

# IN KNOW

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## **In the Know** **Scott Voelker**

Scott: If I can get to page one, now I got eyeballs, right? Now I get all the traffic looking at my listing, that's why you don't want to have just two reviews, you want to have 25 or more, and now you're gonna convert higher. And then I can hopefully, now that I can start getting organic sales, now I can stay on page one because that's gonna naturally start to take into consideration that I'm there. I'm getting reviews. I'm getting sales. And it just keeps working itself.

Buckley: Hello, and welcome to *In the Know*. This podcast is dedicated to all those listeners who want and need the best strategic and tactical advice on engineering growth.

And for season two, it's all about digital commerce. All right, buckle up. We'll see you on the inside. Hello insiders, you are in the know today, and this is the digital commerce series. I'm Buckley your host and I'm thrilled that you are here with us today. On today's episode I'm excited to chat with my guest Scott Voelker of the *Amazing Seller Podcast*, which has been a top ranked podcast in business. And for obvious good reason, not only is Scott an incredible teacher of all things Amazon FBA, that's fulfillment by Amazon for the uninitiated.

He's a downright easy going approachable kind of guy, who is really fun to listen to. And this series would be incomplete without exploring some of the best practices of selling physical products by way of Amazon.com. Now what I find fascinating is that there may be a list of people who have been out there selling on Amazon longer than Scott, but few have had the quick success that he has had. And not only that he really understands what it takes to launch a product quickly, to see if it's going to gain traction, and today we're gonna go over his method on how he does this.

And for a guy who went from zero to 40,000 sales in 90 days on Amazon, not too long ago, I'm excited to learn from him. And speaking of learning, head on over to [beintheknow.co](http://beintheknow.co) to check out our new site layout, and the learning paths and resources that we put together to help anyone looking to grow their business. And if you feel like there is something I'm missing, or you have an exceptional

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piece of content that you think ought to be included, just drop me a line. So again, here with us today is Scott. Scott, it's fantastic to have you here, thanks for coming on today.

Scott: Hey, thank you so much for having me. And I think we should first say off the bat here, we got a dog here that you can actually hear. And we said we might have to do that. But the UPS driver just decided to show up here.

Buckley: And he's howling.

Scott: And he's squeaking. There he is. And welcome to the show is Brody. That is my dog, he is my sidekick, and he's the one that actually will podcast with me. So it's awesome to be here and I really appreciate you having me, and I'm excited to talk about this. And just to let everyone know that I am just a regular guy. I'm not here to claim that I'm this huge expert in this space, although I have been selling in there and also showing other people how to do it. I'm really excited to be here, and yeah, I love talking about this stuff.

Buckley: Well, speaking of Brody and how authentic you are, I've got to give you a little back story of how I heard about you, Scott.

Scott: Okay, cool.

Buckley: My wife and I love to listen to all sorts of podcasts. And, you know, we're just learning junkies. And my show *Marketing In the Know* in season one had just launched, it was near the top 10. And one evening she was scrolling through, you know, the top 10, 20 podcasts, and she stumbled upon your podcast. And she was just listening to see what people liked. And so she was on her iPad with her headphones on and she started laughing, kind of hysterically. And, you know, I was curious, not because my wife doesn't laugh hysterically, but because how many times do you really laugh when you're listening to a business podcast, like never, right?

Scott: Right.

Buckley: So, you know, I was curious. And I gave her the gesture of: hey, take your ear phones off and tell me why you're laughing? And she said, "Hey, I'm listening to this guy name Scott and he's talking about Amazon stuff. And he's talking about his dog, and I think his dog is sitting right next to him, but he's got this dog right here." And I think

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it just in a world of stuffy business it struck her funny bone. And so I took a listen right then and there. And not only was I wowed by your authentic approach, it was just refreshing, it was funny. Your content is awesome; you just blew me away, so I was hooked.

Scott: That's so funny. And yeah, I do try to make him part of the show because, well, he is my sidekick. And I'm sitting here in my home office, and he has his little bed nearby. And yeah, we hangout. And he knows a lot about Amazon, I can tell you that.

Buckley: I bet he does. Well, Scott, real briefly catch everyone up to speed on who Scott is and what your role is day to day?

Scott: Well, again, I'm a real simple guy. I really don't believe that it's building this multi-million dollar business, what to me it's more about is building the lifestyle. You know, I come from a hard working family. My father was a farmer. He was in the construction business, when I got my first job with him when I – not my first job, but one of my first 40 hour work week jobs with him working in this construction business. I worked my butt off learning the trade. And then we built that into over a two and a half million dollar business back in the early '90s. And it was booming and everything, but it was a lot of stress and I learned business really really quickly.

