KNOW WHEN THERE IS A LIMIT TO WHAT I CAN SHARE.”

She's also learned to leave it online, not letting any of the negativity feed into her personal life offscreen and not letting it stop her from sharing her life. "Compartmentalizing and knowing when to translate what is in cyberspace into reality is a real tricky thing but I think with experience, you get good with it." she says. She continues to focus on the things that make her happy whether it is cooking or mixing two mopping liquids for everyone to see.

A vulnerable life is not always an easy life, especially when it comes to being transparent on social media. No matter how good your intentions there will always be someone ready to judge, attack and give opinions. That should not stop you from putting yourself out there. Vulnerability online is not easy but it is also rewarding as it can create connections you didn't expect and build a strong trust and loyalty with your followers. When it comes to personal branding and the several hacks given to build yours, people often overlook an important step - showing up as yourself.

You can keep up with Krysta and her brand by following her on Instagram [@krystag15](#) and [@krystagcollection](#).





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Driving Brand Loyalty by Getting

Authentic AF

Q&A: *With Phyllis Strawder A.K.A The Ghetto Country Brandmother*

We are often sold a mould of what your personal brand should look like. But when everyone is rushing to fit a mould, nobody stands out. It seems that people often forget the personal in personal branding. Instead we see ton of polished corporate personas that feel a bit hollow. If the only thing that separates your brand from someone else's in your industry, is the name, then you know you're in trouble. Your brand is missing the one thing that makes you unforgettable: you.

It's time for you to get authentically branded and no one does that better than the Ghetto Country Brandmother. She comes barging in with cigars, bourbon and a side of tough love. She is not about that cookie cutter branding and is prepared to tell it as it is. I promise you haven't heard branding like this before, but you can rest assured her strategy works. You can learn a thing or two from her when it comes to branding yourself authentically.

MR: Tell me a little bit about who you are and what you do.

PS: I am Phyllis Williams-Strawder also known as the Ghetto Country Brandmother. I am a brand strategist, who closed down a restaurant, became a business coach and fell into branding. I offer brand strategy a little differently than most brand strategists in that I take it from the entrepreneur's

perspective, instead of taking it from the audience perspective, a lot of people want to build their brand around the audience, I say, build a brand around you and let the audience fall where they may. And that's the authentic part about it for me.

I bring a lot of different parts of my life into this. I'm actually a certified business coach with four different certifications, including a certified life coach and brand coach. Bringing that to my groups, just makes for a different experience. Most people will come in and say "let's just talk about your brand." I say no, let's reach back and find out what goals you actually have for your business and then what jacked up piece of your life do we need to not bring into it. So you get all these different parts: a life coach, a brand coach and a business coach rolled up into one and it makes a whole different experience for my clients and I like that.

How have you incorporated your identity into your brand?

Firstly, let me say, I don't believe I am my brand. But when I left the restaurant business in order to become a business coach I did try that whole cookie cutter nonsense. I tried to be corporate and, 'white' or come at it from that perspective.

That just was not working for me because at my restaurant, I had this whole mother vibe between the customers and my staff. I even recognized that before I gave birth to my daughter, I had a mother vibe. It's just my empathic nature, but I'm a tough love kind of mama. I'm not going to give you that sugar coated nonsense. Setting that part of me aside when I became a coach, made being a coach a struggle. It's like, I'm trying to help you work through your stuff while I'm sitting here faking and shaking.

"I'm a tough love kind of mama. I'm not going to give you that sugar coated nonsense."

I realised maybe I didn't truly embrace my brand. During my fourth certification I started studying more about branding, taking classes and reading books. It was there I looked back and found my Ghetto Country.

Now I tell everybody, I'm Ghetto Country. I was raised ghetto adjacent by a Country mama so I brought that out to the forefront and made it part of my brand. I'm giving life to my family and country roots. Those roots are important to me and I'm proud of it.

People think that coming from the ghetto is bad. You just don't understand what Ghetto means.

When I talk about country, it means I want you to work hard, like my family. I'm laying my grandpa on the table. He put in the hard work. He farmed his land and picked cotton. You have to work just as hard to bring all of your 'crazy' to the brand.

That was the change I made to my coaching. I stepped into branding and owned all of it, then I wanted to give it back to so many people.

