

The Maverick Show, Episode 25
HOST: Matt Bowles GUEST: Seth Greene

Matt Bowles: Hey, everybody. It's Matt Bowles. Welcome to The Maverick Show. My guest today is Seth Greene. He is the founder of the direct-response marketing firm Market Domination LLC, which specializes in helping business owners optimize their marketing funnels and grow their businesses through podcasting. He is also the host of the *Sharkpreneur* podcast, a top-rated podcast that he hosts with *Shark Tank*'s Kevin Harrington. In addition to that, Seth is a judge on *Pitch Tank*, which is also the live version of *Shark Tank*, and he's the author of seven books and has been featured in *Inc.*, *Forbes*, *Moneywatch*, and many other places where you may have seen him. Seth, welcome to the show.

Seth Greene: Thank you so much, Matt. It's a huge honor to be here. I'm super excited. We're going to have a lot of fun today.

Matt: This is going to be awesome for a number of reasons. First of all, I think this is going to be a really marketing pillar episode of *The Maverick Show*. We're going to go deep into a lot of tactical stuff. I think entrepreneurs are going to get a lot out of what you're going to have to share on that level. The other reason this is going to be amazing is that you and I have been very good friends for over 25 years now, since back in high school, and I think it's just going to be great. I'm excited about my audience to meet you, so it's great to have you here today, buddy.

Seth: Awesome. I am excited too. It's a little stroll down memory lane and a little glimpse into the future.

Matt: So, I feel like we need to start – I definitely want to go through your entrepreneurial journey and all of that, but I feel like we really need to start that all the way back in high school, which is when we met. Literally, on one of the first days of freshman year of my high school career, I ran into you, met you, and we had a conversation about something – probably hip-hop music, we were both into it at the time – and I was like, “Wow, this guy's cool.”

And then, later on, I saw you, and you were off to something. I was like, “Man, where are you going?” You were like, “I'm going to this amazing club. It's called FBLA – the Future Business Leaders of America.” I was like, “What's that all about?” And, you're like, “Well, they have these amazing conferences. You go from all around the state.” We were in Buffalo, New York at the time, which is where we went to high school.

You were like, “Yeah, they have these statewide conferences, and people come from all over the state, and they have these dances, and it’s this big social thing.” I was like, “Where can I sign up for that?” You’re like, “Come with me!”

So, I was like, “Hey, cool. I don’t know anything about business, but I’ll go to that.” Sure enough, I went, and you and I participated in the Future Business Leaders of America club for four consecutive years and had some really epic adventures over our high school career.

Seth: That is very true, and little did we know that we’d actually become the future business leaders of America. It turned out to be true.

Matt: It is pretty ironic, and in fact, it was a winding road, although my entrepreneurial roots and yours as well do actually go back to that time, because even in high school, you and I were both starting businesses and making money in different spaces, and I remember very early on in high school, my interest in hip-hop drove me to start becoming a DJ, and then I parlayed that ultimately into a business where I started DJing proms, weddings, and all that kind of stuff. Likewise, you were doing all sorts of things. I remember you were first and foremost a magician.

Seth: Yes, which I parlayed into a business as a professional magician, actually getting paid to perform.

Matt: Exactly, yeah! So, I feel like, in high school, we had the entrepreneurial seeds there. We were doing it. We got into all kinds of adventures as well because I would bring you on my DJ gigs because I needed somebody there to take requests, help me set up my stuff, and all that. It was fun to have my friend go with me and pay you something for doing that. But, those got to be some pretty crazy adventures. Do you remember some of those?

Seth: I do. I think one of my most fond – you called me – the one that’s probably the most vivid is when you called me one night and said, “Hey, do you want to go to a prom tonight?” I said, “Sure,” and went over to your house, and we packed all the DJ gear into your dad’s Suburban – extended version, extra-long Suburban – and then, your mom was like, “Well, I’m a little worried about tonight, but I feel better knowing that you’re going with him,” and that did

not sound very good, but I said, “Okay, Mrs. Bowles, I’ll do my best to take care of him.”

And, we get in the car – and, this is no iPhone, no GPS back then, straight road maps, and you hand me this road map and say, “You’re navigating,” which is not my strong suit either, and I said, “Where are we going?” You said, “We’re going to Wellsville.” I said, “What? I’ve never heard of Wellsville. Where is Wellsville?” You said, “I don’t know, but it’s on the map somewhere, and we’ve got to be there in half an hour.” And, I said, “Okay.”

So, I’m paging through the map, and it goes to more than one page, and then another page, and then another, and I’m doing some bad math and figuring it’s an hour and a half away, and there’s no way we’re going to make it on time, and you said, “Don’t worry about it, I got this,” and proceeded to drive 85 miles an hour way out into the country. And, if you’ve ever driven 85 miles an hour in an extended-cab suburban filled with really heavy DJ equipment, I do not suggest it. It is not the safest thing in the world – a speeding tank.

Again, we were driving with a physical roadmap to someplace we had never been and didn’t know how to get to, so we made a couple of wrong turns along the way – I’ll take responsibility for at least one of those – and it just kept getting later and later, and there were no cell phones at that point in time, so there was no way to call them and tell them we were going to be late, no way to call your parents – not that they could have done anything; they had no way to direct us. And, you’re speeding, you’re speeding, and finally, we get somewhere relatively – maybe 15-20 minutes away, and the inevitable happens, and we get pulled over by the cops.

Again, this is way out in the country, more farmland than houses, and the cops pull us over, and we try and explain the situation, but the car is registered to your dad, and I think it was something where the registration wasn’t in the glove compartment or something, and your driver’s license didn’t match up with something or other, and they had no way to confirm anything. But, 15 minutes later, we’re still sitting there, and there are now four – the entire Wellsville police department, all four cars, are now gathered around us, and there are spectators, and this is the most exciting thing that’s happened to them in forever.

We finally clarify that you do have a right to drive this car, and they let us go, and we finally get to the prom, and obviously, we're significantly late, and we've missed dinner, and we're frantically setting up as kids are standing around wanting to dance with nothing to dance to, and then, you start playing your normal prom playlist, which was classic '90s hip-hop, and we start noticing something is awry when no one is dancing, and a large majority of the boys at this high school prom are wearing cowboy hats, and people start coming up and making requests, none of which I have ever heard of, and you have.

And, I think the one country record – and, this was a physical record because it was 20-plus years ago – you own is “Achy Breaky Heart” by Billy Ray Cyrus, which you played – instead of one song, I think you played the whole album over and over again, praying that we would get out of there alive.

Matt: It was a very interesting experience. Somebody else had hired me to do it at the very last minute –

Seth: You were a stand-in.

Matt: I subbed in at the very last minute, which is why I was so late. Somebody canceled, so I was filling in for somebody, so it wasn't like I had booked – of course, if I had booked it, I would have gone through the songs they wanted. You go through the whole business process –

Seth: And, you might have said, “I'm the wrong DJ for you.”

Matt: No, you get the music. You go out and buy the stuff that they want to hear. And so, in this case, I was filling in for somebody, and I had no idea where the place was. It was supposedly – they're like, “I think it's 30 minutes away.” It was two hours away. And then, they didn't give me any information or that kind of stuff.

But, it was amazing though because we did end up having a blast of a time. It was kind of like that scene in the movie *The Blues Brothers* where they're driving around and then pull into Bob's Country Bunker, and they start playing the blues music, and everybody's like, “What is this?”

They're throwing stuff at the stage, and then all of a sudden, they're like, “Hey, let's try

to play the theme from *Rawhide*,” and they play it, and everybody goes crazy. From there, they’re able to figure out what the crowd wants to hear and play it, and we ended up doing that and having a blast, and by the end of the night, they loved us, and we got a rave review, and everything was great. But, it was one of those crazy, last-minute things that go along with the business.

And, I feel like it’s actually a really good business lesson in terms of 1). The types of crazy chaos that get thrown into your life in business, 2). You wind up in situations that are way out of your comfort zone and you have to figure out how to handle them on your feet –

Seth: Preparation, or in our case, lack thereof.

Matt: In this situation, yeah, exactly – and, you learn all these amazing business lessons. I feel like a lot of those kinds of experience really just shaped us though – coming up through that, having those experiences, and figuring out how to resolve them to the point where the client comes out happy at the end of it.

Seth: Yes. I never thought of that as a parallel for some of the business chaos that you and I have both gone through, but it is applicable.

Matt: It is definitely applicable. So, I feel like now, we should also set the scene in terms of where we’re doing this interview, because you and I only see each other once every few years, and right now, we are in sunny San Diego, California, right on the harbor. The marina is right out there. It’s a super beautiful location. We are drinking a bottle of Italian pinot grigio wine, which I know is your go-to varietal of choice, and this is a really nice one from Italy. So, we’ll be drinking through that during the episode.