So I was married at 20, just under 20 – uh, 21. And we had a child and I soon seen how, you know, being away from home made me unhappy. And I was young, you know, and I'm like, you know, I can change this. And this is about probably when I was about 28 now I started having these thoughts, but not knowing anything else. I'm not a college grad. You know, I'm self taught in not just business, but in my life as far as like with anything that I've ever done. I'm a pretty quick learner and I'll apply myself, but I definitely want people to understand that I'm not like this high educated person that went and got all of these different degrees.

It's just I don't really learn much in the classroom, I learn better by doing. So, you know, I learned a trade. I was able to also make extra money on the side, I mean, again working 60, 70 hours a week in construction doing side work and everything to add more to my family's revenue, so we could do more things, but I was never home. So from there I went ahead and transitioned into – and my wife kind of gave me this idea that maybe we could start a photography business. Yeah, that's right a photography business from doing

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what, right? And here I am a construction worker coming home every night, you know, dead to the world and she had a photography bug.

And we were just starting to get our kid's pictures taken and this that and the other thing. Long story short, I said what the heck, we invested in a little bit of equipment. This is before digital by the way. This was 35 millimeter. And we built that business from scratch into a six figure business locally. It allowed me to leave my construction job in about 18 months. We took a chance and we never looked back. And we built that business, and we ran it for just about eight years, and then I started to get the itch again and I wanted to start doing things that could diversify my income.

And I started teaching people online how to start their own photography business, and then also digital products like templates and Photoshop files and all of that stuff. And again, this is a guy, you and I talked a little bit before but also that said I would never own a computer. I said that to my father. I said how can you sit on a computer for hours on end? I'm never gonna do that. And now it's my life blood, you know, never say never, I would say that. But yeah, so then from there I started getting introduced to this online space. And then just being really just an entrepreneur, seeing opportunities, you know, jumping on some, failing at a lot.

But then, you know, just seeing good opportunities, and then this Amazon thing started to really intrigue me. And again, I wasn't doing it necessarily for being the bread winner, but really being the one that could allow me to add a little bit of a, you know, another revenue stream to my portfolio, and that's exactly what it's done. but it really did, you know, I guess when I got started it really made me open my employees and say: oh, my gosh, I got to really look into this thing.

Because I was just going into this thing like, you know what, let me just give a shot and see what happens. If I can add another \$2,000 or \$3,000 to my income a month that would be cool.

Buckley:

Oh, yeah.

Scott:

You know, it would be a mortgage payment or whatever. And, well, I'll tell you what, it woke me up in a hurry because in my first 90 days, you know, I generated over \$40,000. Now that's not profit,

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that's revenue generated, but we were doing about a 30 to a 40 percent margin and it wasn't too bad.

Buckley: That's great.

Scott: It made me say this thing is a viable option here and that I should probably look into and focus on, and I continue to do that right now. So that's really the – I guess that was kind of a longer story, but it's kind of like to give you guys, like from when I was 19 years old to now I'm 43 years old, that's pretty much the roadmap.

Buckley: That's great. And you've been doing that for about what, two or three years?

Scott: The Amazon is just about 18 – yeah, about 18, 20 months, so yeah, just under two years.

Buckley: Okay, perfect.

Scott: And I was online building online businesses for probably about seven almost eight years, so I had some knowhow as far as like marketing and online business and ecommerce and that type of stuff because I was dabbling a little bit of everything, sold on eBay, you know, a couple other market places and stuff like that.

Buckley: Well, Scott, let's start at the top then, as an example I found – let's say I found – and by the way, I'm gonna assume that the listener of this show has a pretty good handle on selling products on Amazon, and so let's start at the top. I found a great product, a great manufacturer, the pricing seems perfect, how do I launch this to know, and really know that this product is something I should put some weight behind?

Scott: Yeah, well, I mean, you're first thing is you're gonna do your research right off front. So if you've already picked your product, I'm assuming that you've done your research and you've already crossed the numbers and you said: you know what, this here is going to be able to sell at a regular – on a regular basis. And I usually look for products that can sell between 10 and 15, maybe 20 units per day. And I call this the 10 by 10 by 1 strategy. It's 10 units being sold per day at a \$10.00 profit for one product. That's basically a \$100.00 a day profit.

