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# REVIEWS

“A powerful book, full of wisdom, yet presented in a joyful, upbeat manner. This book has profound implications for how we can successfully market ourselves and our businesses within the rapid pace of change. A must read.”

- **Al Ritter**

*speaker, trainer, author of The 100/0 Principle and Life is a Paradox*  
[www.ritterconsultinggroup.com](http://www.ritterconsultinggroup.com)

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“When we needed a partner to share insights on social media marketing we turned to Brian Basilico. Brian’s relationship-building insights are fun, funny and right on target. This book is a must-read for anyone wanting to up their branding, marketing and networking skills!”

- **Rich Kizer & Georganne Bender**

*Speakers, consultants, and consumer anthropologists, authors of Champagne Strategies on a Beer Budget! and Jingle Bells, Christmas Sells: Events, Promotions and Tips for the Holiday Season, co-authored with Australia’s Debra Templar.*  
[www.kizerandbender.com](http://www.kizerandbender.com)

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“Brian is ahead of the curve with his advice on sorting through the maze of networking avenues to be the one your customers and prospects know, like and trust. He shares why you need to build relationships with people rather than trying to interest and sell to the masses though

electronic interaction...and he shows you how to do it. It's a must read for today's entrepreneurs."

- **Lillian D. Bjorseth**

*Speaker, trainer, coach, author of Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last*

[www.duoforce.com](http://www.duoforce.com)

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"Communication with people where they are and treating them as human beings is the main message throughout "It's Not About You: It's About Bacon." In fact, there's something for everyone in this book. Whether you're a foodie who loves bacon, an animal-lover, a baseball fan, or a Disney-lover, you'll find a metaphor in this book that speaks directly to you about relationship marketing. That is exactly what makes this book a perfect model for what Brian Basilico explains in this fun, yet packed-solid manual on using social media, marketing and getting results. Highly recommended!"

- **Felicia J. Slattery, M.A., M.Ad.Ed.**

*Speaker and Best-Selling author of 21 Ways to Make Money Speaking and Kill the Elevator Speech: Stop Selling, Start Connecting*

[www.feliciaslattery.com](http://www.feliciaslattery.com)

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"Brian Basilico is a man I know, like and trust. His new book will teach you exactly what, why and when to use social media. Just as he has taught me over the past 6 years. This book's techniques are proven and steadfast using brain-based technologies that every person uses every day whether they know it or not. Brian will teach you — just as he has taught thousands of others — the magic of using social media to build relationships with your clients or customers, and dispel the myths of creating a brand image and how it actually works.

Relationships are built on knowing, liking and trusting. Brian Basilio and “It’s Not About You, It’s About Bacon” is incredible. Trust me, you will read it more than once!”

- **Sally Rutledge-Ott, ACE, NFPC**  
*President & Founder - Women With Power*  
[www.srutledgeott.wordpress.com](http://www.srutledgeott.wordpress.com)



# DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my best friend and wife Kimberly Joy. You have picked me up when I was down, pushed me when I was slow, put up with years of bad jokes, and corrected my bad grammar in my blogs. You've endured the countless trials and tribulations that have led me to the point of really discovering who I am.

I love you and you make me not only a better person, but a complete one.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**To my mentors** Al Ritter, Georgeanne Bender and Rich Kizer: you have taught me how to visualize my ideas, how to convey them, and that politicians give speeches and speakers give presentations.

**To my mom and dad**, Rose and Harold: I know you are looking down from heaven and smiling that all my gyrations in life led to something constructive and of value to others. You were awesome parents, role models, neighbors and loving members of your community. People today still smile and remember you fondly when I mention your names!

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**To my editor** Susan Price. I am sure I made you cringe with my “there, their, they’re” moments...and those were the easy ones to read, cringe, and repair!

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**To some other important people in my life:** Barbara Walter & Bruce Basilico (my sister and brother), uncle Bobbie (RIP) and aunt Tina, my in-laws Dennis and Phyllis Wilkey, my step kids Tiffany & Timmy, friends Rick &

Laura Bursh, and Dave & Julie Locke. And Especially our dog Buddy Guy who gives me 30 minutes a day to think, dream, refocus, and check PMail on our walks!

**To all my clients and vendors:** You have gifted me with your KNOW, LIKE, and TRUST. We have ventured many roads together, some new and some well-traveled, but we have continued to sharpen each other with patience, perception and perseverance.

And finally...

**To you** who wish to better yourselves by taking the time to read this book as well as my blogs, podcasts and webinars. You humble me and encourage me to continuing to try to make the world a better place through collaborative education!

I feel blessed that social media have given me the chance to reconnect or stay connected with many people through music, business, or life in general.

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# INTRO

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*And it turns out that tribes, not money, not factories, that can change our world, that can change politics, that can align large numbers of people. Not because you force them to do something against their will. But because they wanted to connect.* - Seth Godin

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**M**illions of stories, posts, tweets, and blogs get posted everyday about on-line marketing success. Probably hundreds of millions more stories go untold about people creating successes through face-to-face networking.