And, we are actually at – we are attending the Traffic and Conversion Summit, which is the largest marketing conference in North America. There are over 7,000 people here this year, I believe. It’s just an incredible – we heard Richard Branson speak yesterday, a lot of the tippy-top, legendary marketers are here and doing presentations on what’s working for them now, and all that stuff. And then, of course, the parties are crazy. We were up at a sky bar last night which had a whole open bar and sashimi spread, and tonight, we’re going to literally go here – speaking of ‘90s hip-hop, Digital Underground in concert in just a few hours, which

is going to be totally epic.

So, we see each other periodically, and so, I'm just super excited that we could sit down and do this interview, and I think it's been really cool to watch each other's entrepreneurial journeys over the last 20 years and remaining in touch because it's amazing for me just to have seen yours, to follow yours, and all of that. So, let's now go to the next step. A shout-out, by the way, to everybody in our whole Buffalo crew, and Williamsville East High School, and FBLA, and Mrs. Remsen, and that whole era – big shout-out to everybody there. Those were formative years. But, after that, can you talk a little bit about your journey from there in terms of college, post-college, and how your trajectory evolved?

Seth:

Sure. So, I went to Syracuse University for a degree in acting. My original life goal was to be a Broadway star, and my supportive, neurotic Jewish parents had suggested I have a backup plan, which was business and finance, and during my senior year, I had seen my friends who graduated the year before me, who had all moved to New York and L.A. to make it in the theater business, come back for homecoming and tell stories of sleeping on people's couches, all their stuff was in storage, they had apartments the size of postage stamps, they were waitressing, waiting tables, doing three temp jobs, trying to make ends meet until they got their big break.

And, I realized that the starving actor thing is real. I had always thought it would never apply to me – that was other people – but I saw people who graduated a year ago who I honestly thought were more talented than I was going through this, and I said, “Oh, I don't want to do that. That doesn't sound fun anymore, now that it's real.”

So, when I had started Syracuse, it was – obviously, it's less expensive than it is now, but it was still about \$30,000.00 a year 20 years ago, which was expensive then, and after the first semester, my dad had called me and said, “We can't afford this. You've got to come home, you've got to transfer to UB, you've got to live at home. You can't do.” So, I called my mom freaking out and she's like, “We just got the tuition bill. We'll figure it out.”

The second semester, the same thing happens. Third semester, same thing happens. And, I realize that it's going to keep

happening, so I can stop worrying about it. But, when I chose not to pursue acting professionally as my full-time job, I said I was going to work in finance and help other families play the college financial aid game so that their kids don't have to go through the stress that I went through.

So, I became a financial advisor. I went to work for a Fortune 500 company – which no longer exists because it got bought out a couple of times – and got my securities license. The first day back from training, the branch manager says, “I got you a book where all your clients are going to come from your entire career.” I said, “Awesome, man. I'm 20-something. I'm going to go buy a Ferrari. I'm going to be rich. This is going to be great.” And, he hands me the phone book. If your listeners aren't old enough, they can google what a phone book is – a Yellow Pages – and, he said, “They're all in there, tiger. Go get them. Go make 300 cold calls a day and build a business.”

And, I didn't know any better, so I interrupted strangers all day every day asking for money, which is not very much fun, until eventually – my magic business is what saved me from that because I was still being a professional magician as a side hustle, as we would call it now, and I saw a full-page ad in a magic trade journal in a marketing course for magicians.

I didn't have the money because again, I was cold-calling, so I asked my parents to combine my birthday, Chanukah, and every other holiday in a year and buy me the course and they wouldn't have to buy me any other presents that year. They said yes. They bought me the course, I implemented it, and in 30 days, I was the busiest, most expensive magician in western New York.

So, it totally worked. I used my critique certificate to talk to the guy whose course it was, whose name is Dave Dee, who is now Chief Marketing Officer of No. B.S. Inner Circle and I said, “Would this work in my real job as a financial advisor?” He said, “Yes, it would.” I said, “Where'd you learn it?” He said, “From the two words that changed my life: Dan Kennedy.”

So, I started buying Dan Kennedy books, Dan Kennedy tapes, Dan Kennedy products. Dan's the godfather of direct-response marketing. For your listeners who don't know, he has 21 best-selling books on the topic and he's the highest-paid marketing

consultant on the planet.

And, I started learning stuff from Dan and started trying to apply it in my business. I married my sweetheart. So, a year goes by, and I went to her, and I said, “Honey, 12 months ago, we got married, nine months ago, we bought our first house, three months ago, we had our first baby, and a month ago, you quit your job to be a stay-at-home mom, and I’m the breadwinner, and I’m cold-calling. But, I need to go borrow more than our mortgage to hire this guy.”

And, she said no, and I asked her again every day for 30 days in a row, and your listeners can insert whatever profanity they want in her responses, and they probably wouldn’t be that far off because I’m persistent, and on day 31, she said, “You’d better pray this works.”

So, I went to work with Dan, and in two years, he took me from the 6,699th ranked advisor at that company – I was one up from the bottom; there were 6,700 advisors – to the top 30 nationwide for opening new accounts, and I was competing against people who had been building books of clients for twice as long as I’d even been alive.

So, I was written about in the company newsletter, I was written about in the largest trade journals in our industry, I was written about in a couple of best-selling books in our industry, and this was all pre-internet. This was all direct mail. The phone starts ringing from advisors who say, “I want to be you when I grow up.” I say, “I’m 20, you’re 40 or 60, but okay.” They say, “How do I do it?” I faxed Dan because he only communicates by fax and said, “What do I do?” He said, “You start a marketing company and do it for them.”

So, I said, “Okay,” and I let one advisor hire me, and I gave him one marketing campaign that he did and let him license it and use it in his town to test it. It worked, and I had a business – a second one. So, I said, “This is really going to work, this is a real company.” That was 12 years ago – that’s www.marketdominationllc.com.

We’ve gone from just me and one client to an awesome team of about 33 people right now, and we’ve served thousands and thousands of clients – literally, all over the globe. We’ve driven over 30 million prospects. We’ve done several thousand marketing campaigns,

produced over 80 different podcast shows, and it's been an incredible roller coaster of ups and downs along the way.

Matt: Can you talk about at that time – because I want to go on the trajectory and talk about a bunch of different marketing stuff, but at that time, when you were a financial advisor, the first things that you learned from Dan Kennedy that fundamentally changed the way you were marketing and what you were doing that just radically catapulted your ranking among the financial advisors? If you were to distill down to a few key principles at that moment that you implemented that had that big an effect, what would they be?

Seth: Okay. So, the first one is direct-response copywriting, the words that actually sell and get people to take action, which I've spent a decade and a half studying and become really good at. I'll give you one example. I had had an existing marketing campaign before Dan that I had gotten from an industry vendor, and it was a retirement planning seminar. You mail out 10,000 invitations to strangers and offer them a free dinner, and some of them will show up to hear your sales pitch, some of them will show up for the free food and that's it – we call those plate-lickers – and some of them will become clients.

I had done this campaign, and it completely flopped. It didn't work. I think the headline was, "Nine Biggest Retirement Planning Mistakes." I said, "Dan, I just spent all this money, and it totally flopped." He said, "Well, I could give you the easy answer and tell you what I did wrong, but why don't you survey some of the people? Physically call them, ask them if they remember the invitation, and ask them why they didn't respond." Survey your non-responders, which is a marketing lesson right there.

So, I did, and the overwhelming response I got was, "Nine retirement planning mistakes? Son, I've made 27. I could teach that class. I've made 11. I don't need to come." And, the copywriting lesson was that I changed the headline. So, it wasn't "Nine Biggest Retirement Planning Mistakes," it was "How to Overcome the Nine Biggest Retirement Planning Mistakes." So, we mailed it again, and magically, it worked. So, that would be Lesson No. 1: It's all about the words that sell.

Lesson No. 2 is the lead magnet. What are you giving people to get

them to qualify themselves, raise their hand, give you their contact information, and say, “Yes, I’m interested in what you have to offer,” and identify themselves?

So, the first thing we wrote was a long-form report – now, you would call it an e-book, except it was physical. It was 15-20 pages long. “How to Overcome the Seven Biggest Mistakes Affluent Western New York Families Make when Working with a Financial Advisor” was the original title. We did several different versions of it depending on the target market, but that was the first one. We drove response with multi-step direct mail. They called an 800 number because there was no internet, they left their information in a message, and then we mailed them out, and that’s what started it.

Matt: Right. And then, from there, how did that evolve once you decided to start the company to help other people do what you were doing? So, first, you tested something, and you figured out a system that worked for you, and then you started basically selling the system to other people that were noncompetitors because they were in other markets, but basically in the same space, so they could replicate the success you had, and then, how did the business evolve from there?

Seth: That’s exactly how it started. So, we started off just helping financial advisors because it’s what I did and what I knew, and that’s still half of our business, but what happened was other people would see the marketing and ask us if we could do it for them. We started getting phone calls – for example, I got phone calls from people in my own practice as a financial advisor that we had invited to seminars who said, “My brother is my advisor. I don’t need a financial advisor, but I own a business – that’s how I have money – and your marketing is really good. I haven’t seen anything like that. Could you do that in my business?” I said, “Dan, what do I do?” He said, “Do it!”