I want to give back all these different things that I learned to people that don't understand how important branding is. If you're trying to brand authentically, you have to put in the work and know yourself. You have to know how much of your 'crazy' can you lay out on the table. How much of this is your personal brand? You have to know what parts of you are marketable and what parts are not. There are all these different components and I want to help people to do that.



Would you say that dropping the cookie cutter persona and stepping into your authentic self, allowed you to attract the right clients for you?

Definitely! First of all, I personally have a strong personality, and the Ghetto Country Brandmother, she's a little crazier than I am. Bringing that in just changed how I attracted clients. I did not have to struggle or correct myself. I didn't have to try and catch the words that were falling out of my mouth. Ghetto country means I also speak bad English and I might throw my mama in there somewhere.

It takes a certain type of client to want to deal with that or to pay for this type of 'abuse' because I will work your tail off. But I also know that I'm going to create other authentic and rebel brands. I want people to know that, you don't have to be like everyone else to do this. "Well, they're going to be offended if I cuss" My mama is offended if I cuss! So what? Own it! Don't be motivated by the fake stuff.

One of the pieces that I take people through in branding is what I call your brand space. It's about getting in where you fit in. Other brand strategists will call it positioning. Positioning takes up three parts: You have to know your audience, you have to know yourself and you have to know what's going to make you different. For me, I call that : your fam, your frenemies, and knowing what's going to make famous.

When you know your family- your audience, down to fact that they are repeating what you say, you can then look at your frenemies which is your competition. You look at them and find out where they messed up, where are they strong? What ideas can they give me? But don't copy that, it's not yours and it won't make you special. You have to find out what's going to make you famous (different). You did not quit your job and join this crazy life of being an entrepreneur to be the best kept secret.

You have to figure out how to bring what you offer to the table. If you bring it to the table and it's offensive to some people that's a good thing because if you have haters then you have folks that love you for real. You need to own and embrace that. Finding clients like that? Rebel Brands? That means everything to me. I don't do this sugar coated stuff.

I feel like there is no way that you will ever attract everyone.

No and you don't want to.

"DON'T BE MOTIVATED BY THE FAKE STUFF"

Yeah, that's the thing you don't want to, once you are your authentic self, you have people that are for you and people that are not for you. You don't care about the people that are not for you.

Right, you don't care about those people! You actually want to use them to make other people love you more because if they're hating on you, they are hating on you for a reason. I don't do the whole "know, like and trust" thing, I do "Character, Consistency and Competence."

If you own those pieces of you and people are hating on you, you will also have folks that love you, and see you standing by your values. Those are the folks that will buy what you are selling, they don't care if they need it or don't, because it's an emotional thing.

As the Ghetto Brandmother. How does your motherly instinct come in when dealing with your clients?

I'm a tough love kind of mama. I love people where they are but push them to where they want to go. You come in and tell me, this is what you want but you got here and found out what you needed. Mothers do that stuff all day with their kids. I call my clients my brand babies. Those are my brand babies. It's about picking my clients up and doing the process with them. We're in this together. Branding is an action and I help you get branded.

When you google Ghetto Country Brandmother, you will find me. Now the Fairy Brandmother, she might pop up too. But she's the Fairy Brandmother, I have no hate for her, but she doesn't do what I do and she definitely doesn't do it like me. Fairy is cute and pixie dust. I have no time for that. Bring some netballs, bourbon and a cigar and we'll do this. With me you get tough love, but it'll be okay.

Being a late bloomer in personal branding, did you initially find it harder to step out and be visible?

I did, and that's only because when we had our restaurant, my husband was that person to jump in front of the camera, he's a media whore. So it was easy to constantly push him out there to get him to do the speaking engagements, to get him the contracts, to be a spokesperson for things. I was used to being behind the scenes and that was another struggle in my business.

Not only was I not trying to be myself, I was like, okay, nobody wants to see me, they want to see him.

When I had to start putting myself out there, it was a challenge. It's like with one of my clients, we built out an entire brand and she's afraid to use it. She's trying to live down a 30 year reputation she built for herself, so much of her personal identity is tied to it. What we built, would set her apart and make her more famous. She was not controlling her narrative and taking ownership of her brand identity because she was worried she would offend or scare people. It doesn't matter that it's going to scare some people.

Knowing that you yourself had some sort of fear or you found it hard to be visible. Did you face any imposter syndrome and insecurities? How did you beat that? What was the turning point for you where you decided "I'm going to be visible"?