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So that's really what I shoot for. So let's say that we know that we've done the research. We found the product that we feel that can do this. And if your audience doesn't know, there's Retail Arbitrage, which is you kind of like piggy-backing on other brands, and that's still a viable option, a very low entry way to do that, a very low risk way of getting involved. But we're talking about private labeling, so we're talking about sourcing the product, which you said you've already done in this case. And we've got it, we've landed it, and now we've got it into Amazon and they're going to fulfill it, now what do we do?

Well, we really have to get on the radar of Amazon. So the very first thing that we need to do is we need to run some type of promotion. And there's actually a new little twist here, and actually you're hearing it for the first time. I've actually recorded it, but it's not being aired on my podcast for about another four weeks. So I'll give you guys the intel here. But there's a little bit of a twist on how we're launching products now. Before it was like you got your product in, and then immediately you would give away maybe a hundred units. And you can give those all away at once.

And I say give away, it could be for a \$1.00, it could be \$1.95, it could be free, but you're giving away a coupon code to these review groups. And the reason why you're doing this is for two reasons. Number one you want to get on the radar, you want to get in the ecosystem or the algorithm of Amazon. You want them to say – and take note or pay attention and take notice that there's some sales starting to be done. Because everything on Amazon, just to let people know, everything on Amazon is based on sales. Reviews are not there for anything to do with ranking, in my opinion.

It's there to convert to a sale and that sale then will help you rank. So we need to figure out how to get sales, and then we need to figure out how to get reviews because reviews are gonna help us convert.

Buckley:

I think that's a great point because when I'm shopping, I'm gonna look at those reviews. If they've got a high number of views I believe in the product even before I drilldown into the reviews, right?

Scott:

100 percent.

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Buckley: It's kind of this validation concept. You get the reviews out there, I'm willing to put – you know, I'm willing to go to that next step.

Scott: Yeah, it's 100 percent the way it works. I mean, just to kind of give you a little story here. I was in like Target or something looking for a blender, our blender broke or whatever. And I was in there and I picked it up and I just bought it and I walked out. And I come home and my wife goes, “Did you check Amazon to see if there's any reviews on that?” And I'm like – you know, she got a little upset with me, and I'm like, no. And she's like, “You always got to go to Amazon, even if you're just going there to look at the reviews for that product, you can type in that brand and see what the people are saying about it.”

I'm like I guess she's got a point. But, you know, what I mean, like people are suing Amazon also just to verify that the product is a good product. And what is bad about the product? Because let's face it, you can look at reviews, and you can look through all of the one star, the three star, you know, the two star reviews and you can see what people are saying. Sometimes people are just complainers, so it might not be the product, it might just be someone thinking it needed to be something and it wasn't, but it will give you a good gist of what it is.

But reviews are a pretty big component to converting to a sale because again, it's almost like that social proof element. It's like: hey, John, who painted your house? Oh, Bob did down the street. Cool, give me his number. It's the same idea, it's just we're being able to do this by looking at the reviews that someone's already posted, you know, not by them – or the company, it's by third party people that are actually buying the products. But what we want to do in the very beginning is we need to get some reviews.

Okay, we need to get a base set of reviews, even if these reviews are giving out, you know, free product, because what you're doing here is you're not giving away free product to just anyone, either by the way. And I don't – there was a whole like scandal and everything here on, you know, as far as like people paying for reviews. We're not talking about paying for reviews. That's not what we're talking about. What we're talking about is there's groups out there that people raise their hand, and they say I would love to receive product from Amazon at a discount for me to review the product.

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I will be more than willing to do that, just give me a discount on the product and I will review the product. So you have these groups that are either an email list of a group, or they're a Facebook group, whatever it is these people are raising their hand. Amazon has no problem with you giving away product to get reviews, honest ethical reviews. They have to be – put in their little tagline there that says that you received at a discount for your unbiased review that has to be in there.

So there is some rules that go along with it, business they're okay with that. It's the old thing of Gillette giving you a free razor, so you can go ahead and give them a testimonial, or to go ahead and try it and see if you like it. It's the same concept; you're just doing it in a digital form. So really your base – did you want to say something?

Buckley: Yeah, I was gonna ask, how do you – so how do you do that then? I would imagine there's tons of people out there that want a discounted product in exchange for a review, but I'm sure you've found a very good way in a system to do it, so that it's authentic. They turn into buyers. It creates this attraction that you need to start selling product.