So, I said sure, let’s test it, let’s find out. Your butcher, baker, candlestick maker – whatever industry you’re in, the marketing principles are the same. Delivery might be different, messaging might be different, offers might be different, but the principles are all the same, so let’s apply those principles to your business and see if it works. Magically, it does, your business starts growing, and then we go in that industry and say now, I want 27 butchers and 57 candlestick makers because I got something that works in

that industry, and I can keep replicating that one.

Matt: Right. And, can you talk a little bit about over time – so, from 12 years ago until now, the marketing landscape has radically changed in terms of the medium, in terms of where people’s attention is, in terms of how to get people’s attention and how to communicate with them, and all of those things have changed dramatically. But, can you talk about what has not changed in terms of the principles and the fundamentals of an effective marketing campaign that have been true for all 12 years?

Seth: The same principles have been true for all time, not just my 12 years. So, it’s a combination of having the right message, the right target market, the right medium they prefer to be reached through, communicating how you are different, and having a system that puts all that together that delivers the right message to the right person in the right way with the right follow-up system to get them to take the right action.

So, it’s those principles, and the reasons why people buy or don’t buy, human behavior – the math has changed because the media have changed. Click-through rate didn’t exist 15 years ago that much. It wasn’t a common household metric as much, but response to direct mail was. So, the math may have changed, but the behavioral psychology – which is the most fascinating part to me – of why people do what they do and how to get them to do what you want – that’s stayed the same.

Matt: So, if you were to give advice to, say, people who are in the early stage of building their business, how would you encourage them to think about marketing at the early stage of an entrepreneurial venture? A lot of times, things are very overwhelming, meaning there are people who are doing effective marketing on tons of different channels – there are people killing it on YouTube, Instagram, email marketing, or any of these other things –

Seth: And, no one was killed during the production of episode, just so you know.

Matt: But, there are obviously a lot of channels that can be very successful, and you look at all these people who are very successful in doing all these very disparate things. How does a business owner develop – and, I’m talking here specifically about

the early stage of an entrepreneurial venture – a marketing plan that is best for them and their business? How do they think about that?

Seth: That's a great question. So, the most important thing to think about, which will be 50% of the success or failure of any campaign, is the target market. It's the who. Who are you going after? If you nail that, everything else works. Everything else will be much easier. So, I would spend half my time figuring out who I'm going after, and then they'll inform what media you use.

So, I wouldn't go try and do Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat – all those. I would pick one target market, one message that will resonate with them, and one form of media, and get really good at communicating that message to that market on that medium until I've got something really profitable, and then expand to other forms of media if my target market warrants it.

If you're selling quilting patterns to 87-year-old arthritic widows, Snapchat is probably not going to be the place where you're going to advertise. You're not going to start there; you're not going to end there. However, ads in quilters' magazines might be perfect. Facebook ads in front of that page – because they also watch their grandkids on Facebook – might be perfect.

Matt: And so, what should be the thought process for distilling down, and honing, and narrowing your target market? If you're a business owner, how do you think about doing that effectively?

Seth: So, I can answer that best with an example. So, we represent a lot of professional practices – because financial services is one, and again, it was the easiest place to branch out to in the beginning – so, we meet a dentist, he comes in during the early stages of our marketing career, and he says – so, the first question we ask in any marketing consultation is, "Who is your target market?" He says, "I'm a dentist. I can help anybody with teeth." I say, "Hang on, doc. Let me pull out my cell phone, call every single person in my contacts, ask them if they still have teeth, and then send them your way." He goes, "Okay, okay, I get it. That's not really how it works."

I said, "Okay, let's narrow it down." So, we analyzed his patient base – who pays the most, who refers the most, who's happiest,

who he likes working on, who's the most profitable – and we ultimately find out that his real ideal patient – after some deep-dive analysis – is actually a 40-50-year-old affluent suburban woman who's gotten divorced in the last six months, is starting to date again, is terrified of competing against younger women, wants to do something to improve her appearance, but doesn't want plastic surgery. That's a tightly defined niche market that we can then sell to – \$25,000.00 divorce smile makeovers.

We close his practice for six months and remodel it so it looks like a spa. You sit in a massage chair when you get your work done. You get a mani-pedi while you're getting your teeth worked on. There's aromatherapy, there's soft music, there are candles. You feel like you're at a high-end spa. You're drinking mimosas. You get picked up in a limo. You have to bring a friend with you so they sit there all day and go, "I want that." You get an image consultation with a stylist. She goes and picks out three new outfits for you. You get a photoshoot with a photographer for your new dating sites that you're going to be on in your new outfit. It's an entire experience.

He works four days a week instead of six, he does one or two a day, he makes eight times as much money in less than half the time he used to, he's insanely profitable, and he's got a waiting list. So, you nail the target market and you can reinvent your entire business and explode it.

Matt:

That's awesome. Let's talk a little bit now about networking because I feel like there are a lot of people that will listen to or follow a whole bunch of influencers and think they're really inspiring, interesting, and all that kind of stuff and they'll be very intimidated – not even be intimidating, but basically have it out of their mind that they should even attempt to interact with these people or engage with them, or if they were to, how would they do it or how would they do it in any kind of meaningful way? All that kind of stuff.

For a lot of your career trajectory, you've been able to engage with and develop relationships – including very substantive business relationships – with very high-level people in your space. You have met, you know, and in many cases, you've interviewed extensively, and in some cases, even done business with a lot of the tippy-top names in your space, the top marketers in the world.

And, that was based on your proactive efforts to go and network with those people. I want to ask you specifically about networking up, and when you have people who are celebrity-level – if you want to call it that – in your space, whosever space it is where they're in business.

Maybe you can even start with some stories. I would be interested to hear how you connected with Kevin Harrington, who people know from *Shark Tank*. He was one of the original sharks on *Shark Tank* with Mark Cuban and all those folks. Let me just start with that, and then we can backtrack to some of the principles and other stuff that you've done, but how did you initially connect with, build the business relationship with, and start hosting the *Sharkpreneur* podcast with Kevin Harrington?

Seth: Sure. So, I'm a huge *Shark Tank* fan, obviously. I got a phone call six years ago from a friend of mine in BNI, which is another networking organization, who says – it was a referral – “Hey, did you know that Kevin Harrington is coming to Buffalo to speak?” I said, “Nobody comes to Buffalo to speak. What are you talking about?” He said, “Oh, there's some sort of Entrepreneurs Organization regional conference celebrating their 20th anniversary, and he's the keynote speaker.”

I said, “What's EO?” I didn't know what it was. I found out what it was, found it, found out it was open to the public for that conference at \$300.00 a ticket. I bought a ticket. I had scheduled eight meetings for that day. I rescheduled them all so I could go. I went to the event and it was very cool. I saw Kevin speak. He's in the back, selling autographs and books, taking pictures for social media, and I'm in line, and I'm like, “If I just ask for a picture, I don't stand out at all. Everyone wants a picture. I'm a marketing guy. I've got to come up with something.” Think, think, think. It's my turn. Inspiration strikes. I say, “Mr. Harrington, I'm here to take you to the airport.”

And, this was pre-Uber, by the way, and he says, “Oh, that's okay. I'm just going to take a cab.” I say, “No, I insist. Let me take you to the airport.” He says, “Okay, but I've got two meetings first. Why don't you come with me and be a fly on the wall, watch me work, and then you can take me to the airport?” I said, “Hell yes, I would love to.”

And, I'm sitting there in the meetings, watching him do his thing, and I'm texting my wife – “Honey, I'm taking Kevin Harrington to the airport. I'm nervous. I'm shaking a little bit. This is super exciting.” And, she says, “In your car?” I said, “Well, it is Buffalo. I can't rent a Bentley by the hour.” She said, “Will you go clean your car?” We have three little kids, so it's a little messy, and I said, “I'm supposed to be in the meeting. I'm sitting next to him.” She says, “Say you have to go to the bathroom. Go clean your car, or at least throw everything in the trunk.” I say, “Okay, fine. When you're right, you're right.”

So, I cleaned my car, went back, watched the meetings, drove him to the airport very slowly, which – since he's heard me tell my version of this story, he now gives me a hard time about it. He didn't realize I was driving slowly at the time because he didn't know where the airport was in Buffalo. So, I had 25 minutes to pitch him on the way to the airport. He said, “Okay, you got me interested. Send me what you want to send me. Here's my address. Mail it to me.”

So, I mailed him a shock and awe box, which is another marketing lesson. The box had a DVD player in it with a custom message from me to him. His secretary interrupted his board meeting to hand it to him. She said, “You've got to see this. It's the coolest thing ever.” It's an ATA aluminum flight case. It looks like the kind the President would carry the bomb codes in.

They open it, they watch the video, he calls me from the meeting from his cell going, “She just interrupted me. I'm not happy about that, but this is really cool, and I will call you when I get off the plane.” Awesome.