I think that moment came when I actually booked my first client and I had to sit there and actually talk, like I knew what I was talking about. Now I did, but it was more like how am I going to be comfortable doing this?

If I'm not confident and comfortable in this role, then you know what? The review that my client may give me at the end of it all, is not going to be favourable. "Oh, well, yeah. She told me a lot of stuff, but something was off" And the thing that was off would have been me.

**"BRINGING YOUR
PERSONAL BRAND TO THE
TABLE IS GIVING PEOPLE A
LITTLE BIT OF YOURSELF,
JUST A LITTLE BIT."**

So I had to own that I was competent. Bringing your personal brand to the table is giving people a little bit of yourself, just a little bit. Give them enough of a taste so you feel comfortable enough to own the room. It makes it a whole lot easier for you to show up.

You don't have to be timid. A lot of people when they're trying to talk about their brands or business, they feel uncomfortable because they haven't been talking about it long enough.

They haven't been out here saying, you know what? This is what I do. Whatever your pitch, whatever your intro, if you haven't said it yet, do it one time in the mirror. Then go say it to your husband or wife. What you're doing is you're building the confidence in your mind. You're saying, "I can talk about this," because the people that usually judge you the harshest are the people that know you best. If you can talk about it in front of them, then when you get in front of that client and you say "I am all the things", it's not about you being arrogant, it's about you being confident.

For me, it was with that first client and the more I did it, the more confident I got and the more I charged.

Did you notice a change in response, when you started to become more confident and authentic in your brand?

Clients started to roll in and even the type of clients that I attracted. Some black people are actually offended that I'm owning the fact that I'm ghetto country. They say, "Oh no, you're putting black people a bad light. We don't need them to know all of our ghetto-ness" and it's like oh, bougie, heifers step back, you know, I'm not for you. I was not talking to you. That's the thing that I had to own about myself. I'm not talking to you. So I'm not offended by people thinking that being ghetto is about or you don't get my brand.

Ghetto is about family. Ghetto country, that's how I was raised and do you know what that means? I'll tell people, the Ghetto Country Brandmother, she will walk away from a fight. Phyllis? Not so much. I had to learn to fight because I had a big family and you know what? There are disagreements in big families but after the fight, you still love each other.

When I fight with my clients on that level it's different from a business aspect, than if I did it in my family. I'm not fighting against you. I'm fighting with you. I'm fighting for you to win. That's what I'm fighting for and that's how I show up.

**"GHETTO IS ABOUT
FAMILY. I'M NOT FIGHTING
AGAINST YOU. I'M
FIGHTING WITH YOU. I'M
FIGHTING FOR YOU TO
WIN.**

How do you think your coaching style differs from everyone else?

Where most brand strategists offer strategy in a one-on-one type setting I do it in a group, we have a community. I do it in a group setting of about five individuals and we work through it together. They get feedback from other people in the room about their brand.

Together we figure out what's hitting and what's not, or you see what other people see in you. Sometimes that feedback helps you see yourself in a different light because we put on blinders when it comes to ourselves.

Throughout the process I take everything my client gives me and we turn it into what I call your brand soul. Other people may call it the foundation of your brand, I call it your soul. You call it finding your purpose, vision, mission and values. I call it belief, commitment, philosophy, and your future. We talk about everything, break it down, dig deep and make it clear. I help you find your voice and I make sure you start using it and being consistent with it.

I've had clients cry and experience serious breakthroughs and say "Oh I just found this out about myself today and I am so happy!" You don't get that when you just do brand strategy. Taking clients through that journey, that is my joy. Giving them the understanding and the authentic branding, sometimes feels like pulling teeth, but that's okay. I am here to fight for you.

If you had to give a new entrepreneur just one tip, one thing that they should start with when it comes to building their authenticity. What would it be?

Ask your friends why they like you. If you can tap into why they like you, you can make your customers like you. Find out what they see that you don't see. Ask them, "How do you feel when you are around me?" Branding is emotional. You can then go back and make your clients feel that way about you. You may have some things that you think are negatives about yourself but they see it as positive. So go ask your friends, why do you like me? If you have people that are able to articulate that, listen to them and bring it into your brand. Those are the authentic things because you are showing your true self to them.

