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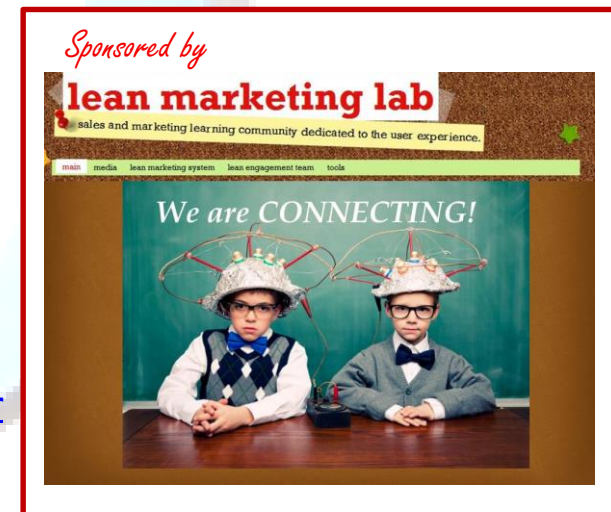
Implementing Lean Marketing Systems



Capturing the Legacy of Peter Drucker Guest was Peter Gandolfo

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Note: This is a transcription of an interview. It has not gone through a professional editing process and may contain grammatical errors or incorrect formatting.

Transcription of Interview

Joe: *Welcome everyone. This is Joe Dager, the host of the Business901 Podcast. With me today is Peter Gandolfo. He is the Business Development Director at the Drucker Institute. Peter joined the Drucker Institute after nine years at Mattel, where he focused on brand strategy, product development, and the creation and execution of consumer marketing plans. Peter, I would like to welcome you and could you start the podcast out and give me a little background on the Drucker Institute.*

Peter: Sure. First of all, thank you for inviting me to be a part of this. I'm very appreciative. To give you a little bit of background about the Drucker Institute, in 2006, following the 2005 passing of Peter Drucker, more than a hundred Drucker-like thinkers gathered in Claremont and they wanted to answer the question, 'What is Peter Drucker's legacy?' In the end, they decided that it is a collection of ideas and ideals that should be acted upon for future generations of leaders responsible for companies and communities in which we work and live. As a result of that, the Drucker family and the board of the Drucker archives decided that the best way to keep his legacy alive was not simply to look backward, referring to his writing and books, but to look forward by building on his wisdom and applying it to important contemporary issues.

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Joe: *Did Peter Drucker have a vision on how his legacy was going to play out or anything? Did he ever lay any groundwork for that?*

Peter: He helped create the archives, and he was intentional in that creating them, he did not set aside any financial resources for us. He believed strongly that if this was going to survive, it wasn't going to be just be based on him setting up some legacy project that would pay homage to him. He gave them access to the intellectual property let's say for using consulting services and working with different organizations. As he would like to say, he wanted the organization to fight for its life, just like any business or idea that his clients were working on.

Joe: *I think of the Drucker Institute, and you had a historic career at Mattel, and that's quite a change or it seems to me it is. What attracted you to join the Drucker Institute?*

Peter: Well, first I'd like to say I loved the time that I had at Mattel. It was very motivating to make toys and to stimulate creativity, and help kids develop new skills. But as you mentioned earlier, I had passed nine years there and as I came up on a decade or approached the decade in the industry, I felt like it was really time for me to diversify my experience to avoid limiting myself to being just a toy guy for the rest of my career.

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As I started to look at what other opportunities were out there, there were several things that drew me to the Drucker Institute. First, while I wasn't intimately familiar with Drucker's work, I had read some of it in business school and I think I'm embarrassed to admit, I lost touch with who wrote it and what some of the ideas were, and once I reconnected with the information, it aligned directly with my personal values. Drucker's idea that the private sector, non-profits, and government share responsibility for the well-being of society really resonated with me. I feel that parties on both ends of the political spectrum too often expect too much to come from one of these sectors at the expense of the others.

Second, 11 years out of Business School, I had come to the realization that my education was not over. It didn't end with my last class at the MBA School and so the opportunity to learn about and apply Drucker's principles while also gaining some knowledge about a broader spectrum of businesses outside of the toy industry really seemed like the ideal complement to the foundation I received at Mattel and in Business School. The last thing I'd say is that the idea of joining a small and diverse team in an inspiring workspace on a university campus was really compelling.