So, that led to some consulting work for his company, and then we got hired to do work – he's got so many portfolio companies that he's invested in. We've done work for his angel investors network. He's sent As Seen on TV products to us to market and do digital tests on before he does an infomercial, and we speak at *Pitch Tank*, which is one of his events – the live version of *Shark Tank* – that happens three or four times a year.

I was asked to be a judge on that show, so I'm one of the judges who narrow down the applications to the live participants to the finalists that he, Steve Forbes, and John Mackey – formerly from Whole Foods – will

pick the winner of. So, we speak at that event together several times a year. We also speak at some other conferences, like this one.

About a year and a half ago, he said, “What are you doing that’s really sexy right now?” I explained our *Done For You* podcast into a book into authority-maker program. He didn’t need the book or the authority-maker part, but he said, “I want a podcast and I don’t want to do any work.” I said, “I’ve already got a successful show. Why don’t you come on my show, be my cohost, and we’ll rebrand it around your brand and *Shark Tank*?” We came up with *Sharkpreneur*, and he said, “Sign me up.”

So, that was about a year and a half ago. He and I do an episode together about once a week, and then I will do an additional episode or two myself of the original show, but still under the *Sharkpreneur* brand.

Matt: That’s an amazing story, and I want to go deeper on a couple of points. So, you were able to get his undivided, individual attention by offering to drive him to the airport, so for that 30-minute ride or whatever it was, you had his undivided attention.

Seth: I joke that I kidnapped Kevin Harrington. He was stuck in my car for as slow as I could drive and still get there to make his flight, so yes, he was a prisoner. He had no choice but to pay attention. I’m not suggesting you kidnap any celebrities, but it did work, and in fact, after I dropped him off at the airport, I went back to the conference, where David Meerman Scott was speaking. He’s the best-selling author of *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*. And, he was also in the back signing books, and I said, “Maybe lightning will strike twice.”

“Mr. Scott, I’m here to take to you the airport.” He said, “Oh, great. I was going to take a cab. Thank you so much. Let me finish signing autographs, and I’ll go with you.” I got another 20-30 minutes. He said, “Okay, send me what you got.” I sent him a shock and awe box. He promptly called me back and said, “Listen, I teach all organic inbound marketing and PR. I can’t do this. It would be incongruent with my brand, but I love what you’re doing. If I was teaching anything else, I would totally do it, but I love what you sent. Stay in touch.” And then, I went home and took a nap.

Matt: All right. I've got to go a little bit deeper on this. So, with Kevin Harrington, when you get someone's full, undivided attention like that and you're able to – we're using the word "pitch" – to them, I want to talk about exactly what an effective pitch to a person like Kevin Harrington is. If somebody's able to pitch and get the attention of someone that is well above them in terms of –

Seth: Yes. He's got a few more zeroes on the end of his net worth than I do.

Matt: – in terms of their level, but they're able to pitch that person, what does "pitch" mean, what type of pitch should you do, how should you think about it, how should you formulate it? What did you say to Kevin Harrington?

Seth: I've done this – not with rides to the airport, but I've done the celebrity pitch many times, and there are two things I've found that work the best. In Kevin's case, when I saw that he was coming, my entire team and I went through and analyzed everything we could find online.

So, we went to www.AsSeenOnTV.com, which he used to own before he sold it. We bought a bunch of different products from that website to see what the funnel for – it wasn't called this back then, but what the funnel was. We wanted to see what the follow-up sequences were and what the delivery was. We went through everything, and we prepared a pretty in-depth presentation of what we thought at the time were 12 holes in the As Seen on TV marketing funnel that we could fix that would add about a 20% increase in sales and profitability.

So, the pitch in the car was, "Here's what we do, here's who I am, here's what we did, here's what we came up with. I'd love to send you our analysis of what those 12 holes are and how we could fill it," and I told him what one was in the car to give him an example. He said, "You're right, we're not doing that. We should be doing that. Yes, I want to know what the other 11 are and how you would fix them." He said, "Twenty percent? You've got my attention."

Matt: Amazing. So, I think what's important there is that you did your research on how you could help and add value to him.

Seth: Yes, and the other thing – the other pitch that I've done that has

worked very well in the celebrity-level space is usually, most of them will have a charitable cause that they are very passionate about. So, we will research that and that fundraising funnel, and I have said to numerous folks like that, “Hey, I really love the work that you’re doing for X, Y, and Z for your foundation or whatever, and the mission that you’re on. I’d love to do a fundraiser for that. I’d love to help you raise money for that. Here are some ideas on how we could help raise money for that. Is it okay if we do that?” Of course, they always say, “Yeah, I’d love for you to help raise money for my charitable mission.”

Matt: Right. Now, you also – so, I think that’s really significant in terms of approaching someone of that caliber –

Seth: Because not all of them care about the money anymore.

Matt: Right. In terms of understanding what would add value to this person and be in their interest, and then, being able to research that and present something to them. “I have really studied something that’s important to you, and here’s how I think that I could add value to something that’s important to you.” That’s the framework.

Seth: Yes.

Matt: And then, if you can do that effectively and you put the time and work into that and deliver it, that is the pitch framework.

Seth: Yeah, absolutely. We saw Sir Richard Branson last night, and Roland, Ryan, and Perry of DigitalMarketer, who are putting on the conference, are friends of mine, so I know that the way they got him here is they wrote a multiple-six-figure check to his charitable foundation, in exchange for which he came and was here for two days.

And, the way they wrote the check without having to write it was they sold admission to a dinner the night before where 10 or 20 people got to have dinner with Sir Richard if they were each willing to write a \$15,000.00. So, they all got seats at the table, and Ryan, Roland, and Perry got him for free – got him to speak for free, in essence – by outsourcing, getting the other 10 or 20 people to write this several-hundred-thousand-dollar check to his charity so that he would do it.

Matt: That is brilliant. That's amazing. Can you talk a little bit more – you alluded to a number of things as you told your Kevin Harrington story, and I wanted to go deeper on a couple of them. In one of them, you referenced the “shock and awe box” marketing technique that you used with Kevin, and I know you've used that with other people as well. Can you explain that marketing strategy and how it works?

Seth: Sure. We're kind of famous for it. You can even do it in a local market. I did it as a financial advisor. So, let's say somebody had requested my magnet, my free report. They think they're just going to get the free report in the mail. No envelope, glossy paper, just a regular old brochure on steroids.

So, instead of that, we would send them a large box of some kind with a ton of other stuff in it so it has shock – “Hey, I didn't know you were going to do this” – and awe – “I can't believe you did this.” So, we will always include food that is nonperishable – so, we're in Buffalo, so we send Anchor wing sauce, we send Buffalo food packages with it – “Here's some popcorn, here's a cup of tea, here's some coffee. Watch this and have your popcorn.” We will always send a video. We have historically done DVD players because not everybody has a DVD player anymore. Your computer may not have a DVD slot, so we send the player, which is \$20.00.

So, we will put my seven bestselling books in the box, there will be a sales letter, there will be supporting materials, there will be swag – we've themed the box in different ways depending on who we were getting it to along with the gifts that go in it. We've sent giant bowling pins. We've sent autographed baseball bats by major league teams of their team. To win a bet with you, I mailed a watermelon from Buffalo to Los Angeles. So, if you put enough postage on it, you can send anything.

Matt: Yeah, and that's really – so, when you're going for those really premium clients and you're really trying to go upstream and get a high-profile person's attention by sending something that's just going to –

Seth: Outrageous.

Matt: – outrageous that's going to stand out and blow their mind, you're going to have their attention.

Seth: Yeah, because you've got to get through the clutter. They get 8,000 pieces of mail a day. They have three secretaries that are all gatekeepers that are going to throw out anything that looks normal. You have to do something that absolutely stands out, whether it's the way you're talking to them and what you're offering, whether it's a ride to the airport or a six-figure charity check, or what you're sending them in the mail to get a phone call.

Matt: Right. So, let me ask you this: On your podcast, you have interviewed a number of extremely financially successful, high-profile thought leaders, business leaders, and marketing leaders in the space, including billionaires like Steve Forbes and other people that you have met and know personally. You've spent time with them, you've been able to interview them and go deeper into a whole series of different things –

Seth: I got to hang out with Steve Forbes on his 70th birthday. It was pretty cool to sing "Happy Birthday" to him.

Matt: That's amazing. Can you talk about what you have learned or taken away from interviewing people of that caliber – the mega-multimillionaire or billionaire-level business owners, the people that created and made that – didn't come from that, but created and made that? What types, if any, of commonalities or themes in terms of traits, attributes, habits, or practices do you notice about that caliber of the successful individual?

Seth: That could fill a book, and it probably should, but I'll give you a couple. So, they all have had a – and, we don't always talk about this on the podcast, sometimes it's pre-show – but they all have had a morning routine that gets them in an optimal emotional state before they do any actual emotional work because "Who you are affects how well what you do works," which is one of my favorite quotes from Dr. Corey Malnikof.

