John: Hey you. It’s John McIntyre here, The Autoresponder Guy. It’s time for episode 66 of The McMethod Email Marketing Podcast. We’re here to discover one simple thing; how to make more money with every single email you send, exciting days. Today, I’ll be talking to Brian Kurtz. Brian, Brian is a legend. He helped sell hundreds of millions of dollars of products with Boardroom Inc.

Boardroom is a big, big publishing company in the US. He’s worked with the biggest and best copywriters on the planet. He’s an absolute wealth with direct response marketing knowledge. He’s actually a friend of a friend. That’s why I wanted to get him on a podcast. There’s a little connection there. He’s got some cool stuff to share.

Today, we’re going to talk about storytelling and how that leads to lessons, how multichannel marketing … Brian is not an online guy. Brian is an offline guy. We’re talking hundreds of millions of dollars with direct mail. As far as I know is all direct mail or advertisements things like that offline stuff. He’s big on multichannel marketing, TV commercial, like infomercial, that was one of the things they do as well. He’s huge on this stuff.

We also talk about the entrepreneurial challenge of, a lot of people start as copywriters and then eventually you get to this point where do you want to be a copywriter or do you want to be an entrepreneur? Because they’re very different things and they require different skillset. If you want to be the best copywriter in the world, you can’t really be the best entrepreneur in the world. If you want to be an entrepreneur, you’re not really going to have the time to say be the best copywriter I’d say. It might not be an either or thing like that. You’ll see what I mean when you get there.

We’re just going to talk about that in this episode. To get the short notes for this episode of The Email Marketing Podcast go to TheMcMethod.com/66, the 66. This week’s McMaster’s insider of the week, if you don’t know McMaster’s is my private training community where you can get access to training programs like the McIntyre Method Pages.

There are a bunch of different things where you can basically learn how to create a 10 email autoresponder sequence, how to set that up in your business and how to create learning pages for sales pages that are going to make you money. That’s at TheMcMethod.com/McMasters. I’ve got the insider for this week right here. It’s from a thread titled you versus I. Don’t make the stupid mistake in your email.

Joy asked a question about her, why you should trust me? Why you should trust me or about me section in a sales letter. I brought up this issue of that you need to focus more on the prospects. Instead of saying I this, I that, I really hope this, or I’ve got this great thing to show you, you’ll discover, you’ll learn, you’re going to get this, you’ll probably feel like this, talk about that. This doesn’t always apply, that’s where Joy question comes in. Yes, you focused language instead of I focused is better most of the time generally speaking but not always.

Zack replied. Zack’s been on this podcast before. He’s the main guy writing my copy right now for clients is he said, “Just my two cents here. Why you should trust me section can be useful especially if your prospect is coming from caller traffic and you’re asking them to pay up for your expertise. You’re answering the, are you credible objections. It’s tough not to say I in your answer to that.”

When you’ve got caller traffic and when you’ve got someone who eventually before they buy something they’re going to want to know who the hell you are. When it gets to the point when it makes the most sense for you to talk about who the hell you are, it’s okay to say, “I am John Smith.” “I’m John McIntyre. I write emails. I help people make more money with email marketing. I have a podcast blah, blah, blah” all these different things. You can say I because that’s the context is okay.

At the topic of your sales letter, when you’ve got a headline and you’re trying to bring people into it, don’t start talking about yourself straight. Just say, “I have got a cool thing to talk to you about today. You’re really going to like to hear it” all this stuff like that. Talk about them. Once they want to know about you talk about you, simple as that.

If you want to spread the word about The Email Marketing Podcast which you really should go to iTunes, go to stores, search for The McMethod Email Marketing Podcast. Leave me a review. I will review out on the show. Make it five stars if you can. If not, that’s cool too. Give me a suggestion. Give me some feedback whatever you feel like. I can take the feedback. You can go and do that. That’s iTunes store.

We’ve got one listener question and then we’ll get to this interview before I get too crazy here. Would you recommend the long email or a short one that drives people back to your website? This is an easy question to answer. That is if you’re trying to drive people just back to your website, to say a blog post or something like that, give them what’s called teaser copy, 50 words, 100 words of teasing them, making them curious and they have to click the link to go to your site to find out what it is.

If you’ve got a sales letter on the other hand, that’s a little bit different. That will require a bit more longer copy because you might want to pre-frame the sales letter before they get to it. That’s it for now. Let’s get into this interview with Mr. Brian Kurtz.

It’s John McIntyre here, The Autoresponder Guy. I’m here with Brian Kurtz. Brian is a partner in Boardroom Inc. He was partly responsible for taking that company to over, was it $150 million? We’re just talking about this. He’s just an absolute expert in this direct response stuff in not so much email specifically but so much of what these guys do in the real world outside of the internet is directly applicable to online and just offline stuff. It’s so much bigger.

Sometimes us on the internet here sending emails, we think we’re so cool and that we’re such ninjas for being able to send emails and make money. The world outside of the internet, outside of these product launches and JVs and Affiliate marketing and everything is so much bigger.

Brian came to me through another friend who’s been on this podcast Greg Rollett. He’s just a pro at this stuff. I admit. I’ll openly admit I don’t know much about this stuff. I’ve written a lot of copy. I’ve never done direct mail because that’s not where I go down. I never go down with a business like that. Even I’m a beginner. I’m an armature at this stuff. I know how to write emails and maybe the sales letter every now and then but that’s it. I’m going to learn a lot today as well. Brian, how are you doing?