Scott: Yeah, that's 100 percent true. There's a whole bunch of different services out there. And really there are some that are great and there are some that aren't so great. So the number one way, and for your audience that's listening, you know, I believe that a lot of these people listening possibly could be in the digital world, where they have maybe an email list, right?

Buckley: Yep.

Scott: Well, if you build an email list around your market for this product, or products, or your market, your brand, I mean, you can just send them out one, that's like the best way. Send out an email to people that are on your list and that are into your market. And maybe people right now are selling a digital product; you could probably add a physical product that could tap into your market right now, even if that isn't your sole business.

Buckley: That's great.

Scott: And then you can tap into Amazon, and you can then also offer products to your customers. But they're also going to help you by

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giving you sales through a coupon code, even if it's discounted, and they're gonna give you a review, right? So first off, if you have an internal email list, that's the best way. The second way is you could reach out there Facebook fan pages out there that have a market or a big large audience, and offer that – you know, that organizer, maybe you're gonna give 25 of them away to them, and say run a raffle.

Buckley: Have you seen good success on that, reaching out to those groups?

Scott: I actually – I haven't done that method. I've had a few other people that have. But I personally built my own Facebook fan page in the very beginning when I first starting. And I built – I think I paid maybe a couple hundred bucks to build that page to 2,000 fans. And within that fan page, which I still have it today, I just don't run it that often, but I think I was able to get between 25 and 50 reviews. It's a slower process. I wouldn't recommend necessarily that now, although if I want to run Facebook ads to that Facebook fan page I can. I can't run them to a group.

Buckley: Yeah. Now Scott, what's the – is it just seller – the Amazing Seller Fan Page if people want to find you there?

Scott: Yeah, it's just – actually, if you went over to Facebook, just put in the amazing seller and you will find it. You can also find it over on the blog at theamazingseller.com. you know, basically what you'll do is if you needed to build your own list, you could do it through Facebook or you could do it through running ads to a certain thing, or you can just borrow other people's list. Okay, that's the easiest, the fastest way. There's a site called Thomason.com, okay? Thomason.com is a place where bloggers that want to review physical products come to.

And us sellers come there to look for people to review our products. So we basically meet, we shake hands. We say here's a product, and then they go ahead and they post it on their blog, and do a review, and they also go on Amazon and then leave you a review. So that's an easy option.

Buckley: A fantastic resource.

Scott: They've got like a free 30 day trial. I've used that. I think I get my first run for free by the way. I think I got 30 to 40 reviews right out

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of the gate. And just to let people know, you only 25 or 30 reviews to get on the map. To really, you know, let people know that it's not just a brand spanking new listing, and you have a little bit of proof there that people are already buying the product. Because you don't want it to say be the first one to review this product. You want that to go away.

Buckley: Yeah, of course.

Scott: Right?

Buckley: Yep.

Scott: So that would be my very first step now would be to do that in a smaller dose. So I would go after just getting 25 reviews. In the beginning when I first started I was like: okay, I'm gonna blast out 150 units. And I'm gonna get 50 or 60 reviews, like right out of the gate. But what I've learned, and again, I learned this from other people now too that are actually people that I coached that they're actually doing things a little bit differently and teaching me now, which is awesome. And recently two of my students actually taught me this.

And they said basically what they're doing now is they're taking and doing the same exact launch process, which is going out and getting those reviews and sales right off the bat, but they're doing it in a smaller and more of a slower pace. So for example, they're going after getting 25 reviews, maybe 30 reviews, and they're gonna do that by giving away maybe 50 units. So let's say that you give away 50 units, you can't expect to get 50 reviews. You're probably gonna get between 60 and 70 percent depending how well that – or how responsive that list is, okay?

But here's the deal, you wait now about three weeks, maybe four weeks, let things kind of, you know, kind of sit there. Let them kind of get into the system. Let the reviews to start to come in. now what you want to do is a bigger promotion, okay? Because now what we want to do is we want to get our listing ranked on page one for our main keywords. Because if someone types in garlic press, and they're looking for a stainless – let's say they're looking for a stainless steel garlic press.

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They type in stainless steel garlic press, if we're not on page one they're probably not gonna find us, unless we're running Amazon Pay-per-Click, which is a whole other conversation. But right now, we want to get page one. So if we want to get page one, then we've got to run a promotion that's gonna help us get to page one. So we're gonna go ahead and run maybe 100 units, let's say. We're going to try to spike the algorithm. And now if we land on page one, guess what? We've got 25 or 35 reviews.