So, if you're in a lousy state when you are writing marketing copy or when you're talking to someone, that radiates. All marketing is a transference of emotion. So, if I'm not excited about what I'm doing, you're not going to be excited about it. So, I've got to think it's the greatest thing since sliced bread and act like it for you to believe me.

So, they all get in an optimal state first thing in the morning, and then, they all think differently in terms of they're not necessarily worried about in-the-weeds, tactical, day-to-day, stressful stuff. They're thinking bigger-picture. They're thinking on a much higher level and making decisions from that place as opposed to – hey, there have been times when you and I were starting out that we were both like, “Hey, how do I pay the rent this month? How do I pay the mortgage?” My wife quit her job to be a stay-at-home mom, and her income vanished, and I wasn't making anything when she quit, and I had a new baby and a new house, so that created some stress.

When you think from that place, you create results from that place, but when you're thinking about Brian Tracy's zero-sum thinking, or Grant Cardone 10x thinking... I'm thinking, “How do I increase my business 20%?” How do I increase it 20 times? You have to think totally differently, which opens you up to a whole new level of spiritual energy, emotional energy, and success.

Matt: Can you talk a little bit about *Pitch Tank* now as well? You got into that through the Kevin Harrington relationship, and through that, you've met Steve Forbes and a lot of those types of people. Can you explain it? A lot of listeners are familiar, I'm sure, with the television show *Shark Tank*. They've either seen it or are familiar with what it is, but can you explain what *Pitch Tank* is and then talk about what your role has been there and what you've seen, experienced, and learned from it?

Seth: Sure. So, *Pitch Tank* is a live version of *Shark Tank*. It's in person. We do it several times a year. The largest one is every July in Las Vegas. At that one, there will be about 2,000 people in the room. We will have received several thousand entrepreneurial applications from people who want to pitch for funding, and we will narrow that down to about 25 who get to come to Vegas. They will pitch in a preliminary round.

I am one of the judges in that preliminary round. The two other judges and I will narrow it down to the top five, and then those five will pitch onstage in front of 2,000 people, Steve Forbes, John Mackey, Kevin Harrington, Bernt Ullmann, and Greg Writer, and they will decide who the winner is. And, it happens live in front of a couple of thousand people and it's a lot of fun.

Then, what will happen is because a lot of those 2,000 people are investors and are coming for this, a lot of those companies – even the ones who don't win first place – will get funded. People will say – we've raised over \$200 million doing *Pitch Tank*. We've had people who have a booth at this convention – every company that's pitching will have a booth. So, it's a lot of fun. It's like a live version of *Shark Tank*.

I've learned a lot from the thousands and thousands of applications we've received, from the hundreds and hundreds of pitches we've taken live, and seeing who wins. I've learned a lot about how you should pitch if you're looking for investment capital, which really applies to pitching anything – pitching a product. I've learned a lot about how you resonate with a large, disparate market – so, 2,000 people, all with different backgrounds, all with different desires, different fears, different investing histories in the room, and you've got less than five minutes to make them want to write you a check.

Matt: Can you speak to – I want to basically speak to two things. The first one is – so, you've been in two different spaces. You and I have both made business decisions to build our businesses and bootstrap our businesses instead of going out and trying to raise investment capital for our businesses.

Seth: Correct.

Matt: You've also been in spaces like *Pitch Tank*, obviously, where people are trying to raise investment capital for your businesses. Can you talk about – first of all, how should a business owner – an entrepreneur – think about whether they want to try to bootstrap their business or whether they should be going the route of trying to raise investment capital, and how that initial decision should be thought about?

Seth: Sure. It depends on what the business is. So, for example, I started the marketing firm with no money, and I could do it – I delivered the first service myself, and did the manual labor myself, and kept doing it until I couldn't fit it in my schedule anymore and had to start hiring people, which was out of revenue.

So, I started with zero and worked my way up the financial services industry. I had a Fortune 500 company backing me, but my paycheck went away – it was very low to start and decreased

every three months until it went to zero in 12 and I was 100% commission.

So, in terms of how you decide if you're bootstrapping, there are businesses where you can do it because it doesn't take anything except sweat equity to build in the beginning. There are businesses where you can't do it that way. For example, one of our *Pitch Tank* success stories, a gentleman who raised \$1 million from a single conversation, was...

I will explain this badly because I am not a biogeneticist, but it is a new chromosomal DNA test that detects cancer super early, so it saves lives, it will detect fetal abnormalities in pregnant mothers and tell them what's wrong with their baby sooner than normal amniocentesis, and if you miscarry, it can identify why so that you can decide if you should have another baby, and if so, how you can prevent it from happening again.

So, that requires a ton of medical R&D. Dr. Babu, who founded that company, could come up with the idea, but he couldn't test that to the point where Quest Labs would buy it without money, and unless he was sitting on millions of dollars, he couldn't fund it himself. So, he had to raise investment capital.

There is another company from *Pitch Tank* that has invented a new type of tablet for your hotel room. No more remote, no more messing around on the TV. You use the tablet to order dinner, order room service, get parking, view the city and see what things you want to do – it's really cool. They have tens of thousands of hotel rooms that now have this tablet that the hotel patrons absolutely love and use.

He has to manufacture these things, so unless he's got the money, he's going to need investment capital to pull it off, whereas if you were starting a chiropractic business, you need an office, you need tables, you need equipment – you might need money. But, there are information businesses, or other service businesses, or other virtual things that you could completely do with no or very limited investment, to the point where a small credit card would take care of it.

Matt: Right. So, if someone is starting or building or scaling a company – that they do want to seek investment capital and they do want to

go pitch for venture capital, they want to get angel investors, all that kind of stuff – based on all the stuff that you’ve seen, reviewed, judged, and evaluated, if you were to distill down, what are a couple of tips that you would give to business owners that make a great, compelling pitch deck if they’re trying to raise investment capital?

Seth:

So, Kevin actually has something called “Ten Steps to the Perfect Pitch” that you can google. It’s available for free as a download, and it will do a much better job of this than I will because he’s taken a lot more pitches than I have. But, I will say elements of a perfect pitch – you have to start with a pattern interrupt. You have to get their attention. Your brain – your reticular activating system – is constantly trying to filter out all the data that’s coming at it. So, you’re filtering out everything you think you already know so you can discount it and not pay attention to it.

A pattern interrupt would be something that stops you in your tracks and makes you consider what’s in front of you. So, whether that’s something that makes you stop scrolling on your Facebook news feed or gets an investor’s attention, you have to start with identifying what problem you solve in such a way that it gets someone to say, “Oh, I haven’t heard this before,” what’s different about what you’re doing.

And then, you have to make them realize the scope of the problem, that this is a real problem that people will pay to solve, and that you’ve hopefully made some progress in terms of getting people to pay you to solve their problem, so you have to interrupt them, tease them, and then please them with how much money they can make investing in this program, and then, how that’s going to impact their lives and how many other lives will be affected by their decision. Depending on how successful the investor is, they may not care as much about the money anymore. The money is a bonus. They care more about the mission. With Dr. Babu, you’re literally saving lives. That’s a pretty hard pitch to beat.

One of the previous winners of *Pitch Tank* was two college kids whose friend was a football player and died on the football field of a heart attack in high school because there was no defibrillator on the field. He had an irregular heartbeat no one knew about. So, they invented a portable electronic defibrillator that would run off your iPhone battery and is the size of a water bottle. Literally, it

could be in every coach's bag, and if only this existed, it would save all these lives, and you're like, "How do I not write a check for that?"

Matt: When I was asking you about all of these incredibly successful people that you're interacting with and observing about their habits and practices, you mentioned morning routines and a lot of the mental and emotional strategies used to get to a present state where they can be really effective in their work, and I want to ask you personally what you do in terms of your morning routine and your strategy for dealing with stress and dealing with all of the crazy stuff that bombards us as entrepreneurs every day, punches us in the gut, takes our wind out, and is the total raw chaos of being a business owner.

How do you manage stress? How do you get into that present state – morning routines or otherwise? What is your practice?

Seth: Sure. I don't manage it as well as I'd like. I'm a work in progress, so I will freely admit that. I'd say the best book I've ever read on the topic is *The Perfect Day Formula* by Craig Ballantyne of Early to Rise, and I know Craig personally. I think he's been on the podcast twice, and we've spoken together at events, and we've done stuff together. I've written for his website.

And so, my routine has changed recently because, in the last few months, we got a new puppy. He's actually improved my morning routine because he is forcing me to get up earlier, and in the interests of keeping him quiet, not barking, and not waking up my whole house too early in the morning, I am taking him for a walk, on which – so, I've incorporated Tanner, our puppy, into my morning routine. So, I am now doing my incantations, affirmations, and prayer on the walk with Tanner, so I'm in a super happy, optimistic, awesome state when I get back to the house, assuming he's pretty much behaved on said walk and hasn't driven me crazy – he's a new puppy.

