



**Marketing In the Know Podcast**  
**Tony Delmercado**

Tony: I guess the most important thing about marketing online today is understanding how you're different, pick a lane, and just rock the #&\$! out of it.

Male Speaker: Welcome to Marketing in the Know, the premier podcast to help you leap ahead of the marketing curve so you can grow your business. Now get ready, set, and grow with your host and tour guide through the marketing jungle, Buckley Barlow.

Buckley: Hello, hello, insiders, and welcome to Marketing in the Know and thank you for listening. Hey, over the last few days, this podcast has been bouncing in the top spots for new and noteworthy in technology, business, and marketing. So, keep the love coming. I appreciate the reviews and ratings and all the great comments and emails of late. So, thank you.

It is a great day today. I'm thrilled to have a chat with my next guest. We had a chance to talk on the phone and he's a passionate and curious entrepreneur and he's super-sharp. He's the cofounder of Hawke Media, which is an outsource CMO digital marketing agency for both large and small companies alike. He's also a master at creating automated email sequencing that works, meaning it drives revenue growth. And I hope that we can spend some time on that today. So, Tony Delmercado, fantastic to have you on the show today.

Tony: Excited to be here.

Buckley: Well, cool. Well, since your name is Tony D., I just have to give a shout out to an old friend Tony P. from Colorado. And if you're listening, Tony, this episode is dedicated to you, my friend. So, Tony D., you ready to rock this episode today?

Tony: Yeah, absolutely. I'm excited to get into the nuts and bolts on email marketing. One of the reasons I was excited to join you on the podcast is specifically because of the fact that you like to get into some granularity and be practical and direct with the advice, not so much theoretical or philosophical. Both are valuable for

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sure, but I really like the tacit knowledge aspect of what we're gonna be doing today.

**Buckley:** Awesome, awesome. Well, I always try to keep my eye on the prize, which is revenue, right? So, Tony, first things first. Get us in the know as to who Tony is, what your role is over there, and the company that you cofounded.

**Tony:** Sure, Hawke Media is a digital marketing agency where we've positioned ourselves as an outsourced CMO. So, everything soup to nuts. You want us to run some pay-per-click ads, great. You want us to create email automation, great, high level strategy about how to grow your business, growth hacking, influencer and social network kind of stuff, community management, leveraging platforms, like I heard you mentioning Periscope and Meerkat, and things like this to get influencers onboard. We do Facebook advertising. We do pretty much everything you can think of soup to nuts but on an a la carte month to month basis.

So, somebody just wants to do one thing, awesome. If they want to do everything, it's good. And we come from the background of being consultants in the marketing space and running businesses. My partner, Eric, definitely worked as a marketing consultant in a marketing role at some companies here in Santa Monica. And I've built seven businesses now in a COO or operational role. And I like the nuts and bolts and the doing side of things. And so we're a good partnership. I think that we've been able to build something really cool.

And our results thus far have been great. We've had a lot of success with some of the clients we work with, mostly in the e-commerce space. And we were talking on the phone the other day. I think my tagline is we're a data driven, direct response, acquisition marketing agency if you can fit all that in.

**Buckley:** Cool. Well, I love your brand and your simple statement of "We grow brands." I like that simplicity. Now you're a relatively new digital marketing company.

**Tony:** Yeah, started at the end of – well, at the beginning of 2014, end of 2013 was when we were formalizing.

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Buckley: Now, I've got to know this. Why did you start the company? What major pain points are you trying to solve out there right now versus every other digital marketing company out there? How do you separate yourself?

Tony: Yeah, I think there's a couple things. First and foremost is in the consultant space, and I don't mean to throw any shade on anybody who's a digital marketing consultant or an outsource marketing sort of strategist. But we found that in that role, we were giving a lot of great advice that wasn't getting executed. There weren't people on-staff either at the companies internally, or their outsourced third party resources weren't actually able to pull those levers effectively.

So we thought, man, this is silly and we started getting together with some friends in town that were good at Facebook marketing, good at email marketing, good at pay-per-click. And then that turned into a 35 person agency a year and a half later.

Buckley: Yeah, you've grown to over seven figures in a couple years, right?

Tony: Yup.

Buckley: Now that's a testament that you must be doing something right. And having been in your exact shoes on a couple of occasions before, I know it's a lot of work to build a seven figure service business in a short amount of time. It's a lot of fun too.