Joe: *What role do you play at the Drucker Institute?*

Peter: I am focused on workshop's practice. I guess I should back up for a second and say that we offer at least one program with three different audiences - the non-profit

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community, government organizations, and then the for-profit world or corporations. So I focus on UN/Workshops practice primarily in serving for-profit companies. We do occasionally work with non-profits, and it's a consulting service for senior executives. My role there is to engage with clients, both past, present, and future as they seek to do something meaningful within the organization. For many clients, I help identify the types of questions they need help in answering and then I work with our design team to create a custom UN/Workshop experience to help them work through those questions.

What ends up happening is a half-day to a one and half day session during which we take those executives through dynamic, collaborative exercises, all of which are grounded in Drucker's framework of course. We focus really on asking them the right questions and let the participants make the decisions that are right for their organizations. We never pretend to be the experts in their business.

Joe: *When I looked at your Website, I was actually – the first thing, I was somewhat floored by it because I expected to see these black and white pictures and all the historical archives out front. But the first thing I saw was 'Yesterday/Today/Monday' and it was like that idea of moving forward. We're not looking at past things here. We're looking at using this information in moving forward. That was the impression I got.*

Peter: Well, hopefully, you were floored in a good way, and we addressed this

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expectation you mentioned of the black and white and looking backward through our 'Yesterday/ Today/ Monday' message. The yesterday really speaks to our work that is based on the timeless wisdom of Peter Drucker. The today really speaks to the fact that we're focused on the urgency leaders feel to successfully meet their greatest challenges and opportunities. And Monday really points to our proven ability to help people move quickly from ideas to actions, to results.

When Drucker would do his consulting engagements, he'd often tell his clients, "Don't tell me you had a wonderful meeting me. Tell me what you're going to do on Monday that's different." And this message really carried through much of our work and it's actually our tagline. 'Tell me what you're going to do on Monday that's different...' And that is very much the way that we measure our ability to help organizations; it's not based on the things and good feelings they have walking out of the experience, but really what actions do they take following a UN/ Workshop.

Joe: *I think that's an excellent way. I've attended some workshops and presentations on the note of what can you do on Monday morning because that is the whole essence of it. We can read, we can go to workshops and stuff, but what are we going to put into action I guess.*

Peter: Absolutely, and we try to make sure that we give them the tools to stay on focus. I follow up with them the Monday after a workshop experience to offer my support in helping

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them follow through on their commitment. And we check in even a month afterward to see if there's anything they can share with us in any areas where they are stuck, and we can help them get back on track.

Joe: *I was also kind of surprised that I saw Lean and Lean Startup principles within the Drucker framework there, and not that he wasn't about continuous improvement and different things, but how does that thought parallel with Drucker?*

Peter: I think the concepts are very complementary. To give you an example, Drucker promoted a concept he called 'Planned Abandonment' which is a systematic process for assessing existing products, services, programs and those could be internal or external, that could be abandoned so that a team can shift human and financial resources to opportunities that will generate better results. I think this works very well with Lean because it presents opportunities to right size resources based on the returns that they generate and that sometimes means eliminating that program or some of the resources completely and sometimes it just means to reduce them to be in commencement with the results that you expect. We recently delivered a UN Workshop to a group of Lean healthcare executives from around the country and what stood out to them was that the process challenged them to think about where those resources would go when they stopped doing something. They were accustomed to the idea of cutting things out but they never really thought about where they would reallocate those resources.

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As far as the Lean Startup principle, I think it's aligned with Drucker's work in that both put the customer and what the customer values at the center. The 5 Y's would frame up an analysis with questions and while the questions that we ask may be different, we do follow a similar approach in asking the right questions, instead of claiming to know the answers. I'd say that Drucker believed that innovation is defined as anything that creates a new dimension of performance, and this would include the Lean Startup method of validated learning which promotes adapting a product as insights come forward, and it's not always just this Big-bang theory of innovation.