Brian: Good, how are you? This is an honor. Based on who you’ve interviewed, I’m in good company. Let’s put it that way. We were just talking about Perry Marshall who you interviewed recently. He’s one of my close friends and gurus.

I would start by saying, just to jump on what you just said about me, I said to you in preparation that I just recently bought a URL that I’m using. If you go there there’s nothing there. I just bought the URL for the sake of buying it. The URL is www.singlechannelmarketingissoboring.com. The reason why I bought that I bought it so I could tell you that; it’s funny and I can make you laugh on an interview for one thing.

Secondly, it’s very, very meaningful to me to talk about that being in any single channel, I was direct mail for most of my career I still am. I’ve never been in one channel to say, you’re right to say that I wouldn’t consider myself an expert in online, in email marketing, I am no [inaudible 00:06:27]. I had trouble getting on Skype today but that’s a different discussion.

I’m a techno idiot on the one hand. On the other hand I know a good copy when I see it. I know a good email promotion when I see it. I know that to be in any single channel is a huge mistake if you’re in business building mode. From what you’ve told me your audience is very much interested in building businesses not just having a series of revenue events.

Revenue events are fine. You got to pay the bills. My daughter is graduating from college next Sunday. I’m done with tuition payment. Cash flow is a little different for me going forward. It’s a huge issue for me and everybody else. I’m not saying don’t make money. I’m not saying don’t create revenue events. To be in a world say of just affiliate marketing as your only way of buying media. We get into a lot of details and all of this stuff, using that as an example, huge mistake, huge mistake.

That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t be in affiliate marketing. It’s a great way to generate money. It’s a great way not to pay for media and actually make money and share it with your partners. If you think or anybody on this call thinks that to ignore the media choices that are available to us other than affiliate marketing and online you’re missing opportunities [inaudible 00:07:46].

If I could give that message today as the overview, I’ve done a great service to your audience. We can drill down wherever you want to go. I’ve been in every medium. I used to say, “I never met a medium I didn’t like.” I’ve been in direct mail, I’ve been in TV. I’ve been in radio. I’ve been in space. I’ve been in inserts. I’ve been all over the internet. Not to say I’ve done every one right all the time. If I did them all right at the same time I probably wouldn’t be talking to you. I would be vacationing in Thailand.

John: This reminds me, this probably happens a lot all the time online when someone we talked about it before I hit record here where someone creates an eBook and then do a product launch we say product launch formula or something like that. They make some good money. Maybe they make 50 grand or 100 grand or 20 grand or whatever happens to be a lot of money to them. That moment would change a lot of things for them if they’ve never done it before. What people might fall into in that moment is thinking that they’ve made it or that they have a business now.

That’s really not true in the sense that like a product launch or one promotion or one product, it’s a business in the sense that you just sold a product instead of your time for money. You’re not an employee. It’s not a very good business.

If you want to have a good business, what you’re talking about here is instead of going single channel just if someone is running a channel in say Facebook or Google AdWords or direct mail, you want to be going in basically having different legs everywhere. You’re going to have all these different channels, several different products where you’re building out an entire street. You’re building a business not just one product stream.

Brian: Yeah. I’ll build on what you said. That was brilliant what you just said. Using product launch formula I’ll use that as an example. Jeff Walker is I’m not name-dropping. He’s a very, very close friend. I’m in his platinum plus mastermind group and don’t even do launches online. Why would Jeff Walker want me in his product launch formula high SN mastermind group? He wants to take my money for one thing. Jeff’s not about the money. He wants me in that group because I educate in different areas that no one else has been exposed to in that group.

These are the best. The people in that group are the people who use product launch formula at the highest level. These are people I really look up to. They know how to maximize launches online to the nth degree.

The reason why they’re really good at what they do is that as soon as they get a successful launch whatever the dollar figure is; 20,000 or 100,000 and of course people talk about the million dollar launch. How much do you really keep when you do a million dollar launch that’s complete affiliate? Half of it is gone already to the affiliates and then how much of the 500,000 did you spend on everything else that you had to spend on? What’s the net?

I’m not saying you shouldn’t do that. It’s a really easy way. You don’t have to pay for media. It’s a great way to launch a business, launchers launch businesses, there’s no doubt. If you’re going to live launch to launch, you’re nuts.

First of all, being in the launch mode online is like living in a fire drill which is something I refuse to do. I’m old. I don’t have the patience for that. I’ve done launches. It’s not like I haven’t done them. I’ve done direct mail launches since 1981. The word launch was not invented by an internet marketer just so you know. People have been launching products and businesses forever. The online launch concept and you hit it right on the head and brilliantly that don’t mistake a successful launch for a business.

I gave you two quotes before we hit record. I’ll repeat them here for everybody. One is from an internet marketer who I really respect; his name is Chris [Thrall 00:11:22] from the UK. Chris said, “The product is not a business.” The other quote is from John Carlton who is a crusty, old-time direct marketer like me. What John says is, “A promotion is not a business.” John is one of the copywriters who’s ever lived.

The idea that knowing that a particular product, there are people online that get a killer product or a killer promotion and that promotion they start going out to all of the affiliates. They start crushing it as it were, I hate that word. They start crushing it everywhere they go. They are the number one affiliate on ClickBank or whatever affiliate network they go on. All of a sudden they don’t even think about the first thing they should do is how are they going to beat that promotion?

We have an expression here for the last 40 years that control is your enemy. Those of you on this call all know what a control is in traditional direct response, the control package is you’re winning creative, you’re winning promotion. The second you have a winning promotion, the first thing you must do is to beat it. Think about how you’re going to beat it. It’s “The king is dead long live the king.” People have heard that expression. The control is your enemy. That’s a good one too.