Tony: Yeah, we've had quite a ride. We broke the seven figure number in year one. And we're hoping to do 2, 3x that this year and then above and beyond from there. And what I'm most excited about, though, is if you look at our revenue growth, it's a pretty direct corollary reflection of the tens of millions that we helped our companies achieve. And so that's what I'm stoked about. Obviously, it's sort of a byproduct of the growth that we've achieved for the companies we work with. And that's what gets me out of bed. That's what I'm fired up about.

Buckley: That's cool. Now how did you guys go about marketing your marketing company when you got started?

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Tony: Yeah, well, I will say first and foremost my partner Eric who is driving the biz dev train is very much a man about town. He's out beating the streets a lot. I call him the face of the franchise where he's speaking, he's meeting people, he's going to events, he's just a hustler first and foremost. So, I think that's important. Any company, any business, whatever you're doing, CEO's got to really be waving the flag out there. And so he's done a great job with that.

And then we've built up really strong referral partners, people that are either service providers for eCom businesses or platforms or SAS products. And they've helped us generate a lot of business. And we've also done pretty well with SEO and paid search and generated some leads that way. But for the most part, it's a lot of boots on the ground and it's a lot of referral partners, so building those bus dev channels.

Buckley: Let's dive into one aspect of your business that Hawke does really well, but so few companies do well at all, and that's email automation and sequencing. Everyone acts like they know what it is, right?

Tony: Uh-huh.

Buckley: A good majority try their hand at it, but only a few actually really get it right. Why is that, Tony?

Tony: I think email in general is so very archaic that most of the companies that we get exposed to there's this batch and blast mentality. And then I think, frankly, there's a lot of ESPs, email service providers, that don't allow for full-fledged automation and split testing and reporting in a way that lets you, the user, be intelligent with how you're setting up these drip campaigns and this automation. And I think so you're constrained by the ESPs in a lot of cases.

And, frankly, it's hard. It's hard to think through, there's a lot of labor involved. It's time intensive to develop instead of an automated email that comes out to people if they sign up for your list once to create then and then to create 20 that follow up on each of those ten based on what that user did in the funnel. It's just time consuming, right? I think that's where most people miss.

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Buckley: Yeah, I personally struggle with implementing segmentation as well and especially on larger campaigns. You're talking about 20, 30, 40 different segments. And that's not easy.

Tony: No, definitely not. And, again, it's in the data collection and it's in how you're splitting and creating those cohorts. I think whether it's a promotional blast that goes out at a specific time or it's an automated thing, either way, thinking through those cohorts, thinking through the user experience, thinking through how you're nurturing a new listener to the podcast who – a paying member of – whatever it is. It's always a trick to be thoughtful about that entire process. And, again, I think it's time and having the tools that you can build on top of.

Buckley: Now you just mentioned a term; cohort. That is the term that is often used with data driven analytics. And by the way, I found that [cohortanalysis.com](http://cohortanalysis.com), which is just a standalone landing page site for RJMetrics, is a great place for anyone looking to learn more. But Tony, how do you use cohort analysis within your email automation strategies?

Tony: Yeah, so what we're trying to do pretty much at all times is going back to the tagline data driven is the first part of it. So if we understand, for example, somebody's selling a product online. And we know that there's a certain number of customers that are purchasing that product twice in a given six month period, the messaging for them is going to be different than the messaging for someone who's only purchased once in the last 18 months.

I think just in a very, very simplistic way, thinking about who is this user. You can do it based on average order value, you can do it based on time onsite, you can do it based on how frequently this user is visiting the site, you can do it based on whether or not they're engaging with your emails, creating all these different cohorts around the data that you're collecting. Again, the collection challenge is another barrier, I think, or an impediment to some of these businesses that are maybe newer and don't understand the nuance of creating a cohort and then marketing specifically to them.

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Buckley: I can say the majority of smaller businesses just don't have the time to get their hands dirty like this. They don't understand it, which I think is why you're probably doing so well out there. But you also work with some large brands as well. Give us a case study, Tony, if we can. Let's talk about what you did, how you implemented it, and how well it has worked for you, specifically around the strategy.

Tony: I'll say it this way: Go to our website, look at our customers, and the three biggest ones didn't have what I'm about to talk about. So —

Buckley: That's easy enough.

Tony: Yeah, so if you look at email automation, what most e-commerce brands are doing is there's some sort of incentivized email capture. If there's not an email capture, this is the nuts and bolts, you have to have an interstitial when people land that says 15 percent off my product or sign up for this to get that other thing, whatever that might be. We're also seeing some success with exit pops, working more effectively with some brands who don't necessarily want to tarnish first user experience. I don't think it actually limits the ability of a brand to put itself out there, but I think having an interstitial with some sort of incentive is first and foremost.