And then, I will go over my goals, I will go over my day and what's coming, and then I will try – if he lets me – to get at least a 15-minute jumpstart of work done on the most important thing I have to do that day. So, I will have my top three things that don't require somebody else because I'm not going to talk to them when everybody else in my house is sleeping, so it can't be a phone call,

but if there's something in my top three priorities that I need to work on, if I can get a jumpstart on that before everybody else wakes up and he chills out after his walk, it's a bonus.

Matt: Can you say what you mean by affirmations and incantations and how you structure or choose those for yourself for a morning routine?

Seth: Sure. So, in my opinion, the best resource on that is Tony Robbins. He is the master of that. I've learned it from a number of places, but in my own personal opinion, his is the best by far. So, an affirmation would just be something that you say in your head over and over again that's positive and moves you toward your goal. That could be something as simple as "Every day in every way, I am better and better," the Émile Coué formula from the 1900s. Or, it could be like, "I am healthy, I am successful, I am financially abundant, I attract money to me like a magnet" – whatever that is, whatever those positive statements are.

The difference between an affirmation and an incantation is the next level because it has to be said out loud, it has to be said with strong emotion, and you have to put movement with it because, as Tony says, one of the best ways to change your emotional state really quickly is to change the way you're breathing and change the way you're moving your body, and he will say this at every seminar and every interview.

If you are depressed, do you know how to stand to be depressed? Have you ever been depressed? Sure, we all have. So, do you stand with your shoulders back or do you stand slouched forward? You're slouched forward. Are you taking deep breaths or breathing shallowly? You're breathing shallowly. Are you looking down or looking up? You're looking down. Et cetera. So, you know the pattern to put your body in to feel depressed.

On the contrary, you already know the pattern to feel amazing, but we tend to make the less resourceful choice. We don't even realize we're doing it, but if you change the way you're breathing, the way you're moving, and what you're focusing on, and you do it the right way, you can put yourself in any positive state you want. I don't do it as often as I'd like, but I try to do it a lot.

Matt: Do you have a...I'm going to call it a recovery or a rebound

practice? I feel like for me, in business, being an entrepreneur, you just get punched in the gut, punched in the eye, or whatever you want to call the metaphor on pretty much a daily basis. You can walk into the office like, “Oh, yeah, I’m feeling good. I’ve got all this stuff.” And then, you just get an email or something, and the entire wind gets knocked out of you, and you’re just like, “Ughhhh,” you know?

Seth: I have made that sound effect.

Matt: But then, you realize, “Oh, but I have these meetings, and then I have this podcast interview, and I’ve got to be on top of my game for it, and I have these employees I need to inspire.” I have all this other stuff. So, when you have that gut punch thing – which occurs to any business owner on a very recurring basis –

Seth: It took me a long time to learn. I thought I was abnormal. I thought it was just me, that I was screwing up, and I was like, “This sucks.” And, when I finally got into Mastermind and stuff like that, I realized everybody had that problem. I’m like, “Oh, I’m not crazy. I thought I was doing it wrong.”

A couple of months ago, Dr. Corey said to me – he came to speak at my Mastermind group, and we were talking about goal-setting and morning routines, and I had asked the question personally for my own benefit – but also for everybody in the group – “How do you deal with the anxiety of being an entrepreneur? I’m self-medicating, too much wine, too many pills. I don’t always have the most resourceful way to handle that.” And, he totally reframed it for me. He said, “If you are an entrepreneur and you don’t have anxiety, you’re not pushing hard enough.” I said, “Damn, that’s a reframe.”

So, I will give myself five minutes. After a gut punch, I will take five minutes to wallow and fear the negativity, the panic, the fear, the emotion, “What am I going to do now? I needed that money”, whatever it was. I will set a five-minute timer, wallow for five minutes, and then do something to snap out of it. I will get up, I will move, and then I will go, “I got to reset, I got to focus on everything that’s awesome,” and I got to ask myself an empowering question.

The quality of your emotional state is determined by the questions you are asking yourself, so I will ask myself – I will try; I’m not perfect at this –

“Where’s the gift in this? What can I learn from this? How could –” Napoleon Hill would say, “In every adversity, there’s a seed of an equivalent or greater benefit” in *Think and Grow Rich*. “What is amazing about this? Why did I attract this to myself right now?”

I will try and ask myself a series of positive questions to get myself out of that state. It doesn’t always work because I don’t do it perfectly every time, but I try and do it as well as I can, and most of the time, at the very least, it significantly helps. I’ve had some serious gut punches that cost six figures or more, so...amen.

Matt: Haven’t we all? Or, for anybody that’s in business and plans to be for a long time, they certainly will if they –

Seth: It’s coming.

Matt: Yeah, it’s coming, so prepare for it. But, that’s actually something that I talk to entrepreneurs about. Prepare your rebound regimen.

Seth: I wish I had thought of that years ago.

Matt: Exactly, because it is coming, and it will also come again, even if it has come. Let me ask you about your strengths and your weaknesses. All entrepreneurs have super strengths in one – or, if they’re really lucky, more than one – area, where they can really excel, but no entrepreneur that I’ve ever met is amazing in every area of the running of a business. You just can’t be.

Seth: No, you can’t be.

Matt: So, over the last 12-plus years, how have you approached the self-auditing process? “I’m really good at these things, but man, I am not quite as good at these other things, but I know that those other things need to be done well to run an effective business.” How do you approach that?

Seth: So, that has been a journey that I have gone on. I spent the first 10 ½ years of the marketing firm focused all on the marketing. Every book I read was marketing, every conference I went to was marketing, I ate, breathed, and slept it all my – I was always trying to become a better marketer.

I made some messes along the way because I didn’t learn anything

about running a business. There are many stories about that. So, what I realized about a year and a half ago was that I needed to start becoming a better leader and manager or hire someone for that, and at the time, I wasn't going to make the financial commitment to hire somebody, so I needed to get good at it.

I started reading management books, going to scaling-up conferences, and learning from other people. I said, "You know what? I'm a pretty darn good marketer. I could probably back off 10-20% of those hours and devote them to being a better business owner."

So, I've done that. I originally thought I should hire people who were good at what I was good at, which was a big mistake because I'm already good at it and it doesn't support me, so for the last year and a half, I've been hiring people who are good at things that I'm not good at. I'm a really good copywriter and I'm a really good marketing strategist. "Here's the overall big-picture vision."

I'm not the detail guy, and it was painful to learn that, but I have now hired people to build systems that sweat the small stuff and take care of every detail who love dotting every "i" and crossing every "t" and think a 47-step thing is the greatest thing since sliced bread, which is incredibly helpful, freeing me up to be the visionary as opposed to – I should not be personally running anybody's Facebook ads, even though I am good at it.

Matt: I think that's so important, and I feel like the self-awareness piece is really the quintessential skill that a CEO, business owner, or entrepreneur needs to have.

Seth: I learned it the hard way. I was stubborn. It took me a long time to figure out. It took a lot of pain to realize that, so if we can save your listeners from that, that would be a lot of therapy or alcohol they don't have to buy.

Matt: Totally true. Understand, acknowledge, and give yourself props for what you're good at, but also be aware that you need other players to compliment you in these other areas, and first of all, understand whether you're a business owner/CEO person or a COO-type person that needs to partner with a CEO-type person. Who are you in this whole business equation?

Seth: I have told my project manager, who will soon be promoted to chief operations officer, that she needs to fire me. I said, “You need to finish building what you’re building right now and these couple things, and if they work the way they’re supposed to, you will fire me. I don’t want to be CEO. I want to be CMO.” I want to market our company. I don’t want to touch anything else because it’s not – I shouldn’t – and, there are probably clients listening to this, but I shouldn’t be doing client service. I shouldn’t be building funnels, even though I’m really good at it. I shouldn’t be scripting videos, even though I’m really good at it. I should be marketing Market Domination.

Matt: How would you describe the highest and best use of your time? What are your peak skills and the highest value that Seth Greene should be doing? How would you describe that?

Seth: I should be doing podcast interviews, I should be writing books, and I should be creating marketing campaigns that somebody else executes for our firm.

Matt: Great. And then, hiring the people to fill in all those other roles that you’re not doing so that you can put the whole piece of the puzzle together as the business owner.

Seth: We’re pretty close. I’m almost free. We’re very excited about how close we are.

Matt: That’s awesome. So, let me ask you this now. You are also married to an amazing, wonderful woman who is also a dear and amazing friend of mine – shout out to Rebecca.

Seth: Hi, honey.

Matt: And, you have three amazing kids who I have been super fortunate to interact with and hang out with as frequently as I go back to Buffalo to see you guys. And, one of the things that I’ve known about you for many years as a friend, and subsequently, after you got married, as a husband, and subsequently as a father, is that you really prioritize your family. And, that means – I feel like a lot of people would say this or acknowledge this, but I feel like you really execute and deliver this – you really put time and mental and emotional energy and effort into both your marriage, which is now well over a decade –

Seth: Fifteen years.

Matt: Fifteen years – and your kids’ lives, and raising them and mentoring them, and at every level, whatever the extracurricular stuff they’re into, you’re involved with that. You’re coaching your kids and going to everything – you’re really involved and you’ve really prioritized that.