You must, must, must always think about not living in the present, you’re always going to the next step. Getting a successful launch, getting a successful promotion is just the beginning I’m a big believer too that all of the other media, online is great to launch a business because it’s much less expensive.

To do direct mail, to launch a business, I don’t think I’d recommend even though I’m the direct mail guy, to not do direct mail on the back end when I already have a buyer who I now have a more intimate relationship with, the beauty of doing things like direct mail or telemarketing, I’ve done telemarketing with actually shipping physical product as opposed to just digital product, you can start seeing the value add that you might have to parts of your audience that would appreciate a more intimate relationship, a more concrete relationship and one that has a higher perceived value.

Frankly, whether you like CDs, whether you like USBs, whether you like a physical product versus a digital product or not, there’s no doubt in my mind that giving somebody giving physical product as opposed to digital product could definitely change that relationship. To do that on the front end which I did my whole career is tougher and tougher to do these days, the US Postal Service isn’t helping me at all; printing and production and all the stuff that people hate. To ignore that is just, ignore that at your peril is my suggestion.

I’ll give you one quick thing too just speaking of PLF. I met somebody who is an online launch expert who showed me her database one day. Basically it was a snapshot of her customers, her database, her customers or people who bought her products. She has a lot of products which is great. She has a lot of diversity.

She started showing me the breakout of her list. Of course she had 10,000 people on her list we’ll say and of course 8000 of them that bought one product only. The other 2000 they bought two products, three products, four products, five products. At the bottom of that list, there was one person who bought 17 products from her.

I looked at her and I said now I was joking but I wasn’t joking. I said to her, “This person right here whatever her name or his name is 17 products from you, when is the last time you invited them to dinner?” She looked at me funny like “Why are you being such a wise guy Brian?”

What I was really trying to get to is that whether you invite them to dinner or whether they get the gold platted X price for being the 17 time buyer who is the person that knows more about your content than anybody in the world or something, I’m making stuff up because I’m not going to tell you what to sell them or how to treat them. Why wouldn’t I want to treat that person like royalty and try to move everybody else on my list closer to royalty?

If you think about your list like that, how many people may be listening on this right now have an email list of 100 people, 500 people, 500,000 people and that when they send an email out, it’s one size fits all. They send the same message to everybody. That’s a huge mistake. List segmentation is all part of this mix as well. I’m going off on a lot of different topics here.

The whole umbrella that I’m trying to get to is that you have to look at this … I’m going back to exactly what you said you have to look at this as a business not a series of launches, not a series of revenue events. You’ve got a business. You’ve got people who love you. You’ve got people who love you more than other people love you. How are you going to treat them versus other people on your list? How are you going to deliver product that may be different to some people than the product that you deliver to others? I just put all that out there because if you’re not thinking like that you’re not thinking about growing the business. You’re just thinking about making money.

John: Right. That reminds me a lot of everything you said there reminds of this is why I brought Perry Marshall on the podcast is because I just read his book on 80/20 Sales and Marketing. I keep mentioning it when I talk to people now as well.

Brian: It’s the best book I read last year, best business book.

John: It blew my mind.

Brian: Yeah great book.

John: Yeah.

Brian: It’s based on a basic print principal. He took it to a whole nother level which was very cool.

John: Yeah. It’s basically focus on the right stuff and you get a much higher return. One thing I thought about, recently with, I’ve been testing in your format where people pay per month to go in because everyone is going in. They’re creating revenues, the best thing in the world. The more I thought about it the more I started realizing, it’s not really, the whole point of being an entrepreneur is there’s that old French definition which is an entrepreneur is a guy who will go and he moves resources from a lower area field to a higher area field.

It’s all the job of the business owner not necessarily the copywriter but the business owner or the entrepreneur is to figure out basically increase, figure out ways to increase the last time of the customers, how much money they spend with you and try to lower the cost of the amount they have to spend to acquire that customer and then to scale that as high as possible.

Brian: Exactly.

John: Just do that on every channel. You add more products into it. The reason why I mentioned Perry Marshall is because he’s got his thing in that book that he mentions the conversion triangle, the trafficking consistency where you’ve got traffic at the front or the top of the triangle and then on the bottom right hand corner you’ve got conversion because you’ve got to make that traffic do something. You’ve got economics which is you’re going to make money with it.

The economics then you feed back into traffic and the traffic feeds back into the conversion. Then that brings in what you mentioned is always try and beat the controller. That’s the cool about online is you can just set this up automatically with a split testing software. You’re just always running a split test.

As long as you’ve got traffic, you can be running a split test or several split tests on every step in that entire sales sequence. It’s all automated. It goes on to talk about expanding the universe to where you might stand on paid traffic because that’s one of the hardest mediums at least online to convert. Then you move out to JVs and then affiliates and then email traffic and then you go and optimize for your search traffic. Then you go and go offline. It’s like you take this one basic principal of get a product and sell it. You just blow things out of proportion.

Brian: Right. It is common sense. Email marketing and online marketing has made for some lazy marketers because of the, it’s inexpensive. What you just talked about, do you understand? I’ll be 56 tomorrow.

John: Happy birthday.

Brian: Thank you. I’m proud of that because my mentor Marty Edelston who founded this company, he never complained about getting old because getting old means he had all this extra wisdom that he had accumulated. When you talk about A/B split testing and as soon as you take control, how do you go out and tweak it. The idea that indirect mail promotes my career the cost of doing that was so high. I had to mail an additional 25,000 names in direct mail at a cost of 3, 4, $500 per thousand to decide what panel to test against that initial panel.