So, I will name one company: Sunwarrior is a natural protein product, a vegan protein product. And they sell a whole bunch of supplements and things like this, plant based, and their automation was non-existent. And when we came in with them, this is the formula: So, incentivized email capture, give them some sort of reason to give you the email address. And the first email that comes out, that's a no-brainer. Everybody knows that you have them sign up for the list, you send them something interesting.

And then what happens next is really where I feel like that's where a lot of companies miss, or at least a lot of the companies that come to us, the people that we're exposed to. So now of course some of those users are gonna click, they're gonna go through this site, they're gonna redeem. And that's ideal. But let's be honest, what percentage of that? Three maybe if you're great messaging, great incentive, etc. out of all the emails you send. Because maybe half of them didn't open. Of the half that did, maybe only half of

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them clicked. And the ones that clicked, only ten percent of those converted. Whatever the numbers look like if you go down that funnel.

Well, what we saw with them is that they essentially had that first part. And then we layered on top of that what do we do if they didn't open? Let's send similar messaging with a different topic line. Exact same thing, doesn't take a whole lot of time to change the subject line, and now we've got a small group called people that didn't open this first email and we send them another one.

Buckley:

Let's back up for a second here because I think a lot of small businesses, entrepreneurs that are trying to instill email automation, they skip this point. And I think it's an excellent point. So could you just go over that exactly again? What kind of messaging you're using, maybe give us some insight into the copy you're even using in that second email.

Tony:

Yeah, so the second email in most cases that we're doing, giving away all my secrets, not really. But the copy in that second message is identical in most cases. We might tweak it a tiny bit, but it's almost identical. It's basically, hey, you signed up for this discount, go use it. Something to that effect; big hero image, basic call to action, all about the fold, that kind of simple language, less is more. People don't read anymore. But, yeah, making that as distinct as possible.

So when that first one comes out, if somebody doesn't open it, just change the subject line. Change the subject line and say, "Hey, you forgot about this," or, "Great offer," or whatever. You can split test ten different subject lines to see which one generates the most opens. But that in and of itself increased the number of orders that we got five percent.

Then you look at the one that happens after that. So, again, you've got this decision tree, this massive hierarchy that if you were sketching it out on a piece of paper, it gets pretty tall and wide in a hurry. What about the people that didn't open that one? And then rinse, repeat. Now let's go back to the first one, back up the tree. I wish I had a little PowerPoint here. But if you go back up the tree there, what about those people that opened but didn't click? Or

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what about the people that opened and didn't redeem? Well, then again, we create user groups out of those.

So, do that down the funnel for that first email. At the end, you end up with five, six, seven different emails for a user before they even get to that second email that comes out in that automated series. Now that in and of itself, again, what we found by re-messaging just that first email is that we got closer to seven, eight percent. So, that's a lift in revenue that's significant especially at scale. That's on email one.

Then email two, which didn't even exist before, now we're messaging them again. Sort of a blanket statement we use around here is called an eCatalog email. Basically, here's a ton of great products we offer. You should be in the know about that. You can test on the time delay; three, four, five days later, seven days later. Some companies like to do it a couple days later. But after that initial incentive then we want to go ahead and remind them that there's a whole bunch of other product there that they can be checking out. This, by the way, for the sake of this part of our conversation, alleviated post-purchase and card abandonment and transactional emails off to the side. But that's a whole other animal.

So, this automated series, second one is about e-commerce or, excuse me, eCatalog where we've got the opportunity to go buy nine of their best selling products are listed. Very simple, again, big images, not a lot of words, bold call to action, keep the color scheme and the header consistent with what it looks like onsite so when people click through, they've got a similar user experience. I think that's, again, small point but really important; consistency from what your email looks like to what your site looks like. It makes it real easy for people to navigate when they get there. They know where they are. So that, again, we added a whole bunch of additional clicks to the site and added another three percent. So, now we're closer to ten.

And then if you go down, we also follow that up, same program that we did with the first email. You get hierarchy of decisions; opened, didn't open, clicked, didn't click, etc. Build out a tree on top of that and then follow that up with social engagement. That's the third one that we did. So, the third in the drip campaign was a

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social engagement email. Basically encouraging them to reach out on Instagram, reach out on Facebook, reach out on Twitter, connect us, stay in the know, get discounts, etc. Again, same program. That didn't generate revenue necessarily but it did well for community engagement.