Joe: *I noticed about the Website, you have the Monday tag up there, but what you said earlier in the podcast about corporations and non-profits and government, all have an equal role in making society better. Is that really the Drucker framework going forward? I mean is that a key in thinking about Drucker and how he'll continue in the future?*

Peter: Absolutely. I mean Drucker provided consulting services to leaders in all areas including non-profits and government organizations. It was important to him, and it continues to be important to us to make sure that we have strong programs and strong support to encourage good management, innovation, and good decision making in all areas. In the non-profit world, we have an award for the most innovative non-profit that applies every year in the public sector. In government, we have a program called the 'Playbook'

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which is innovation and leadership development training program that we offer in partnership with the national league of cities. In the for-profit world, we do the UN/Workshops I've been talking about, but we also have programs like our CEO forum where we'll bring together CEO's from a wide variety background both public and private and small and large, and facilitate an exchange of ideas around a concept or theme that is relevant to Drucker's work, but also ties in with something that's particularly important to the leader that we might have co-chair or lead the CEO forum.

Joe: *When we talk about Lean and more of the traditional Lean Toyota type thinking, Dr. Deming always gets brought into it a lot and I know that both Deming and Drucker had a deal of great respect and had met from talking to Kevin Cahill and Joyce Osinga, but have you seen any in the archive anything from Drucker's perspective of what Deming taught in the quality movement that Deming led?*

Jeff: By no means an expert in terms of the archives, there is a wealth of information available and we do have a dedicated archivist that I'm sure would take it as a great honor to track down some of the material between Drucker and Deming. I do know that they worked together, and they had a great deal of respect for each other, but that doesn't mean they always agreed. I think the two of them would continue to challenge each other's ideas but that both of them would appreciate the value of their different points of view. I mean who wants to be surrounded by people who only tell them that they are right all the time.

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And even as I look at Peter Drucker's writings, some of his ideas evolved over time and I'd like to think that Deming would do the same. The world was better having both of them in here and offering an exchange of ideas.

Joe: *One of the things that always amazed me about both of them is so much of their work occurred in the later stages of their life. They put out a lot of information.*

Peter: Yes. Peter Drucker published 39 books and two-thirds of them were written after the age of 65, which is a really inspiring lesson to all of us that at any age, we have plenty left to contribute to the world.

Joe: *What's the future for the Drucker Institute? I mean, what is their vision?*

Peter: It's easy for me to imagine a future in which innovative leaders and for-profit, non-profit government consistently use Drucker's principles and in many aspects of managing their business, we've seen their impact on the community. And the next generation of leaders look not just on the writing of Peter Drucker but also the guidance they receive from the Drucker Institute in shaping innovations of tomorrow.

Joe: *How can someone contact you and learn more?*

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Peter: There're a couple of ways that you can learn more information or reach out to us. First would be to check our Website, which is DruckerInstitute.com. We are tweeting almost daily, if not multiple times a day and our Twitter handle is @Druckerinst. Of course I am happy to speak with anyone directly who's interested in learning more about the institute and if it's not information that I'm the expert in, I can put them in touch with anybody that's more prepared to answer their questions. And then if anyone wants to read up on Monday, our bi-monthly digital magazine that brings up several topics that were important to Peter Drucker, you can go to our Website and find the most current issues there.

Joe: *Is there anything you would like to mention before we part here?*

Peter: I think the one thing that I would like to share is that our mission is strengthening organizations to strengthen society, and I think that's really reflected in the programs that I've mentioned in the non-profit world, with government organizations, and in the private sector.

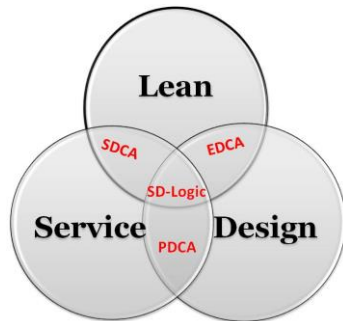
Joe: *Well, I would like to thank you very much, Peter.*

Peter: Thank you very much for having me. I appreciate it, and it was a great honor.

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Joe Dager is President of Business901, a firm specializing in bringing the continuous improvement process to the sales and marketing arena. He takes his process thinking of over thirty years in marketing within a wide variety of industries and applies it through Lean Marketing and Lean Service Design.

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