We're not brand new. But if I did that same exact thing in the beginning and I got to page one and I only had two reviews, do you think I'm going to convert as well?

Buckley: No, of course not.

Scott: No.

Buckley: Now tell me, how are you getting to page one, what's the process there?

Scott: Okay. Now the process there – and that's kind of changing a little bit, but it still does work. And it's something that they refer to as the industry kind of, the super URL, or the keyword loaded URL. And basically what it is, is if you were to go search for a key, if you were going to search for a stainless steel garlic press and you typed that in the search field. Then if you went to, let's say page one, and you found the list and you clicked on it, you'll see up in the URL, up in the web address, you'll see an extension at the end that says: keyword equals garlic plus press, or stainless plus garlic, plus press.

And that's basically saying that someone searched for that keyword. They landed on your listing, and now they converted to a sale. So Amazon takes note of that. It gets put into their algorithm, and then you start to rank for that keyword. So you're kind of manipulating the system a little bit, you're kind of doing that, but here's the other thing, some people say: well, Scott, you're manipulating it. Well, yes, kind of, but here's the deal. If I get there and I have a crappy product, it's not gonna stay there because people are gonna buy it, and then they're going to return it, and they're gonna hate it. I'm immediately gonna lose my page rank.

Buckley: Of course.

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Scott: Right?

Buckley: Yep.

Scott: So to me it's just a promotional strategy to get to page one. If I can get to page one, now I've got eyeballs, right? Now I get all the traffic looking at my listing, that's why you don't want to have just two reviews, you want to have 25 or more, and now you're gonna convert higher. And then I can hopefully, now that I can start getting organic sales, now I can stay on page one because that's gonna naturally start to take, you know, into consideration that I'm there, I'm getting reviews, I'm getting sales, and it just keeps working itself, okay?

Now another way that you can help yourself rank, and this another part of the strategy, is starting to turn on Amazon Pay-per-Click. Now Amazon has their own Pay-per-Click engine, and anybody that goes out there and tries to drive external traffic right out of the gate is foolish. I think if you're thinking about this, Amazon is a search engine for what? Buyers.

Buckley: Yes.

Scott: Right? So if we can run ads inside of Amazon using their Pay-per-Click, we're gonna have a better success rate. We're gonna have a better conversion rate than taking someone off of Facebook that's looking at wedding pictures, over to Amazon that wasn't ready to buy a product, right? But if you go to Amazon, you're ready to buy a product. You got a credit card on file. You probably got Prime, you're ready to go. So on day one, I can get ranked on page one by using Pay-per-Click, not organically, but in the sponsored ads.

So here's how this would work. Let's say I want to rank for a stainless steel garlic press. I'm gonna run a campaign for stainless steel garlic press. I'm gonna bid high, so I can get there. I might lose money, but here's the deal. If I can get people to click on my ad and then buy my product, guess what, Amazon's gonna rank me for that keyword. Now if I can get ranked on page one, well, now all of sudden guess what, I'm gonna start getting organic sales, right? So now I can start getting those organic sales because I pushed it through Pay-per-Click. Does that make sense?

Buckley: Oh, yeah. So let me ask you, you've gone through this process of very quickly validating whether or not you're gonna get lift.

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Obviously, you need to get the reviews first and foremost. You got to get your keywords there. You got to manipulate the system, so that you can even be seen. It's a visibility equation. So now, how do you know if this product is going to fly, and you're gonna keep – let's say you're gonna be spending more on Pay-per-Click. How do you know when to cut it or to press down the accelerator?

Scott:

Well, I think you need to look at the data that's surrounding your research. Because when you went into this thing you had expectations that I'm gonna sell ten units a day. And now if you're doing everything that you want to be doing here, and you've got to page one. You have let's say 50 reviews, and you're still not getting ten sales a day, but everyone else is, then you got to ask yourself is it my product? Is it my pictures? Is it my copy? Now you got to start thinking about the conversion part of it. Because you got the traffic, we got the traffic now, but now we got to test different elements.

And a way to test these elements, there's not a software rate now currently that allows you to test much. There is one in production I've been kind of notified about, but I haven't tested it yet because it's kind of new. And you don't really want to change your title that much because once you start getting indexed, you don't want to change that that much, right? You're kind of getting in the system. It's like changing your title in Google and then losing your rank because you changed your title of your post.

Buckley:

Now Scott, would you mind sharing the name of that resource, or is that still under beta?