When you get the truth and you figure out what part of this can I turn that into a positive for my brand, that is going to bring a level of authenticity. It's about finding what fits you. Don't get scared because there are some people that are going to be turned off by that. That's why you only have a handful of friends in the first place, you want your niche to be tight. You want the people who are attracted to you to be small because that is where all your money is.

You are consistently showing up as who you want to be and how you want to be perceived.

Also remember you are not your brand so when you are not working - leave that brand to the side. The Ghetto Country Brandmother is not who I am when I'm with my husband, my friends, my family. Learn how to lay stuff to the side.

**"I've had clients cry
and experience
serious
breakthroughs"**

If you're ready to get authentically branded AF you can connect with Phyllis aka the Ghetto Country Brandmother at www.ckocreator.com and [@gcbrandmother](https://www.instagram.com/gcbrandmother) on Instagram.





**GOT
SOMETHING
TO SAY?**

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THE DIGITAL ENTREPRENEUR'S *Wish List*

Written by:
Jamila Bannister

'Tis the season! As you know, one of my favourite things to do at Christmas time is share recommendations on tools you should gift yourself or your entrepreneur friends to make business even better in the new year. Our list this year re-visits some old faithfuls while introducing you to a few new tools that can help you reach your audience more effectively and take some of the heavy lifting off your shoulders. Here are 6 great digital gift ideas that should be on every Digital Entrepreneur's Christmas Wish List.

1 **AWeber Email Marketing**

I can never overemphasise the value of email marketing in reaching your audience consistently and authentically. As mentioned before, email marketing is one of the most underused communication channels by businesses in the Caribbean, therefore it's a blue ocean you want to get into right now.

With AWeber, collecting email addresses is easy whether you're online or offline. From their landing pages to the sign up forms you can embed into your website or their Atom app that you can use to sign up people through your mobile device; AWeber makes it easy to collect addresses, add them to your list and follow up with email updates. It also gives you detailed reporting and analytics that can help you make informed decisions about your next email campaign.



A blue rectangular banner for AWeber. At the top left is the AWeber logo. The text reads: "Email marketing. For free. No credit card required". On the right side is a small cartoon robot character. At the bottom is an orange button that says "Get AWeber Free".



Glue Loyalty

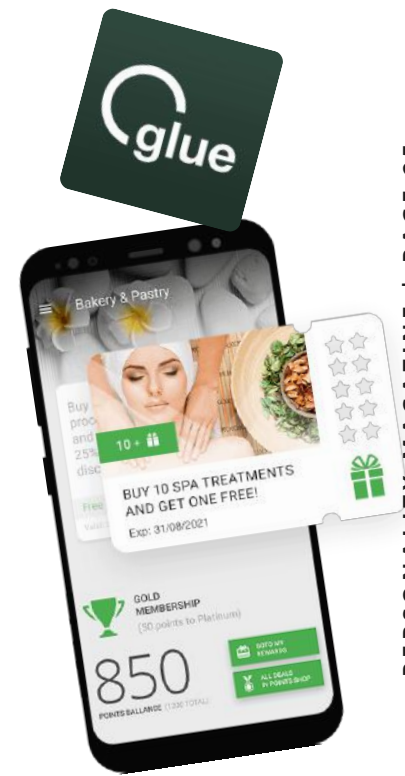
One of the best ways to build customer loyalty and drive more sales is through rewards and incentives. If you're a small business,

2

building a whole programme on your own may be tough and this is exactly why we're recommending Glue Loyalty. Especially useful for retail businesses, like food, beauty and apparel, Glue provides you with your own desktop hub and mobile app that you can brand with colours and images that suit your business. They will even submit your app to the Google and iOS play store for approval. This means they will take all of the heavy technical lifting out of the process for you which allows you to focus on getting customers signed up.

Glue will also help you plan your strategy for engagement. Whether it's discounts, coupons or scratch cards, there is an option for you. If you have a shopify store, it's even better as Glue integrates directly with your store to make collection of points and management of your programme so much easier.

If you have all the things you need to get started with a loyalty programme and you're ready to use this as a tactic to drive business growth, Glue offers a free 14 day trial period after which you can have up to 7 members for free. But if this is a Christmas gift to your business and you have more than 7 customers, visit the glue website and get the best plan for your business.