What's happening to our business world is nothing short of a revolution. We see change happening at an increasingly rapid pace. We also see people starting to re-embrace the values of the 1950s and '60s. What can't be denied in business is that a customer-centric focus has become more important than ever before in our history.

We no longer can broadcast, advertise and shout ourselves into success anymore. The customers now hold the remote control and can change the channel at will. They can choose to be where we are communicating, or not. We no longer act as the hunter, but must learn to be what they want to hunt.

Customers can make or break us through on-line conversations with their contacts: friends, neighbors,

relatives and co-workers. They can choose to comment about your business in multiple forums and on separate platforms, speaking to hundreds, thousands, even millions of people. Are they going to leave a positive review or are they going to take you to task, justifiably or not?

It's up to us to meet customers and potential customers where they are, follow their leads, and create conversations that put them in the forefront of our focus. We need to be accessible like never before. For some of us, that means connecting or being available to them 24/7 and 365 days a year.

Knowing where our would-be customers prowl is just the first half of the social networking process. We also have to use the technologies that they embrace. The responsibility is yours to learn these technologies and adapt them to help your business. And for the process to work, you must learn to communicate in a way that focuses solely on your customers' wants, likes, and needs.

## **You see, It's Not About You!**

It's about your customers interacting with you and your messages. It's about your customers getting what they expect when they interact with you. It's about being top of mind when someone not yet a customer is looking to purchase what you offer. It's about them.

## **Why read this book?**

You probably own a small or mid-sized business. Maybe more than one. You need to learn to look at your business through new lenses, the ones your customers or potential customers see you through. Perception is a business reality, and it's your job to shape and mold a perception that puts you and your business in the most favorable light.

Reading this book should help you understand that you and your personal brand are as important as, and sometimes more important than, your product or service brand. You will realize that it's your job to define and shape that brand through interaction and engagement.

This book should help you embrace the concept of social networking by showing why so many people are talking about it. Also, it will try to debunk the idea that social media are the new frontier in advertising. It will review some of the most common and popular social media platforms, and whether they may or may not be the right tool or choice for you brand and your business. Finally, it will look at how to use social networking to your advantage while avoiding some common pitfalls.

## **More WHY than HOW**

Hundreds, if not thousands of books now exist on social marketing how-to: textbooks, books for dummies, or books on maximizing Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and so on. This is not a how-to book, it's more of a "WHY-to" book.

The social networking game is really just getting started, and this book aims to entice you, encourage you, and educate you as to why you and your business must join this game. The goal is not just to be in the conversation, but to learn how to start it and direct it in a way that you will be top of mind when someone needs your product or service.

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*Just remember... It's Not About You... It's About Bacon!*

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# PART 1: NET-WORKING IT

Social networking works on three key relationship factors: **know, like and trust**. But it also uses techniques and tools to help you engage with people. What those people (your potential customers) do when they engage with you determines whether you succeed.

Your ultimate goal is enticing people to your home base. We will explore what that means, social networking best practices, and how you can maximize your investment in time to produce their investment in trust!

This process depends on three key factors.

- First, you have to have a solid home base, a place where people find a clear indication of what you want them to do and how they can effectively interact with you.
- Second, you must be able to measure how people get to your home base, and how they interact with you once they get there.
- Third, you'll need to drive more traffic to measure and learn how to create value for those who ultimately get to your home base... your website!

# CHAPTER 1: RELATIONSHIP MARKETING



## BACON-IZMS

- Marketing has evolved over the decades
- Business used to be all about personalized service
- Technology has changed the game
- Marketing has many meanings and variations
- Social media have revolutionized marketing on a personal level
- Businesses sit at a marketing crossroads
- Relationship marketing is treating people as people
- All networking starts with a smile and a handshake

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### **Marketing has evolved over the decades**

I have spent more than 30 years in business. During that time business has experienced many changes, innovations, breakthroughs, revolutions, and upheavals. I've had the chance to see the birth and evolution of the personal computer, and worked at the company that pioneered the cell phone, then watched the "brick" phone transform

into a computer that fits in your pocket. I've watched, and evolved with, the growth of the internet. I experienced the world before browsers, email, websites, Google, Facebook, and watched in awe as these new technologies emerged to create a huge paradigm shift in the ways we could, and probably most should, do business.

## **Business used to be all about personalized service**

Before the internet, all business happened in person, by mail or over the phone. People had no eCommerce: no eBay, Amazon, FedEx, or cloud computing. People generally had to walk, use public transportation, or get into their cars to go to a store in person to buy products. To receive services, you might have had the option of ordering by phone or mail, and some products could be ordered for delivery by phone or mail as well.

Back then, relationships were everything. If you shopped in your local downtown, you knew the store owners and they knew you.

One of the first real jobs I ever had was as a shoe salesman at Joe's Shoes in downtown Wheaton, IL. It was a family owned and operated store that was known for two specialties: kids' corrective orthopedic shoes, and women's oversized shoes (sizes 12-15). Those specialties were a big part of Joe's brand and why people came there instead of going to the other shoe stores in town.