Scott:

Yeah, it's still under beta. I don't even know the name of it honestly off the top of my head. I get a lot of people pitching me different softwares that's in development, so it's kind of hard for me to say for sure. I did go back and forth with the developer of this one that's actually creating it. And I told them some of my concerns, and that was one of them, and he definitely said that. That's something that they don't really say to do often, maybe once a month is you would test that, but more things to test would be your pictures because that doesn't really – that doesn't decrease your rankings if you change them because they don't really get indexed as far as search goes, it's more of a visual.

So think about this, if you get on page one, most people are scanning thumbnails. They're looking at the images. The title is probably the

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most weighted keyword spot in your listing is the title. So if you want a rank for stainless steel garlic press, you better believe that your stainless steel garlic press should be in that title.

Buckley:

Now how long does this process take? Again, assuming that you've done all the legwork of finding the product, doing the competitive intel, how long does this validation process typically take you? That would have been my first question. The second question I'd have is how many times have you done this where you did get your ten sales per day, but then all of a sudden it just died?

Scott:

Yeah, that's a great question. Well, first off generally, I would say if you give yourself – you got to kind of give yourself that plan and that process and then kind of reverse it back. Depending on how competitive the space is. If you're going into something that you are competing with people that have thousands of reviews, that's gonna be a really hard road to go down. I would say stay away from that, especially when you're first starting. I like to look for products that are 500 reviews or less, preferably less because then I know I can compete.

But I would say that the process in my head, if I'm launching a product, which I'm getting ready to launch actually two products right now in the next four weeks, and my process looks like this. It looks like I'm gonna do the launch process. I'm gonna change it a little bit. I'm gonna do that little tweak I told you, right? I'm gonna let it sit for probably two, maybe three weeks depending, and then I'm gonna run the second phase, the next wave of that, where I'm gonna blast out a bunch more. Then, I'm hoping to get to page one. So I would say once the product is launched, if I can get to page one in about four to six weeks, and then I can determine if I'm going to be able to get my ten sales a day.

So really you're talking about four to six weeks, maybe eight weeks to really say is thing gonna fly. But here's the thing, if you didn't take into consideration that your product is seasonal, now you've got a problem. One thing in the research process that I always tell people is go to Google trends and look at the trend of that particular keyword that you're looking for, or that product, because that can tell you over the course of the past five years, and also if it's trending up or it's trending down.

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So that's something right now that's a summer item, you might be a great position right now to get yourself setup to sell a lot in the summer, but the minutes summer is over your sales are gonna plummet. You got to be aware of that, right? And then you know that next year, it's probably gonna come back again. It's kind of like waiting on the fourth quarter. I don't like that. I like that. I like to have products that can steady – you know, steadily sell, but there might be a few spikes throughout the year, but just steady sales. So again that ten – that ten sales is really like my guide and my gage. If I can do more than that, then beautiful. And if I can't, then I'm okay as long as I can get to the ten. Now to answer your second part of that question have I had a product?

I recently had a product. It came out of the gates, I mean, it was guns blaring. I mean, it was just out of this world. And I kind of seen a trend, I seen it – now I don't really like to go into trends, but I just almost couldn't resist and I did it. And I came out of the gate and I was selling like 50, 60 units a day almost right out of the gate.

Buckley: Oh, wow.

Scott: Yeah, it was like: oh, my gosh, like this is awesome. Well, guess what? A bunch of other people did the exact same thing. Now what I'm doing is I'm competing on price and that's what you don't want to do. So I'm still selling probably 10 or 15 a day. My price is a little bit lower than I'd like. But with that being said, it's still selling. It's not a loss. It's just not what I thought it was going to be. And now because of that I've also thought about: okay, how can I take this product and how can I boost it? Well, I can probably add it as an accessory as another additional thing to a bundle.

Buckley: Oh, that's great.

Scott: So that's like my second strategy is trying to get it out of there is doing that. And then the other thing is external sales. Like, I could run and make an external funnel through Facebook and drive people to content and then use this as an up sell. There's a whole bunch of things you can do once you have a product, not just on Amazon.

Buckley: I think one of the things that scares people away from this when they start to put money toward the product is: hey, how much inventory should I buy? How much should I commit to because what if it just gets to the point where that's not selling anymore? I have too much

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competitive pressure. I've got to continue to lower the price. How do you deal with situations like that? Is it a matter of just kind of moving on to the next product, or you're like: hey, this is not gonna be that high of a profit margin, but we're gonna keep on bundling it in other packages?