Online as you just said you can do this on the fly. Make sure you have somebody who understands statistical significance though because 12 orders beating eight orders for $100 product is not a winner just FYI. You must have all that, I’m not a statistician. I was an English major not that I speak the language that well. I was not a math major or a statistics major. If you don’t live by your numbers, that’s what direct marketing is all about.

The idea true A/B split testing to really determine how you beat your controls, how you take your business, once you get something that wins and start incrementally moving it up, building, building, building and at the same time thinking of the next new products. There’s a great quote in the Bible of direct marketing.

There’s a book written by Bob Stone, I used it as a textbook when I taught direct marketing at the college level. It’s called Successful Direct Marketing Methods. It’s in its seventh edition. Right at the beginning of that book, one of the first quotes is “No direct marketing business can succeed without repeat business.” Anybody on this call is probably saying this guy should not be being interviewed by John. He’s not telling me anything I don’t know.

Frankly, that may be true. I will tell you right now what I observe in the market place is that not everybody is understanding the concept that no marketing business that if you want to succeed whether online offline I don’t care what you do that you must have repeat business. You must have business that builds upon your existing business and nobody wants to be a one-hit wonder. There are many more one-hit wonders online than there are people who’ve built franchise businesses, my opinion.

John: That’s because you can probably, when you have a real, I always say it is a real business, when you have an offline business the stakes are much higher. If you don’t pull it off, if you don’t succeed then you’re gone, you’re out. You can’t stay in business whereas online it’s easy enough. The stakes aren’t that high because you don’t have any costs.

Brian: Good point.

John: You’ve got a couple of outsource in the Philippines. You make a little bit of money. It’s all good. It’s not a big deal.

Brian: Yeah. I did a post on copy blogger which is a really great site. I’m sure you know it because you’re a copywriter. My post on there, my article on there that I’ve done it’s called How Paying Postage Made Me a Better Marketer. It talks about nine things of why the thought process it takes when the stakes are as high as you said … Look, I’m not sitting here running around saying, “Oh man, I’m a better marketer because I pay postage. I paid all this money to do direct mail.”

Maybe I’m the idiot. I should have figured out how to do a lot cheaper marketing earlier. The discipline that it took to do that has really been something that I’ll take with me as I move into all kinds of media cheap or expensive. It doesn’t matter. The discipline of marketing is the discipline of marketing which you hit on perfectly.

John: There’s almost like pros and cons if you’re online there’s less downside. That also means it’s easy to be lazy and give up because offline there’s a lot more downside. That at the same time forces you to up your game.

Brian: Absolutely. There’s also a bigger upside. I’ll say that nothing still scales like direct mail. We do direct mail programs now that can get three, 4, 5% response rates. The economics are tough if you’re dealing with physical product. That’s the difference. You’re delivering physical product. You are cutting into your profits by not having a downloadable product. If you do your direct mail right today, the response rates are as good as they’ve ever been.

The problem the list universes aren’t as big and then you’re margins are tighter because of physical product. The risks are much higher. I just want people to know that’s why I was emphasizing that using direct mail on the back end of an online business once you have customers who have already paid money with you the investment that you can make in them is much higher therefore using “more expensive” media is going to have a chance of paying out.

I’ll just tell your audience that the response rates that you’re going to get with direct mail even with an audience that may be not used to responding by direct mail but they’re used to responding to you as a guru. Look at Dan Kennedy. Dan Kennedy, he swears by still sending his print newsletter on the back end. Once you’re at $60 a month member of whatever he’s doing. Don’t underestimate physical product.

I’ll tell this quick one; I was at Underground two years, maybe three years ago which is the number one internet conference Yanik is a real good friend and somebody I really, really respect. Yanik is a student of all the things we’re talking about today. People would think Yanik Silver is an internet marketer. Don’t let him fool you. Yanik Silver is a direct marketer.

Yanik Silver had a guy on stage. It was Saturday morning of Underground two or three years ago. The topic of the speech was the big, deep, dark secret of online marketing. The deep, dark secret I’m going to whisper into my microphone here. The deep, dark secret, I don’t want anybody to hear this is physical product, physical product. That was the secret from an online marketer talking to online marketers that they just found out.

Fortunately I was sitting next to a fellow dinosaur who’s been in direct marketing since the 1980s like myself. I looked at him I scratched my head I go, “That’s brilliant. We could definitely benefit from this physical product thing.” I’m not bragging. It’s not bragging if you did it. I sold $300 million worth of books, hardcover books on TV over a three year period. People will still buy physical product. I don’t want to go crazy with that. You get my point.

John: It was about a month ago, I actually bought a physical book online from an internet marketer. It was actually the first product I’d bought from him Russell Brunson I don’t know if you know him.

Brian: Yeah I know Russell. I know him well.

John: Yeah. He had his ads coming up on Facebook for some is 101, 103 split tests, you got to the site, it’s free but you got to pay $20 postage or $10 postage I can’t remember what it was. He sent it out in Thailand. Obviously after that I start getting a whole ton of emails from him as well. That was an interesting example. When this book came out, I don’t have it with me here. It’s high quality paper with glossy prints, it’s gorgeous. There are problems with the book.

The book was an example of this guy doing something different. It’s incredible. It’s got my attention. I’ve told I don’t know probably at least five or 10 people about it who have then gone and either bought it or told other people about it. It’s a very disruptive marketing as well. You’ve got a list of people who are used to eBooks or videos online and you send them a letter, postcard even, they’d freak out.

