

Video transcript

Turning customers into brand advocates

[On Screen text:] Networking, topical, ideas, insights, innovation, Bankwest Connect Events™, Amanda Stevens.

[Amanda Stevens:]

Now there is a lot of change going on and as I've already mentioned, some industries are dealing with more change and disruption than most.

This change is going on with external economic forces, there's changes going on in the property market. But there's also changes going on with consumers and there's a shift that's happening right now and I believe that as small business owners, if you can ride this wave of change over the next 12 months.

It's literally the difference between where your business is at now and where it potentially could be in 12 months time.

Because the shift that's happening right now is we're moving from customer service to the customer experience. We're moving from, word of mouth to word of mouse. So online channels and social media are amplifying the opportunity that you have in your business right now, to create customer advocacy and literally grow your business exponentially.

We're moving from high-tech to high-touch. Isn't it amazing that we live in an era as business owners, where we have access to incredible technology that enables us to automate, to be more productive, to scale our businesses in ways that we couldn't even do 5 years ago.

But I believe we're starting to see a pendulum swing back and we're seeing that businesses that really nail the customer experience are those that combine the best of high-tech with the best of high-touch. And we're going to talk about exactly where that intersection sits today.

I believe that we're also moving from massive peel to niche specialisation. So businesses that really are very clear on what they're good at and focus on that, clear the path and move forward on just being a niche and really nailing that niche are the ones that are winning big.

We're also moving from powerful to influential. So it's no longer about being a big brand, it's now about being an influential brand. And we're moving from trustworthy to transparent.

So brands that are winning big, businesses small and big are those that are being truly transparent with their customers. So for those of you don't know this is the future of search we are now entering into a phase of v-tailing, voice activated search and selection.

This is how we will interact with the internet in the future. So for those of you who don't know the Google home it's a device that sits in your living room or where ever you choose to put it and it's always listening.

So last week I said to my Google "Hey Google" which it's indication to start listening, "What's the cheapest flight from Brisbane to Honolulu departing on the 13th of March?" It comes straight back to me and says "What's your return date?" "The 20th of March."

So "The cheapest flight I've found is with Hawaiian airlines for \$1918, would you like me to email you the details?" "Yes, please." That's in my inbox straight away. It then emails me two days later with a price update to that flight route.

Do you know what the most trusted brand in Australia is now?

The number one most trusted brand in Australia is... Not Bunnings, not RAC, nicely played though. It's actually Aldi.

A brand that has been in Australia for 16 years, which is a micro second in the scheme of things, has over taken banks, Telcos, Australia Post even Qantas, as being the most trusted brand in Australia. Which I kind of find a little bit funny because I do love Aldi but I find that middle aisle a little deceptive. I don't know what they pump into that middle aisle but has anyone ever been to Aldi for

bread and milk and come home with a chainsaw and some ski gear? The middle aisle at Aldi...

So what does that tell us? What it tells us is consumers are resonating with brands that are prepared to be transparent, offer value and be a little bit irreverent.

I don't know about you but I love Aldi's advertising, it's funny, because it's real and it's authentic. So brands that are brave enough to be authentic and be a little bit vulnerable are the ones that are winning.

If you take one message out of our time together today let it be this. That it is often the questions we ask that have a greater impact than the answers we give. So often the questions we ask that are far more important than the answers we give.

I believe that as humans we're only ever one of two states. We're either interested or we're interesting.

We can never be both. And I don't know about you but I have found myself as a consumer in plenty of scenarios with lots of businesses and in retail in service space businesses, where the person serving me or interacting with me or selling to me is very interesting, knows a lot, that's not very interested.

Asking more questions is the key to you improving your customer experience. When we ask more questions of our customers and we get a richer picture of who they are, what they're all about, we can actually ultimately serve them better.

The other thing that asking more questions enables us to do is build commonality. People now and in the future will do business more and more with people brands and businesses that they have something in common with.

Commonality is what drives us as human beings, we gravitate to people, brands and places that we have something in common with particularly in uncertain times and lets be honest, we are in for more of those. We gravitate to people,

brands and places that we have something in common with because it makes us feel, what?

Safe, it makes us feel safe, it actually speaks to our highest human need, above shelter, above food, it actually speaks to safety.

[End of video:]