Scott:

Yeah, you know, it comes down to – it really does come down to got. And it comes down to do kind of looking at the, I guess, the ecosystem and the platform, it's like what's happening? And kind of determining if it's up or down. And really you want to try to stay 30 days ahead. And that can be tough because we are buying inventory now. We've got inventory, and if we have inventory and it's not sold, then we have money that's invested that's not technically making any money, so that is a tricky spot. I always tell people I would start on the light side and then build from that. And if you run out of inventory, it's not the worst thing in the world.

You don't want to because then you start losing rank, but you can usually get it back relatively quickly doing a small little promotion or turning on Amazon Pay-per-Click, but sometimes starting small. You know, instead of doing 1,000 units, do 500. And then seeing how that goes, and then plan for the next batch. But yeah, you don't want to over buy and you don't want to get stuck. I'd rather be the other way. I'd rather be like how am I gonna get more inventory because the demand is so high, than I've got a bunch of inventory that I don't know how to sell. That's probably my thought process.

Buckley:

Well, that's awesome stuff. We just compressed about two years worth of learning, you know, the bumps and bruises into about 25 minutes, that's amazing. I can't believe this is free, too. People are getting this for free, which is what I love. And by the way I love your podcast because you speak so openly and authentically about what you're doing and what the failures are, what the wins are. I think it's very very insightful. I don't think, I know it's insightful. So before we launch into our final round of questions, which I'm excited to ask you, I'd like to take a quick moment to thank our sponsor.

I hope you're enjoying this episode. I've got to reach out and say thank you to the sponsor of this episode hotjar.com. Listen, they are an amazing group of people over there and their tool is fantastic. It's an all in one analytics and feedback tool, from heat mapping, to recording, to building out funnels, and creating poles and surveys. If you own a website and you want to know how to take it to the

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next level and get the data you need to know to be a forward thinking consumer centric business, you got to check out Hot Jar. That's hotjar.com. Now back to the episode.

Scott, out of all the mistakes that you see people doing, what is the biggest mistake that you see companies or entrepreneurs making in digital commerce today, either specifically related to Amazon or not, or even maybe both?

Scott: Well, I would say that chasing the dollar first. I think that's a big one. And don't get me wrong I've fallen into that plenty of times because, you know, we all know that with money it brings the things that we want, not just material things, but the flexibility of being able to record this podcast at 11:30 in the morning. You know what I mean, like sitting here with my dog.

Buckley: Yep.

Scott: Going out and taking a walk here in an hour. Like, those are the things that to me it affords me to do. But chasing the dollar can really cloud your vision. And again, I struggle with it. I still struggle with it because it security, right? The more money we can have, even if it's in the bank, it's security. And it's being able to do those things and not worrying about those things that could come. But that would be one thing. And I would say that a lot of people don't focus on the market, they focus on the product. And if you can switch that around and focus on the market that you want to serve, and then really identifying those through communications and building that email list or building that audience and really listening, I don't know how you can fail.

And that's if I was to start right over again today from scratch, it would start by coming up with value that I could add, but knowing that I could then in turn sell products to that audience if I wanted to. A perfect example is going back to my photography business, which I still have part of that business running right now, and it makes me money, is really just like I could have – and I haven't done this guys, by the way – I could have launched camera gear on Amazon, if I was still heavily into that space. But I'm just not really – I'm knowledgeable in that space, I'm just not as passionate in that space right now. You know, so because of that, that's not where I want to go, but I could have.

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And if I had a photography business right now today, and I was in that business where I was really doing face to face and I was learning all this stuff, I would put out great content. I would teach people through email, and through blog, and through podcasting, and all of these different platforms, and then I would offer products that I'm using to them as my recommendations. And it's just an easy way to do it and really authentically.

**Buckley:** Yeah, that's perfect. Now you mentioned early on some of the resources and tools that you use, but what are the key tools that you use to be able to run your empire? Don't you love that little term I used?

**Scott:** Yeah, I do. I like that. It's no empire, but I do like that. Yeah, I mean, tools are great. And again, going back to my construction days, if I didn't have a hammer it would have been hard to pound in a nail, right? I mean, you need the tools. But you can be, I guess, inundated with different tools and thinking that you have to have them all. I'm really a streamlined guy. I like simplicity. I like to not over complicate things. And that's one of the other big problems, by the way too is people over complicate.