Brian: Yeah. I’ll tell you. It’s not anecdotal. This is a real story. I do a lot of speaking for students in direct marketing. These are college students who are going to go into direct marketing. I got up in front of them; this is when I whisper into a microphone as well. It was a dark secret. I said to them. I said, “When you go on a job interview, after the interview, how many people here send an email follow-up?” Of course every hand goes up. I said, “How many people send any other kind of follow-up?” No hand goes up.

There were 300 kids in the room. I said to them. I said, “Just so you know that if you go on a job interview and after the interview you send something” and then I actually happen to have at my fingertips, “If you send something on this.” I held up a piece of paper. I said, “This is called paper.” I said, “This is called a pen. There’s also called a Word processor which you can actually type on paper. You don’t have to do it as an email.”

I said, “This is an envelope. I don’t have postage on me now.” If you’re sitting in an interview talking to an interviewee and they are talking about an author or an article that they read or something that you have in common. I’ll make this up that you send an envelope on your follow-up with a cover letter and then you attach an article from the author that you were talking about in the interview, you know what? I whisper in the microphone again, no one else is doing that. No one else is doing that.

Differentiation, I’m using that as an example. I’m not telling people to go apply for jobs here. I’m saying that that thinking is the same thinking that marketers should have that … You said, I love the word you used, disruptive. It’s so ironic to me that physical product on the back end for an online marketer is considered disruptive marketing.

I applaud you for looking at it, for observing it and then saying, “This is something that people should learn how to do.” Keep in mind it wasn’t disruptive in the 1980s. It was how we did things. Now the combination of things given the high cost of physical product, the high cost of postage and the low cost of email, the low cost of digital product combining those into a unified whole is a game changer.

I’m saying the people on this call right now are privileged to be talking to me and you because if they haven’t thought about their business this way, think about your business this way. It can be game changing. I’ll repeat something. Listen carefully; no one else is doing it.

John: There are sites out there. I’m guilty as charged. I’ve never done any physical stuff myself. I know people who do. It’s not even that hard anymore. You can set it up so you send out. You can take a PDF send it to someone else or another company. They’ll put it on to a, they’ll print it out into a report. You can put it onto a CD. You can even send people USB drives with probably videos and all sorts of stuff on them. It’s not even that big of a deal.

Brian: No question. I’m doing a live event in September that’s going to be an epic event. I call it The Titans of Direct Response. Basically I’ve got a lineup of speakers that is unprecedented. The thing that I’m doing there, one of the giveaways, I’m going to actually give a binder, two binders actually, Dan Kennedy does this too. I’m going to have a binder that’s going to have PDFs of all of the best control packages that the copywriters who were speaking at the event have done for Boardroom that have mailed over 650 million pieces of direct mail. These are control packages that they wrote for us.

In the binder, it’s going to be the PDF and also everything on a CD. I was thinking about a USB drive since you buy a Mac Air now, you don’t even have a CD drive anymore. I’m still cool with giving a CD and a PDF. I’m going to have another binder that’s going to be a printout of every direct mail piece not written by those copywriters who were speaking that have also mailed in the 100s of millions of pieces for Boardroom. I’m going to give those away as physical product.

These are direct mail packages. I could give those away digitally. They’ll be on the CD for those people who are allergic to paper which there are a lot of people that still are. The idea of touching and feeling the direct mail package, that’s a 12-page letter, that’s a 24-page magalog, the kinds of direct mail that we do that weave a story, that tell a story that is powerful that sells product, sells through on a product and not just is on the periphery of the sales.

By the way a flashing arrow in a red box on a landing page is not necessarily good creative just FYI. There’s a lot that goes into it. You as a copywriter I know you really understand this. That the copy approaches of my direct mail from the 1980s, ‘90s and 2000s is all applicable to steal smart from in online marketing today. That’s why I’m giving it away as physical product. I’m giving it away on digital too. I’m giving it away on physical product because it existed as physical product first.

John: The whole [inaudible 00:30:57] the disruptive idea I mentioned before is that it’s almost like marketing is the art of figuring out what’s going to disrupt someone the most? When no one is saying lose weight, the person who comes out and says lose weight as their headline disrupts the person because someone is like, “No one has told me that before. I want to buy this product.” Everyone starts saying it and all of a sudden you got to say something else.

Brian: Exactly.

John: When online doesn’t exist if you have something online that’s disruptive. If everyone is doing online and no one is doing offline then offline is disruptive. It’s almost like the game is always shifting. A good marketer is always basically taking in the environment, the surrounding. They’re saying, “What’s everyone expecting and then going, “I’m going to do the opposite of that.”

Brian: Yeah. As a copywriter you’ll love the title of an interview I did with my friend Joe Polish which is actually on my site for free if people on your list want it. In the interview we said, “Everyone is going right time to go left”, which is exactly what you just said. It’s really about direct mail for internet marketers. It introduces this concept that it’s not that … We’re not telling people to replace online marketing with offline marketing. We’re encouraging people that there’s this thing that people aren’t doing that you’re going to stick out. I know some online marketers that are just doing incredibly well with that. I bet Russell did great with that back end book to his online audience.

I have a ton of stuff on my site that your folks are welcome to eat it up. It’s all free. It’s BrianKurtz.me, www.BrianKurtz.me. I’m not selling anything there. They can opt-in to my list. I’m blogging every week on all of these kinds of topics. I want them to have that interview in particular. It’s on there. It says, “Everyone is going right time to go left.”