I want to ask you about how you compartmentalize and manage and structure your time in terms of your passion and desire and prioritization of business success, obviously, and what needs to go into that for any entrepreneur to be successful, but also, the time that you put into – which is obvious to me since I follow you on Facebook and have known you for many years – both your marriage and raising your kids, and how you balance that and choose the allotment of your time.

Seth: So, Barbara Corcoran, also from *Shark Tank*, also once told me that balance is bull and that boundaries are bull. She has a work cell phone and a personal cell phone, and when she walks out of the office, she physically turns off her work phone, and they cannot get her until the next day. She’s like, “No one’s going to die.” None of her work people have her personal phone. They just can’t get her.

I haven’t gotten to that level yet. I would love to. So, Rebecca will sometimes be mad at me because I always answer the phone, and she’s like, “That’s great for his clients, not so much for us.” So, as you said, I’ve coached eight years of every soccer team Max has been on until he’s moved up to a more competitive league that has professional coaching. I’ve been to almost every game, except when I travel. Ella’s an actress, and I take her to the theater and have been to every show, and have been to Lily’s dance and gymnastics recitals, and...

You’ve just got to make the time and prioritize it. I don’t know if there’s a secret to it. I just try and get home every day by 5:00 or 5:30 East Coast time, and there are times that our business suffers because of that, and I have often said, “I can always make more money. I can’t make more time.” So, they’re little – they’re 12, 10, and 6 while we’re recording this – I’ll never get the time back, so if I miss out on a business deal because I’m not going to work until 8:00 at night and

I want to be at a soccer game, I'll live.

Matt: I think what is amazing is the way that you prioritize that and the way that you put effort into all of those familial relationships. Fifteen years into your marriage, you're still doing those – I remember that elaborate Valentine's Day scavenger hunt gift that you gave Rebecca, and if you want to talk about that, you can.

But, just the thought and the mental and emotional energy after a business day, which any business owner knows can be insanely stressful – how are you able to mentally and emotionally refocus and become present with your family when you walk in the door to be excited about what your kids are doing, and to be excited about, and thoughtful, and to creatively be able to do these amazing things for your wife and so forth? How do you switch that gear so you don't just have the time to sit for your kid's soccer game, but to be present with your family members?

Seth: So, Rebecca will tell you I don't do it perfectly. There are plenty of times when she will remind me, "Hey, get out of work mode. You're home now." Fortunately or unfortunately, I have a really short commute. Our office building is less than five minutes from my house, so I don't have half an hour in traffic to reset. I'm glad – it would help, but I'll take the five-minute commute.

So, I try to reset on the car ride home. It isn't always enough time. I try to focus on what's going on at home. I do work at home sometimes; I will do work from home, and Rebecca's like, "You just got home and you're working." I'm like, "Well, do you want me physically here and doing some work or do you want me to stay at the office for another hour?" She's like, "No, you're home. You could help me do stuff around the house and I can interrupt you. I'd rather have you home." So, it's not perfect, but I do my best.

The first eight years of Max's soccer career, I did not sit at any of the games because I was a coach, so I was up and yelling at the players. Now, I finally get to sit and watch, and it's someone else's problem to get the team to do what they're supposed to do. They're much more qualified than I am in that department. I've got some street cred with Ella because I've got an acting degree from Syracuse, which is one of the top three drama schools in the country.

I just try and focus and pay attention to what they're doing and put my energy into them or Rebecca, and I try and get all the work done before I get home. I don't always do that. There's probably at least one day a week where I'm doing some work at home before the kid activity.

Matt: Can you talk a little bit about the way that you are educating your kids about finances and about entrepreneurship? One of the things that have been exciting, fun, cute, amazing, and inspiring for me to watch is, in particular, what you've been doing with Ella. I don't want to say anything about it, I just want you to be able to talk about it in terms of – and, you can maybe start with how old she is, and the entrepreneurial things that she's doing and you're doing with her, and how you're mentoring her, because that's really amazing.

Seth: Okay. I'm going to back up. I'm going to start with Max because he's the oldest. I started with Max. So, when Max was maybe 6 – I don't remember – I bribed him to read *Think and Grow Rich*, which is, in my opinion, the greatest book of all time. I paid him \$1.00 a page to read it and got in trouble from his first-grade teacher because we would do the reading log of the book they're supposed to read every night, and after the first week, we got a phone call from the school. "He's got the same book listed every single night." "Yeah..."

"Doesn't he finish it? Isn't he reading *Hop on Pop*? Shouldn't he be moving on to another book?" I had to explain to her, "No, he's reading *Think and Grow Rich*. It's 365 pages. It's going to take a while." And, she's a teacher. "What's *Think and Grow Rich*?" So, I started him on *Think and Grow Rich*. Max and Ella both have played Cash Flow, Robert Kiyosaki's board game, with me multiple times, and we have the board game app on his iPad so he can – he used to play it on there as well when I wasn't home to play with.

So, Max's first business venture was an affiliate marketer. He would make YouTube videos reviewing toys and have an Amazon affiliate link, and if people bought, he got a commission. If they didn't buy, he didn't get a commission. He also made videos about what toys were bad so he would have credibility. He didn't say to buy everything. He would say, "I played with this for a day, and now it's dumb."

So, we would post those videos on my wife's blog. Rebecca is one of the top 100

mommy bloggers in the country. It's www.whinypaluza.com. She's got a book coming out shortly, which she doesn't know will – there's going to be a funnel behind it and more revenue opportunities.

Ella is 10. She's our actress, so she loves to perform, so for the last 70-plus days as we're recording this – so, I was in a challenge with Russell Brunson who said, "You've got to post Facebook Live every day, blog every day, or do something every day." So, I chose Facebook Live, and I started doing a Facebook Live every day about marketing, and I was doing the nine rules of marketing, and on day three, Ella came upstairs – I was hiding in the bedroom recording it, and she came upstairs, walked in, asked if she could join me on the show, and started commenting. I was like, "Damn! You've been paying attention!"

She had some really insightful, amazing things to say on Episode 3, and I said, "That's really good! You should stay on the show!" She was like, "Oh, my God, I would love to, Daddy!" So, it became the Ella and Daddy – it was supposed to be the Daddy and Ella show, but she kind of took it over. It became the Ella and Daddy show because she's 10 and cute, so everybody wants to see her now. I've become the straight man to her comedy act about marketing, and people ask her questions, people hire her, she's gotten clients from – she's written a children's book that's been published.

It's a board book. It's called *The Fastest Raindrop*. It's from www.ellaraegreene.com. She's just finished up her second book, which we're working on now. She's got a Facebook fan page with 6,000 followers, she has a community of raindrops – she's made a name for them after the raindrop book – and she's had clients hire her to write children's books about their businesses. Even though she wants to be an actress, she's got this nice side hustle.

Matt: That's amazing, and she's following in your footsteps because you also –

Seth: Yes, started as an actor.

Matt: – started as an actor, and were in all the high school plays, and went to school to study drama and business.

Seth: She's way ahead of me. She's 10 and has already had her first

audition for Broadway, which I never even got to, so she's way ahead of me.

Matt: That's amazing that you took her to New York City to audition for Broadway at age 10.

Seth: She was 9. So, we got a call – they didn't know we weren't in Manhattan, they didn't know we didn't live there. "We'd like Ella to audition for the role of young Anna in *Frozen*," and we don't live there – "Oh, you can send a YouTube video for the submission," and Rebecca and I talked about it and said, "They won't get all of her sparkle on the YouTube video. There will be thousands of girls sending in YouTube videos. We have to go."

So, I was fortunate enough to be able to move all my meetings that Monday, get last-minute plane tickets and be able to afford it, pull her from school, and fly to New York. She did her audition, crushed it, did great, and then we spent the rest of the day wandering around Broadway checking stuff out, and then flew home.

Even though I don't think she got the part – they never called and said she got it or she didn't, but we're assuming she didn't get it because it's been six months. She still has the story of it. "At 9, I flew to New York and did a Broadway day with Daddy," and that confidence for that audition – now, for every other audition in Buffalo, she's like, "Well, I already auditioned for Broadway, so I'm not really nervous about this anymore."

Matt: That's so amazing. Can you just give an example? It sounds amazing, but I've seen her local news coverage –

Seth: Yeah, she's been on TV.

Matt: – of her book that – she wrote a children's book and got local news coverage for writing – because you helped her to publish the book.

Seth: Yes, we own a publishing company as well.

Matt: And, can you talk – you alluded in passing to the fact that she has gotten paid clients. Can you give an example of one of those?

Seth: Sure. There's a dog trainer in another state – in Virginia – who we have communicated with. She has watched our Facebook Live, and

we have asked her for advice about Tanner, our golden retriever puppy, and before we got Tanner, Ella was afraid of dogs. She didn't want a dog. When we asked her, she said, "No, I do not want a dog." Nobody wanted a dog except for Rebecca. Rebecca got a dog. So, now, Ella is the one who loves Tanner the most, spends the most time with him, and has bonded to him the most.