And then if somebody hadn't ordered from front to back, follow it up with a deeper incentive; 20 percent at the fourth email with, again, the same rinse, repeat if they open or if they didn't open. Create a follow-up email for each of those. Net net at the end of the day, we're up about 14 percent on that.

So if you look across revenue, organization, I won't say their exact numbers, but let's say your organization is doing \$100,000.00 a month in revenue, you add 14 percent, that's \$14,000.00 in revenue. That's significant for anybody. That covers the cost of a heck of a lot of advertising dollars that you can then shove more people at the top of that funnel.

Buckley:

So, Tony, a couple things that I'd love to know and I think listeners would love to know. And I know this depends on the type of business, the size of the business, but what kind of automation tools do you love the most that you've worked with that you're using? Especially for some of these more complex sequencing events.

Tony:

Yeah, I'm really, really hot on Klaviyo right now; K-L-A-V-I-Y-O. It's a great email service provider that comes in cost competitively with places like MailChimp but offers more robust features especially in terms of automation and split testing automation and reporting on automation. I love, love, love, love MailChimp and have for a long time. It's got a little funny monkey hat and a shirt. And I think I was one of the first 10,000 users on that platform. But they really have failed to innovate in the automated space.

And so Klaviyo's a company on the East Coast. I think they're in Boston. They're cool guys, small team, super-focused on making automated email just idiot simple. And I dig that. So, that's a great company.

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And then on enterprise level, we use Bronto a lot. I really like them. They're an annual contract, much larger company. But it's a really, really robust feature set especially if you're a data wonk and you like getting in there and creating cohorts and having dynamic content in your email based on which users are receiving which messages and stuff like that. They also have a really intuitive sort of WYSIWYG drag and drop thing with these little – it's hard to describe. I guess there's nodes and little strings that you can draw from box to box.

And that's how you create your hierarchies which is, again, without having to write code or think through an Excel sheet. You can literally see on page how users are flowing through different parts of your email automation. And so they're pretty excellent. They're really e-commerce heavy. They built their ESP to support e-commerce.

Buckley:

Now you see tons of clients come through your door. And I'd like to focus on the smaller clients for just a second on this next question. But for those smaller clients looking to achieve really fast and sustainable growth, what things should they stay away from that will blow a hole in their budget and receive little ROI in return?

Tony:

That's a great question. What to stay away from? I think don't spend a dime until you have a great mousetrap built, until you have some incentivized email capture or some email capture mechanisms so that you can engage with people and create some of the automation that I'm talking about, until you have a retargeting pixel. Anybody with very, very limited skill on a technical level can go and create an AdRoll account or can go into Facebook and set up a re-marketing pixel. It's really, really simple to do.

And I think that that's, again, a mistake that I see really categorically with smaller businesses. They don't have re-marketing pixels so that they can message people and they don't have good email acquisition. And so what happens then is let's say you're driving 100 clicks a day to your website, you're a small business. 97 of those are gone if you don't have any re-marketing, any email nurturing, anything like that. Maybe three of them are

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turning into a user, a customer, or what have you. But the other 97, they're into the mist.

And so before you spend any money trying to acquire customers, make sure that you've got a good mousetrap built. So, I would say categorically don't spend money until you have those things. And then when you come to actually spend money, I think people fall in love with trend really easily. So if Instagram ads are hot now, there's an interface and you can get there right through the Facebook platform.

Buckley: Let's hop on just because they're hot.

Tony: Yeah. I would say be judicious about it. The impressions are way more expensive. It's real tough to measure the efficacy of those campaigns in the same way that you can across some traditional methods like PPC or Facebook display or something like that. And so I think that that's the other cautionary tales. Just beware of the hot thing.

Buckley: Well, that's great advice, Tony. One of the things I see with small businesses today is they don't even know what a pixel is. They don't know anything about retargeting or re-marketing because when they did look it up before four or five years ago, it was expensive. It was for the bigger brands. But today, I love the fact that Facebook has integrated retargeting. It really is easier to scale that re-targeting, re-marketing today than ever before for a small company.

Tony: Totally. And we see that. If you're looking for the best leverage for your money, that's categorically, it doesn't matter what you do, we see excellent returns. Many multiples over return on ad spend from re-marketing on Facebook because people are there. It's a utility. And so it's a good thing.

Buckley: So, a smaller company comes into Hawke Media and says, "Hey, I want to work with you." Give us an idea on some of your pricing. Where does it start? Give us an idea.