John: Okay. I’ll have the link to that on short notes at The McMethod.com. One thing I’ve been meaning to ask you about which we talked about a little bit before is this whole idea of being a beast of marketing. In this case being a beast is a good thing. Tell me about that.

Brian: Marty Edelston who passed away this past October. He was my mentor. He’s the guy who founded Boardroom in 1972. An entrepreneur is an entrepreneur just and he was a beast. Marty was a tenacious marketer. He was also incredibly generous as well. That’s what makes to me a beast. The beast sounds very aggressive, always on the prowl, always have to sell the most. My definition here would be tenacious yet generous marketing.

How I would definite that, there’s a picture I have in my office here of Marty in his prime, he was black belt in Karate. He’s Karate chopping a board on two stacks of books. The books are called The Book of Secrets which is a book that we mailed 20 million names over a couple of years.

The Book of Secrets was the third version of a book that the first two versions were disasters in direct mail. I won’t go into the whole story. I’ll be telling the story actually at Info-Summit in November which I was invited to speak at which I was flattered to. I’m going to tell this story about tenacious marketing. Marty believed so much in this product and realized he was a great promotion away from 25 million pieces or 20 million pieces in direct mail from a disaster one, disaster two, big winner three.

It’s not just being relentless and stupid, doing the same thing over and over again is not and getting the same results. That’s stupidity. That’s not what I’m talking about. Gary Halbert who is one of the great copywriters of all time had the classic line that every business problem can be solved with a great sales letter.

This idea of being a beast in marketing and being tenacious, you have to put it all together. It’s not any one thing. We’ve already talked a little bit about the product alone is not enough; the promotion alone is not enough. The list and the segmentation and the media buying is not enough by itself. You must put all of those things together and to be a true beast of marketing involves making sure that you have experts at all those areas.

There’s a great quote that I have in one of my presentations from an investment banker in New York. He was talking about buying internet companies. He said, “Advertising opportunities are now infinite.” What does that really mean? What that means is that anybody who … I said this one on my blogs recently, anybody who comes to you today and says, “I’m your one-stop shopping for all of your media needs”, run away, run away, run, run fast. Don’t even stay near that person. There is nobody, nobody that can be an expert on all those things.

Being a beast in marketing as I’ve talked about creative, as I’ve talked about lists and audience segmentation, as I’ve talked about product development, all of those things, there are experts at all of those areas. I don’t care what type of entrepreneurship or star you are. You’re probably not an expert in all of those things.

You have to using Dan Sullivan’s term the entrepreneurs’ coach who talks about working your unique ability. If you’re a copywriter for example, yeah you should be writing your own copy. When you want to start working on new product development, collaborate with people that can help you based on what you want to do, what your passions are and make sure you’re running it by people, make sure you’re in mastermind groups.

Marty didn’t invent mastermind groups. He always supported me being in them. Mastermind groups also were not invented by internet marketers just saying. Napoleon Hill talks about masterminding in his books from way back in the early 20th Century. Being around people that can help you develop your business, going to experts in those areas, you can’t be the list expert. You can’t be the Facebook expert. You can’t be the SEO expert and all those things. You must find those experts. If you’re not the expert in copy, find a copywriter who is.

I was writing the promotion for this [inaudible 00:36:59] that is in September. I sent it to one of my buddies David Deutsch who is a world class copywriter. It was on a Sunday two weeks ago. David sends me a very, very polite yet pointed email after he looked at my copy. He said, “Brian, you’re an expert in list, right?” I said, “Yeah.” He said, “If I was looking for information on lists, databases and list segmentation, I would come to you. If I was [inaudible 00:37:24] if I was trying to do that myself, that would be a big mistake.”

He’s sitting there trying to in a subtle way saying, “Brian you can’t write [inaudible 00:37:32].” It wasn’t like my copy sucked. It was I was writing prose. I wasn’t writing sales copy. At the end he goes, “Brian, it’s Sunday go to your family. Give your sales letter to a professional copywriter.” He wasn’t going to do it because he’s too expensive. Basically that’s what I did.

I had violated my own rule of thumb of why I am a beast in marketing and why am I a tenacious marketer. It’s not because I know everything about everything. I know everything about this much. Right now my thumb and my index finger are an inch apart. I know everything about this much. I have a sense of what else I need to know to make sure that I can get my products and services to the market place in the best ways possible. If I think I can do all that myself at the highest level, I’m an idiot.

John: Yeah. This is like what Richard Branson talks about. Some of these guys who are building billion dollar companies is if you talk to them or you read their books that kind of thing, it’s always about hiring. It’s never about doing anything specifically. It’s pretty much always about finding good people who are smarter than them to get the job done. That’s what these guys do. They have a vision. They have other people to execute on it. They just do that over and over and over again.

Brian: Yeah. In this event in September, there’s going to be a huge tribute to Marty Edelston who I mentioned before. Dan Kennedy was a big admirer of Marty. Dan and I are going to basically spend the first morning of two days at the event going through the four pillars of what made Marty Edelston this modest guy from Newark, New Jersey an extraordinary entrepreneur and businessman.

One of the four things is basically if you’re the smartest person in the room you’re in the wrong room. Marty always surrounded himself with people smarter than himself even though he always used to say he had the great bullshit antennae. He knew when people were bullshitting him.

He also knew when he needed to take a piece of this and piece of that. That’s how he built his business. He had the smarts. He had the drive. He had the work ethic. He had the entrepreneurial spirit to the nth degree. If he didn’t have this idea that he wasn’t the smartest guy on everything, he never would have built $100 million business.