So, Ms. Anna said, "Hey, can you write a book for me about a little girl who was afraid to get a dog, got a dog and loves the dog? And then, I can use that and give that to my families that are considering a dog, but where the kids are scared, and this will make them feel better." So, Ella is almost done with writing the outline for that book, and then we have to actually finish it, do the illustrations, and turn it into another book. That will be the third book.

Matt: That's amazing. That's so amazing. And, she's so excited about it, too. When I tune in to watch the Ella and Daddy show, she is so excited about it, she's into it, she plays the guitar –

Seth: Strums, yes. She sings the intro.

Matt: – the musical intro – she sings the intro, but then actually dispenses marketing advice.

Seth: Yup. There are people on the show you've seen who will say, "I have a question for Ella," and will ask her opinion, and she will answer, and I'll be like, "That is what I would have said," or "That is better. I'll just shut up and watch."

Matt: That's amazing.

Seth: There are days that I have a gut punch or a stressful day and I don't want to do the show. I need a day off. Ella's like, "It's my favorite part of the day, Daddy," and I can't resist that. I guess I'm doing the show.

Matt: That's so amazing. Let me ask you this: In terms of your entrepreneurial journey, what would be, for example, a business mistake that you can recollect that you eventually learned from and grew from? Can you share a mistake and what you learned from it along your journey?

Seth: I'll give you two, and then I know we've got to wrap up. I'll give

you two that started with gut punches where we had to turn lemons into lemonade. So, we did a marketing consultation with someone who had heard me speak – one of the largest personal injury law firms in a multistate region – so, one of those firms that have commercials on all the time.

We had nine months of back-and-forth, and he says, “You’re hired. Give me a contract on Monday, and we’ll get you a check.” He would have been our largest client ever. It was a multiple-six-figure contract with performance incentives that could have gone... He’s building a new office building. We can move into his office building. He’s got space. It was a dream thing.

At the same time, we had recently had our third baby, and we were looking for a new house. So, I gave numbers to the mortgage broker, who tells us, “This is what you’re qualified for.” Rebecca goes shopping for houses in that price range. That price range was based on that check coming in. And, weeks go by, back-and-forth emails, phone calls, messages – no check, no contract. I’m starting to freak out because she wants to put an offer in. This is about 30 days later.

So, I take the day off, I grab a book, I go sit in his office, and I tell the secretary, “I don’t have an appointment. He won’t return my calls or emails. I just need an answer. I’ve got a book. I canceled all my meetings. I’ll sit here all day. I will sit here for eight hours until I get face time.” She gets all huffy, storms into the back, and comes back a couple of minutes later. “He changed his mind. He’s not doing it.” That’s a multiple-six-figure gut punch.

I can’t even – I’m screaming in my car. I can’t even call Rebecca. I just text her. She goes and drops the kids off at her parents’ and meets me at home with a bottle of Jack Daniels because she’s a wonderful wife, and then I have to tell her, “We can’t buy that house. It was based on this check, which isn’t coming. We’re still going to get a nice house, but you’ve got to shop a couple hundred thousand dollars cheaper.” So, that was not a good day.

But, the lemonade we made was when we realized later he would have been a very difficult client to please. We would have also been in his building, so he would have been our landlord. He was also a lawyer; it would have cost him nothing to sue us and make our life miserable if he wasn’t happy.

It would have taken so much time, and he would have been such a large percentage of our business. We wouldn't have marketed, we wouldn't have gotten other clients, it would have been way too big a percentage of revenue dependent on one person and too precarious a position to be in. So, we learned not to spend the money until the check clears and not to have too big a percentage of your business tied up in one source of revenue.

I will give you one more example, and then I know we've got to wrap up. Our podcast-to-book service has 50-plus steps that get done over six months. They used to all be in my head. I used to have to tell each team member every day what to do for every client. I didn't always remember where everybody was. The more clients we got, the bigger mess I made, the more I pissed off people – both clients and team members I had – until I realized I needed a system that does all this management for me.

So, we hired a software developer, we built something for ourselves that literally tells every employee what to do every day for every client without me having to do it. It never forgets, never misses a step, nothing ever slips through the cracks, and that has spun off into multiple separate software companies building that process out for other entrepreneurs.

Matt: All right. So, I want to close out with the lightning round here, Seth, but before we do that, I want you to tell one more story, which is how you sold your house in one day using your marketing techniques.

Seth: In western New York, which is not a hot real estate market.

Matt: In western New York, which is not a hot real estate market, you literally sold your house in one day by simply applying your marketing techniques. Can you tell that story?

Seth: Yeah, super quick. So, I built a Facebook fan page for our house, I did 20 or 30 posts, every post was a picture of a different room, or a post of the nearby shopping malls, or whatever. I ran fan ads to get fans for the house, I ran engagement ads to build up an audience of people who had liked or commented on a post who are all geometrically – geographically in the school district the house was in but didn't live there, who had two kids at young ages.

So, our target market was a family with one or two kids who wanted to do move into the school district who didn't live there yet. And then, we did an open house, which was an event on Facebook. We ran an event response ad to everybody who was engaged with our page. The real estate broker said she'd never seen anything like it. We filled the open house. Normally, she sits by herself and there are a couple of people. She had a standing-room-only crowd. And, we had a bidding war, which didn't happen back then in western New York, and we sold it for over asking in, again, less than 24 hours.

Matt: That's unbelievable. All right. Seth, at this point, are you ready for the lightning round?

Seth: Fire away.

Announcer 1: The lightning round!

Matt: Who are the top three marketers today that you would recommend that people follow and pay very close attention to?

Seth: Dan Kennedy to learn direct response marketing and copywriting from, Russell Brunson, who is the founder of Click Funnels, a leading authority on how to build a marketing funnel online, and then, Digital Marketer, which is Roland Frasier, Ryan Deiss, and Perry Belcher, who are arguably the most cutting-edge digital marketers on the planet.

Matt: Whose conference we are at right now, in fact. Okay, what is one book that you would recommend to the audience that has influenced you the most or that you would most recommend people read?

Seth: I've got a list of 18. Do you want one? I can't do one. I'll give you *Expert Secrets* by Russell Brunson, *Marketing to the Affluent* by Dan Kennedy, and *80/20 Sales and Marketing* by Perry Belcher. And, for dealing with the gut punches and for inspiration, *The Four Dollar Sandwich* by Dr. Corey Malnikof.

Matt: Awesome. What is one app or productivity tool that you are currently using that you would recommend to people? It could be software – any kind of program that you're currently using that you'd recommend people check out.

- Seth: An online calendar so people can schedule on your calendar without going back and forth 20 times. I use www.youcanbook.me. There's a ton of them that work. I'm a big fan of Evernote. That's what I got.
- Matt: What is one travel hack you would recommend that you have used?
- Seth: Well, the easiest one would be if you have a social media following, offer to the hotel to do a video review of one of their suites for your social media following, and a lot of the time, if they're available, they will just upgrade you as a thank you.
- Matt: Awesome. Knowing everything that you know now, what advice would you give to your 20-year-old self?
- Seth: Wow. It's going to be okay. Hire sooner. Build systems yesterday.
- Matt: Awesome. Last lightning round question, Seth: If you were starting today in 2019 and nobody knew who you were, you didn't have any list, nobody knew your name, you had no networking connections at all, you had \$500.00 and a laptop, and you were trying to figure out how to start a business, what would you do to start that business today?
- Seth: I would build a list of the people who had done what I wanted to do in the industry I would want to do it in, I would start a podcast, I would do it all on Zoom so it was free, and I would interview them on my show, get to pick their brains for free, and then use that information and those relationships to launch my company.
- Matt: Amazing. Seth, I want to thank you so much for being here today, and I want to ask you how people can find out more about you, about market domination, how they can follow you on social media, how they can get in touch, how they can see what you're up to, learn about what you're doing, and connect with you.
- Seth: The website – www.marketdominationllc.com. If you want to enter to win a free podcasting studio, which is a couple hundred dollars' worth of equipment, go to www.podcaststudiocontest.com. If you want to follow me on social media personally, it's Seth Greene, and professionally, it's Market Domination LLC on Facebook and
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everywhere else.

Matt: Amazing. Seth, thank you so much for being here. This is an interview that I've wanted to do for a long time, and I'm super excited that we knocked it out today. Thank you so much for being here, buddy.

Seth: My pleasure, and make sure you tune in to the *Sharkpreneur* podcast to listen to me and Kevin.

Matt: Absolutely. We're going to link everything up to the show notes, so, everything that we've talked about today, all the books that Seth recommended, all the places to contact him, all the people that were recommended that Seth encourages you to follow and look at their stuff – we're going to put everything in the show notes at www.themaverickshow.com, so just go there and it'll be in one place. Seth, thank you for being here.

Seth: Thanks for having me.

Announcer 1: Be sure to visit the show notes page at www.themaverickshow.com for direct links to all the books, people, and resources mentioned in this episode. You'll find all that and much more at www.themaverickshow.com.

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