Tony: Yeah, sure. We're really transparent. Our business is broken up into five silos if you think about it that way. And there's different line items under each one. But basically it's strategy, creative,

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media buying, email marketing, and influencer. Pretty much categorically with a few exceptions, we charge \$3,000.00 per client per month per channel. So if someone wants to come in and have us guide their entire digital strategy, which I think is our most valuable channel, that's the outsource CMO side, that's 3 Grand.

If you want to do that and email marketing then it's three and three so that's six. If you want to do that and have us reach out to some bloggers and create some social influence and some third party validation and SEO juice then that's influencer. So, that's another three. So, that would be nine. We take a percentage of spend in the media buying channel.

So if someone wants to buy Facebook ads or Display or Pay-Per-Click or PLAs, sorry, product listing ads, or anything like that, we're gonna take a percentage of spend on that. We don't work on a CPA or CPM deal because we feel like, honestly, goals are out of alignment that way. Our goal is to grow your revenue so that you spend more money with us so we can take more as a percentage.

Buckley: Yeah, very straight forward. I like that. That's great. Now as an agency, you have tons of talent over there for sure. What did you say? 30, 31?

Tony: About 35.

Buckley: 35? But I'd love to know, if you were to hire one person today in your growth or marketing department, that next hire, what kind of person would you hire? What would you be looking for? What kind of skills sets and why?

Tony: That's a great question because I'm always looking to hire. The main thing is having a curious mind, a real analytical, someone who wants to know why. Someone who wants to know why is this business performing this way? Someone who's got that analyst mentality and can dig into Google Analytics, or can dig into Facebook Report, or can dig into any kind of ad buying report and really start to understand where we can optimize ad dollars or where we can pull levers that are gonna give us big returns or what's happening sort of in the ether.

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Anybody looking to break into sort of the digital marketing game, go get Google Analytics certified and you'll be smarter than 95 percent of the people that I talk to.

**Buckley:** Really? And I've had a few college students ask me recently, "Hey, what should I do? What kind of skill set should I have?" I say, "Just go listen to the podcast and listen to what everybody's been saying because it's being reiterated again and again how crucial these skill sets are."

**Tony:** Yeah. And so those are the kinds of things that I think subjectively. Objectively in my professional life, I only value three things: 1.) Can you get stuff done? Can you execute? That's No. 1. No. 2 is can you learn quickly because we work in an industry that moves on a dime. And then No. 3: Are you cool? Are you a culture fit? Can you get along with the people over here? And if you're having a rough day, are you gonna take that out on the guy next to you who didn't do anything or are you gonna go for a walk in the beautiful city of Santa Monica and chill out?

**Buckley:** That's great stuff, great stuff. Well, Tony, last question. Would you mind leaving the insiders with your best growth or marketing tip that you've received along your journey? That you've learned along your way? And even more important, that's highly relevant today? So that one piece of advice that you could leave us with that say, "Geez, you know what? Ah-huh. That's one I need to work on."

**Tony:** I would say make absolutely crystal clear that you're differentiated in your space in some way that is easy to understand. That's, I guess, the most important thing about marketing online today is understanding how you're different, pick a lane, and just rock the #@\$%! Out of it. Pardon my French. But the idea there is you need to do something and be all about it. Otherwise, you're just another guy selling t-shirts. You're just another guy doing this. You're just somebody doing something. So I would say make sure that you know exactly how you're differentiated. Stick to that with razor sharp claws and preach it from the mountaintop.

**Buckley:** Beautiful. Well, listen insiders, it is cool to talk with a guy like Tony because he deals with businesses of all sizes looking to grow.

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And if you want to find out more about what Hawke Media can do to help you grow, you've got to head on over to [hawkemedia.com](http://hawkemedia.com). And that's a hawke with an E. So, H-A-W-K-E [media.com](http://media.com). And you got to check him out. So, Tony, thank you sir for coming on today and sharing some very, very valuable insights.

Tony: My pleasure, Buckley. Thanks for having me.

Buckley: All right, insiders. That is a wrap. Hey, thank you so much for joining us on Marketing in the Know today. Now head on over to [beintheknow.co](http://beintheknow.co) for the links and show notes to this podcast. And by the way, while you're over there, feel free to grab and download the version of my guide, the free version, Ready, Set, Grow. It took me a long time to write and pull of this information together. And I spent a pretty penny getting the look and feel just right. So, I hope you enjoy it. Again, I appreciate you listening, hope that you'll subscribe, rate, and review.

Male Speaker: We appreciate you joining us for this episode of Marketing in the Know. For show notes and a free version of Ready, Set, Grow visit [beintheknow.co](http://beintheknow.co). Thanks again and we'll see you next Tuesday here on Marketing in the Know.

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