John: Tell me about this event man, because we’re getting up to about time here. Before we go though, you did mention this event with all these speakers. You’ve told me a bit about it. I wish I could be there for it but I’m not going to be in the States I don’t think. Tell me about it. Tell the listeners about it because I’m sure there’s a few of them that are going to be in the area.

Brian: Yeah. I wasn’t planning on going on this call to pitch anything. I’m not a sales guy. I’m the only guy that’s never spoken at a Glazer-Kennedy event that didn’t sell anything from the stage. I’m very proud of that. That’s not my game. This event is going to be the ultimate educational event to bring together the greats of direct response and the greats of today’s marketing environment in one room to teach, to educate, to interact.

Basically as I said it’s called The Titans of Direct Response. The first part of day one is Dan Kennedy and I basically talking about those pillars from Marty Edelston which are both marketing pillars and entrepreneurial pillars of how to build a business and how to have insatiable curiosity when it comes to building a marketing business. Dan is going to actually do a bunch of things on his creative approach that he has not shared at other events. That’s going to be cool.

After that, I’m going to have what I call the Boardroom’s Mount Rushmore of copywriters. There will be four copywriters on this panel who are responsible for 650 million pieces of direct mail, all profitable direct mail. It’s not like mail we threw away. It’s this mail that actually mail with response rates.

That’s the Mount Rushmore the four best copywriters for Boardroom currently. That’s David Deutsch, Parris Lampropoulos, Eric Betuel and Arthur Johnson. Maybe people have heard of them, maybe they haven’t. These are four of the best copywriters in the world.

After them I am going to have the best copywriter in the world Gary Bencivenga who is no longer writing and yet he has his own business. He is going to speak. He never speaks anymore. He did the Bencivenga 100 many years ago. That was his farewell to the direct marketing industry. Gary thought that he needed to be on stage for this event. He’ll speak for an hour on things that he has not talked about since his retirement.

If anybody in copywriting or creative, we’re talking about copywriting royalty here. After him, we’re going to have Ken McCarthy who is basically if Al Gore invented the internet, Ken McCarthy invented Al Gore. Ken McCarthy is one of the pioneers of internet marketing. He’s a direct response. He’s my age. He’s got the experience. He’s studied all the greats of direct marketing.

He’s no [inaudible 00:42:19] by any means and just the opposite. He’s still doing tons of stuff online, doesn’t speak anywhere anymore. He used to have the system seminar which is probably the best marketing seminar that you could go to in the ‘80s and ‘90s. That’s day one.

Day two, I’m going to have Perry Marshall who you’ve heard on this podcast. He and I are similar in that I think we’re bridges between the past and the present. Perry is a lot smarter than I am. That’s why I’m having him speak because why do I want to be the smartest person in the room? I’m by far, I maybe the dumbest person in the room. I’ll have Perry Marshall.

I’m going to do one-on-one interviews with Jay Abraham who is one of the great pioneers of direct marketing. I’m going to do a one-on-one with Joe Sugarman who is the eventer of BluBlocker sunglasses and probably sharper image and any hi-tech cataloger owes Joe Sugarman a debt of gratitude for inventing that category. Those will be interviews with them.

I’m going to have, in the afternoon I’m going to have Greg Renker of Guthy-Renker which is the largest infomercial company in the world. They’re close to a $2 billion business. It’s not to talk just about direct response TV. It’s to talk about multichannel marketing on steroids. Greg Renker, Guthy-Renker does TV. They also do kiosks in malls and everything in between.

I’m going to have Fred Catona who is the father of direct response radio, probably the number one guy on direct response radio in the world. I’m going to do a final panel with my internal mastermind group, the closest people in my particular circle of why I can be a tenacious and beast marketer. That will be Michael Fisherman, Jim Quick and Ryan Lee. Your listeners probably are well, very familiar with Ryan Lee.

I’m not just getting a bunch of old guys. I’m getting some people together who are the Titans of the future. The four of us are going to talk about true masterminding and what it means to be accountable to people in your world so that you don’t go out and launch product indiscriminately.

I am going to do a day three as a VIP package where David Deutsch and I are going to spend an entire day all hot seats probably a maximum of 30 people and 15 minute hot seats, people bring their business problem, their copy, they’re tired, they’re poor, they’re hungry, whatever they want to bring.

David and I, David is one of the top copywriters in the world. In this context, I’ll consider myself one of the best direct marketers in the world. David and I will spend the entire day with a group of people. That group also will have a special dinner with Dan and I in the VIP package which will be cool too. They’ll get a tour of the Boardroom.

All of that will be in Stamford, Connecticut September 11th to the 13th of this year. Promos are going out soon. If your folks want to hear about it I’ll send you a link at some point when I announce the event formally which will be in the next two weeks. If they go to my list www.BrianKurtz.me they get all that free content. If they want to opt-in to my list, they’ll get the link to the event if they want to come. It’s going to be an epic event.

John: Sounds good man. I’m on your website right now. I’m signing up. I want to hear about this event. Maybe I can make it over, who knows.

Brian: That would be awesome. I would love to have you. I could just tell by the questions you ask and the preparation for this interview that you’re someone that really gets all of this. That you want to teach the audience about everything they need to know about email marketing. You’re bigger than that I can tell. I’m really flattered that you asked me to participate in this.

We weren’t able to drill down too much into specific marketing techniques. There’s a lot of stuff on my website that has some of that. I’ll be moving much more into drill down type content over the next year or two. I’m very excited about the possibilities for the marketers of today. It’s the best time to be in marketing. I say marketing. I don’t say online marketing. I don’t say offline marketing. I’ll say direct response marketing. Online is the ultimate direct response medium.