They think way too far ahead. I've got a website. I got to have this. You don't have to have all that. You just got to get going. You got to get a product out there. But I would say one of the number one tools that you're going to need in the very beginning, which this wasn't even out when I started, was a research tool. You got to be able to look at the data. You got to be able to look at the numbers. And you got to be able to look at the numbers with accuracy. And the tool that I love is JungleScout. JungleScout was created by an Amazon seller, Greg Mercer, who is a good friend of mine, by the way. And he's doing really really well, and he's also got a great software business now because of it.

And that product really does speed up the process. I can literally look at a product on – it only works on Google Chrome, it's an extension. I can look on Google through Amazon. I can go to Amazon, but on Google Chrome, and I got my little extension there. I can go to page one, I can click on a button and it will show me all the data. It will show me the BSR numbers, which is the best seller rank. It will show me the units sold per month on an estimation. It will tell me how many reviews each one has, if it's fulfilled by Amazon, fulfilled by merchant. It will tell me all kinds of data that

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I in the beginning, I was digging into each listing. I would scroll down to the BSR.

I would kind of get an estimate of how much I thought they were selling. I would put it in a spreadsheet. This here is all down now with a click of a button. So that would be number one. The other one, we talked about reviews, we didn't talk about this, but the follow up. Like, you can have a follow up sequence inside of Amazon. Amazon doesn't let you contact your customers, but they do let you automate using a third party tool, their messaging system. So if you have a customer, you can click on their name and you can write them an email. You know, hey, I just wanted to make sure that you're happy with your product. If there's any questions let me know. And oh, by the way, here's a PDF on how to whatever, you know, press garlic like never before or whatever.

Buckley: That's great.

Scott: And that one there I use is called Salesbacker. And that's by Chris Guthrie, who is another digital commerce guy, and he's also an Amazon seller as well. And he created this software basically for himself because it was a need he wanted. A little bit more bells and whistles into it that you can do, more control. You can have it notify you if you've got a negative review, so you can respond to it. You can really follow up, so that's another tool that I would use. And those are really like the two primary tools that I think that are a must are those two tools. Other than that, there's a bunch of other ones too, but I would say that those would be my top two.

Buckley: So Scott, is it just you or do you have a team over there? Yeah, I'd be curious about that?

Scott: Yeah, well, I'm starting to slowly build a team. Now that the podcast has really taken off, and I've got a course that I teach and all of that stuff, it's really become a little bit harder to manage. So I've got a small team that helps me with my podcast. And now I'm starting to build a little bit of a team, as far as customer service, day to day operations inside of the Amazon business, and also product research. Because here's the thing, once you kind of know how to do product research, you've got your criteria, I can give that to a VA, and I can say here's my criteria, here's my tools, go find five products this week that you think might fit our criteria, and then I'll look at them at the end of the week.

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And then I can pick which one we want to go with. Then I can say contact these three suppliers and see what our bottom line is gonna be and how long it's gonna take to get from point A to point B. So I can delegate a lot more now, now that we've kind of got some revenue coming in.

Buckley: Well, this has been fantastic Scott. I mean, you've given a lot of information in a very short amount of time and it has been fantastic, fantastic to chat with you. Scott, thanks so much for coming on today. I really appreciate it.

Scott: Buckley, thank you so much. I hope that it's been valuable. And again, I love talking about this stuff. If you've got any other questions shoot them my way, I'd be more than happy to answer them.

Buckley: Yeah, we'd love to have you come back on. So insiders, if you want to know more about Scott and more about what he does and how he does it, let me tell you I'm a big Scott Voelker fan, and you can't go wrong when you listen to his podcast The Amazing Seller Podcast. And you can find more – is it [theamazingseller.com](http://theamazingseller.com)?

Scott: Yes, it is [theamazingseller.com](http://theamazingseller.com). And just to let people know too, if they wanted to go right to a resource, I do a free workshop, and that's at [theamazingseller.com/workshop](http://theamazingseller.com/workshop). And we break everything down as far as start to finish, so that's another resource for you.

Buckley: That's perfect. And again, you can always find all the links and tools mentioned in this episode at [beintheknow.co/podcast](http://beintheknow.co/podcast). All right, Scott thanks again.

Scott: Thank you.

Male Speaker: We appreciate you joining us for this episode of In the Know. You can find show notes, past episodes, and special giveaways for insiders at [beintheknow.co](http://beintheknow.co). Thanks again, and we'll see you next Tuesday on *In the Know*.

**[End of Audio]**

**Duration: 38 minutes**