We used to keep each client's information on index cards in a box, so when one walked in, we knew what she liked or what that family bought last time. Those cards meant we could provide the customer service that Joe's clients had come to expect. All of that service is what helped people justify paying the premium prices for specialty—and regular—shoes.

Even then, people had many other options: mall stores, K-Mart, Venture, and the other local or chain department stores operating in the area. Those places primarily competed on price.

Back then, business was all about people and relationships. Getting to know the customers on a personal level defined what customer service was all about.

## **Technology has changed the game**

Fast forward to today. We all have data and lots of it. We have databases, contact managers, spreadsheets, accounting systems, analytics and more. Practically everything we do online is being recorded, processed, analyzed, and profiled. Big companies like Google and Facebook probably know more about you and your habits or preferences, than you, your family and friends do. They know what you like, when you sign into your computer, what you search for, roughly where you live and more.

Companies like Zappos (zappos.com, an online clothing retailer) use this data to build a very loyal following of repeat customers who generate a huge buzz via word of mouth advertising. What makes them a standout in the online retailing industry is that to don't view themselves as an eTailer that sells products. They view themselves as a customer service company that delivers products.

It's real easy to get mired down in all the data and technology. We have converted people into channels, avatars, and profiles. We look at buying patterns, categorizing them through graphs and charts, and trying to predict behaviors.

What's missing for all the equations is... people are people.

## **Marketing has many meanings and variations**

Generally speaking, marketing tries to marry customers with what you have to sell. To do that, marketers do **research** to see what people want, and use what they find to **communicate** why people should want what you offer.

**Market research** helps us determine the best type of customer for our product or service. We look for people in certain economic or business groups. Then we look at buying patterns and try to position our product or service to be accessible and attractive.

**Marketing communications** include branding, and the creation of messages and advertisements that promote the features and benefits of our offerings. Often these communications seek to differentiate us from our competition.

**Internet marketing** uses online tools and technologies to deliver our messages to people by means of websites, emails, text messages, tweets, instant messages and more. The internet seems very attractive and useful because it provides a fast, flexible, targetable, and generally less expensive (sometimes almost free) alternative to traditional media such as print radio, and TV.

## **Social media have revolutionized personal level marketing**

Many people view social media websites as excellent internet marketing tools, because they allow you to create conversations and interactions. Social media sites also allow you to create marketing segments where you can promote specific messages to selected audiences.

The intrinsic problem with marketing is that people have to **want** you to market to them for your messages to be accepted, relevant, and acted upon.

## **Businesses sit at a marketing crossroads**

We have come to an unprecedented time in business. Businesses large and small find themselves at a crossroads of marketing tools, principles and methodologies. The biggest change and challenge is that of being effective communicators at a time where the audience gets to control (at least to some degree) the messages they receive.

People can choose to opt in to or opt out of your messages. If you send unsolicited email without giving the user a choice to join in or stop the madness, you may be breaking laws. You will certainly annoy some of the people you are hoping to attract.

People can choose which social networks they belong to, and they control their experiences there. They choose when to log in (or not) and, in most cases, they can and will block or de-friend you if you become an annoyance. The power to connect no longer resides solely in the marketers' hands but is getting more and more user-centric.

All businesses should examine what has worked in the past in light of what is working now. The real trick, though, is to figure out what will still work in the future. Some businesses will choose to stay with their current course, while others will turn on the blinker and make a sharp turn. Either way, you'll need to start asking permission to contact people to get them to listen to your messages about your products and services.

## Relationship marketing means treating people as people

Relationship marketing is a mixture of the old ways and the new ways of marketing. It starts by simply treating people like people.

You get to know them on a one-on-one level. Then they give you permission to communicate with them on a social level. Finally, if they get to **know**, **like**, and **trust** you enough (those three key concepts, about which more later), they may buy from you or recommend you to their friends and connections.

If you are a multinational corporation, then you may do all of this on-line, which is how Zappos does customer service. But my guess is that you, like the vast majority of my readers will run a small local or regional business. You are blessed with the opportunity to meet with your customers face to face, just like we did at Joe's Shoes.

You have the opportunity to get to know your customers on a personal level and connect with them in ways that make them feel respected, important and genuinely valued.

If all you care about is making a sale, then you might as well put this book down right now. But if you want to establish highest quality (and often lifelong) relationships with customers, vendors, employees, and the community, then this book will be an enjoyable and fruitful read.

The information that follows will help you understand business through your customers' eyes better. From reading it, I hope you get some perspective on how things have changed over the years, and how the new era of social media can help you start, grow, and nurture relationships.

You will also get some perspective on internet tools and technologies that may or may not be right for you and



your business. Ultimately, you will better understand that you're no longer in control (or at least not as much as you used to be). The customer now chooses you, and you have to work harder to convince customers that you are the right choice.

## **All networking starts with a smile and a handshake**

There is no better way to do this in today's short-attention-span-theater, gigabit-speed, totally connected internet world, than starting with a smile and a handshake.