Flutin Live

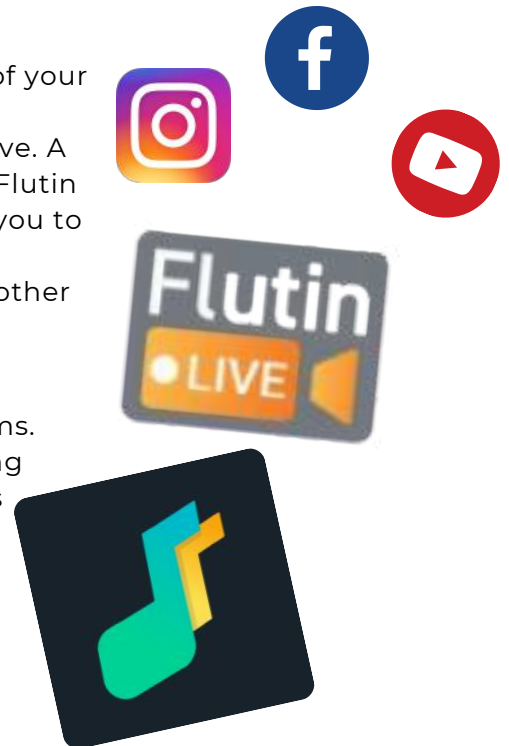
3

If you plan on making live streaming a part of your content marketing for the new year, I'm recommending my latest purchase, Flutin Live. A relatively "new kid on the streaming block", Flutin Live is one of the only platforms that allows you to stream to Instagram while also streaming to Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and a host of other platforms including natively on the Flutin platform.

Flutin also allows you to monetize your streams. One way you can generate income is by having your viewers send you tips, virtual gifts, meals and even drinks. You can also host ticketed events on Flutin.

If you're a performer and you want to have a mini concert, a talent show or even a paid class, you can do that on Flutin. You can get paid through direct deposit or through Paypal. It's an excellent way for your community to buy-in to what you do and contribute to your business while you give them value.

Flutin offers a free trial period but its benefits to both consumer and artist justify their premium basic package for \$9 monthly or \$99 annually. If you head over to app sumo right now, you can get yourself a lifetime membership for a one time payment.



4



Smart Quiz Builder

This past year, I implemented quizzes with Smart Quiz Builder as a lead magnet and it's one of the best decisions I've made. Quizzes are powerful because they are automated, which means you don't have to manage them yourself, yet the results are specific to each person who completes them. Quizzes are excellent for personalising the customer experience while qualifying a lead based on their responses.

If you have a Wordpress website, we highly recommend getting yourself Smart Quiz Builder. It's easy to set up and you have many options for the types of quizzes you can build. There are personality quizzes, surveys, trivia quizzes and even calculators. You can use a quiz to recommend solutions to your lead based on their responses. For example, you can recommend a hairstyle or a style of nail design based on someone's personality based on someone's responses to your quiz. You can even create engagement on your site with trivia questions.

Using a quiz to engage your customers and automate your lead engagement is definitely the Christmas gift that keeps on giving.

5



Approve ME

Approve me is definitely one of those digital gifts that keeps on giving. If you're a service based business and contracts are essential to managing the services you offer, you will appreciate Approve me. Approve me is a library of over 100 contract and agreement templates that are suitable for almost every business situation. From service agreements to photography agreements to book publishing and employment contracts, you can find many useful contract templates in Approve me. While I don't recommend Approve Me as a replacement for an attorney it could give you the start on the contracts to run your business.



6

Ocoya

As someone who is constantly posting on social media for my business, we all know how time consuming it can be. From designing posts, to coming up with the right captions, trending hashtags and remembering to post. The best digital gift an entrepreneur could get is something that makes the content marketing process a little bit easier.

If you're looking for something to help you master your content and social media marketing. I may have just found an app that feels too good to be true! Think of all the typical apps you usually use for creating content rolled into one. Ocoya is an elaborate app that allows you to work through your entire content creation process from one place. This all in one platform may give other content marketing apps a run for their money.

You can create stand out graphics with less time with thousands of editable templates, use their AI software to help you come up with the perfect copy and hashtags, schedule posts, plan ad campaigns and get analytics to see how your content is performing. I told you it seemed too good to be true. While most content marketing tools come with a monthly or yearly subscription, you can get this for a lifetime deal on AppSumo for only \$59 USD.

Now, all of these suggestions won't work for every business, and truth be told, you don't need all of them to reach your audience and create great experiences for your community. You just need to know which may work best and put those on your wishlist for Santa!