John: A quick question before we go though you know about the GoPro camera right?

Brian: Yeah. Is that the thing that Mike [Annese 00:46:30] talks about? No.

John: This camera, the guy who started it is one of the newest, America’s newest youngest billionaires, one of those guys.

Brian: Yeah, yeah.

John: I don’t know too much about the story. I remember hearing somewhere along grapevine that those guys did a ton of infomercial stuff.

Brian: Hmm (affirmative).

John: I thought you might know.

Brian: Yeah infomercial is a tough business. We could do a separate podcast someday if you want to talk about direct response TV although Greg Renker that’s why I got Greg Renker because if I was going to talk about TV, why would I want to talk about TV when I can have Greg Renker talk about TV? We did do well on TV.

The problem with direct response television is that you spend a lot more money on the production infomercial for example and to get on the air. The media cost to test is not that high it’s maybe 15 or 20,000 bucks. The production could be 50 to $150,000. The thing is as soon as you run it on the media that you think is going to work on TV which is limited to some degree and it doesn’t work, it’s all sunk cost.

It’s not like direct mail or in email where you can tweak it, where you can change it, where you can recoup some of the money you might have had in product development, very tough to recoup on that big upfront investment when you’re in direct response TV. I find it to be a very dangerous medium. It’s also one that if you hit you will go nuts. We not only went nuts by getting a successful, we had four successful infomercials. In every case increased all boats rose. We were able to get into direct mail in a big way for the products that we sold on TV using direct mail that talked about the infomercial.

We actually had screenshots from all the experts that were in the infomercial in the direct mail package and then we went online with the experts that we used. In one case Hugh Downs who was the famous newscaster. We put Hugh Downs all over the internet talking about this book. That is seen on TV, seen by millions which was true. All of a sudden all boats rose because I think singlechannelmarketingissoboring.com. We were able to take the infomercial combine it with direct mail and online and it became this juggernaut. It really, the TV scaled so quickly.

I tell that story a lot I’d like to repeat it one day. I don’t consider it a one-hit wonder. I do consider it a four-hit wonder. That’s why our company went to 150 million but then went way back down to 80 million very quickly because we were able to hit on something that big. The interesting thing, talk about building a business, we didn’t have to really staff up to do any of that. We went from 70 or 80 million to 150 million within one year or a year and a half. We stayed at 150 million for close to three years. I didn’t increase our staff at all. Talk about direct marketing scaling, right?

John: Yeah.

Brian: I already had the direct mail people in place. I already had the online marketing people in place. I outsourced almost everything for the infomercial, the production, the telemarketing, the fulfillment I already had in place. I didn’t have to add vendors. I had to add telemarketing vendors. They’re getting paid as a piece of the order. I did not really increase my overhead at all. I went from 80 million to 150 million.

If I could do that on a regular basis, see you in Fiji right? If I’m making this sound easy you can slap me up the side of my head. It’s not easy. Boy, when you’re thinking in terms of this multichannel approach, it can just scale quickly. It was probably the most exciting period of my career to date. I’ve had a lot of exciting periods of winning controls with all those great copywriters and all this other stuff.

In fact at the event, one of those four copywriters, Arthur Johnson was actually in the infomercial with Hugh Downs. He wasn’t a TV star beforehand. He is just so passionate about the health topics that he writes about. He really is a health writer. He’s not a copywriter. Talk about a copywriter becoming a health expert, he really was, because to become a great copywriter he had to become a health expert first, to write about health information.

Arthur will talk at the event about that being the most exciting period of his career. He’s had an illustrious career as a copywriter writing for the best direct marketers in the world over a long period of time. He considers that whole infomercial to direct mail to online as the most exciting marketing that he’s ever done in his career. That case history will be really mapped out.

On my site, there’s an interview that Perry Marshall did with me which is about, it talks about the three biggest successes of my career or something like that. I map out the case history from my perspective on that interview if people want to listen to that. Arthur will give it from the perspective of the copywriter and from someone who is actually on camera the whole time. I went crazy there when you said infomercial. I wanted to get all that in.

It’s a phenomenal medium, direct response TV. That’s why radio is a forgotten medium. A lot of online marketers have found it. You hear a lot of stuff online on the radio that our online marketer is using radio for lead generation. That’s why I went and got Fred Catona to speak, because I said to Dan Kennedy, “Who is the number one guy in direct response radio?” It isn’t me. I’ve not had big success in radio personally.

I want to make sure I put the person on stage that’s going to teach that because this is just the beginning. The concept of the Titans of Direct Response is something that I’m going to ... This is the first event. This will be the big one. I could see a whole series of workshops coming off of this in all of these different media, medium or whatever because I might, maybe I will use that site singlechannelmarketingissoboring.com because I think people will remember it even though it’s long. Use that as a link to bring all of this together because that is one my real passions.

I have this thing called O-to-O-to-O, online to offline to online. That to me mixing and matching all the media probably is what excites me for my next 30 year career. The first 30 years have been really, really good. I’m really happy with my first 30 years. Now I got to decide what I want to do when I really grow up. These next 30 years are all about this merging of the old and the new, merging online and offline and being a bridge, being Perry Marshall junior maybe. I don’t know.

John: It sounds good Brian. I’ll have to get you back on sometime in the future maybe in 20 years’ time we’ll have to talk about what’s happened since then.

Brian: Yeah. I’ll be in a wheelchair but yeah sure.

John: Absolutely. I really appreciate you coming on the show Brian. It’s been good.

Brian: Okay thanks.