

Transcription - Trisca Scott Brannigan Part 1

Welcome back, this is Inside Exec and I'm Kim Baillie. The podcast that you're about to listen to is the first of three parts of a conversation Fulyana and I had with Trisca Scott-Brannigan.

We were in a very noisy location during the conversation. We have, as much as possible, removed the background noise, but you will need to adjust your volume a little bit during this recording. Let's get on with it.

[Music]

Welcome back, I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn and this is Inside Exec. Today we're delighted to have with us Trisca Scott-Brannigan and we appreciate the time that she has given to talk with us today about all things marketing. You come very highly recommended and we've heard so much about you, I'm sure our listeners will really enjoy hearing this conversation. Just a little bit, for our listeners, about your background and please jump in anytime.

Trisca is ranked number seven most innovative CMOs by the CMO council. That's fantastic, not an easy thing to achieve and we'll talk about that more. At the moment you are in education, at Deakin University and you've got 70 people, you're leading them into the world of marketing and business development. I know you're going well because the numbers show that a lot more students are going to Deakin and also the fact that we all have heard of Deakin University.

That's great and it's good to know it's working but there's a lot of business going on at Deakin, mainly on the online learning side of things. It's a highly competitive highly sector. I think it's really going to help commercialize the self-learning aspect. So it's an exciting to be a part of that.

Excellent. Before that Trisca you have about 20 years in the finance and professional services with Deloitte, not just in Sydney, Australia or in Melbourne but also in New York. And the other big area, which we're very interested in, is your participation on boards. You're on a number of boards and I know that's important for everyone, particularly for women to be on boards. We'll come back to that. Is that a fair summary?

I think that's a great place to start.

Well, tell us about your journey into marketing, what made you choose that over business development?

I started my career and I think that my mid-twenties, at the time, I had fairly new skills in business development. I say I fell into it because I actually did an arts degree at university and I thought that I was going to go to a job in that area. But while I was doing my undergraduate studies, I worked, I had five jobs at one time, and I felt that I was more enticed to working sometimes than studying. So I had lots of different jobs on the go, not studying really, but I made sure I got some good work through. The time at jobs that I did when I was

studying, they ended up being in roles that were more sales and so my very first proper job was, you know, you can't even see it as a business manager, was for a car dealership. So business managers, because they don't take too many, they try to sell you insurance, warranty, etc. When I started, I was 20 years old, I was the youngest person in that seat. I had an amazing education at the end, it was like the University of life training while I was in that role.

So I did university part-time, I worked for the dealership for a couple of years. And that was a really great training ground for me. From there, I realized I had an art for sales, an art for me, focused on revenue growing, and so I moved into business development roles. And in a business development role, it's more working business to business, forming partnerships, forming alliances between two companies. And then you partner with the product together, someone will have a customer base and they'll want the product to sell into that customer base. So I had a lot of fun doing that, but what I found was sales is very much a lot of collaborations. I was getting impatient that it was taking so long to see the revenue growing, to grow one-to-one relationship arrangement. And that's when I introduced that to be a product, because I saw that marketing was a one-to-many relationships. So I could get right in, if I could figure out how to scale the conversations I was having individually.

And that's why in my late 20s, I took myself back to university. I was still working full-time, so I studied part-time, about three years to finish my postgraduate studies at that time. Then the journey began finding an organization who's going to be willing to give me a start, to give me a first chance in marketing. That took a little while. That's when I moved from Sydney to Melbourne. I think that's a theme in my career, I moved to where the opportunity is. So I was based in Sydney, grew up in Sydney, and really wanted to move into marketing. I was looking at all the different opportunities in Sydney, but it was all business development, account management. And that's fine, but that wasn't what I wanted to do. I was really curious and interested about this world, marketing.

Finally, an opportunity came to me, about five or six months later, to move to an organization based in Melbourne in insurance. I decided to pack up, move to Melbourne, didn't know a soul there at the time, but I was excited about the opportunity, because the opportunity was a blend of marketing and business development. They loved the fact that I had the business development side, were willing to give me a break and let me start on the marketing side.

I'm interested in the personal development side of things. You obviously were comfortable in developing the things that you were interested in and pursuing that. Now that you're in a management role, do you see people that you can identify that are doing the same thing?

Oh, I see it a lot. I think that the people who are really engaged in what they're doing, there is this wave of curiosity, this wave of appetite, the growth of the people who really want to aspire to branch out, which has different challenges. I am delighted to see that, particularly for someone that I have, so I see the staff, I have, I see the people that I meet outside of work, and I just see this lust to gain knowledge, to acquire the knowledge, and to really resonate with it.

We get sold on the idea that things are not as creative or as innovative as they used to be, the great age of marketing is passed. I know someone who is deeply involved in what he's

doing, is working, can see that there is still the age of marketing.

The age of marketing is definitely not passed, but it's been disrupted in the last five years, is unrecognizable. So what has happened is the whole world has been disrupted through, technology. Not just sectors, but professions. What is happening is because the worldwide web came into being. That was transformation, but it took a while for organizations to see it. It is absolutely marketing. A website is like a retail shop for your business, and you'll see some of the biggest retailers around world recognise there's more money in redeveloping, or in the website, than there is in opening a flagship retail store. So that is a reality. Now with the website comes, we've grown in marketing technology, so what we call tech.

My take is where technology companies have built different software systems that allow us to engage moderately with the end-class to both engage with them and help them in their journey of using your product with your service, but also in identifying potential future customers and using it as a lead generation, ultimately lead conversion to them.

There's over 3,600 marketing technologies out there with marketing today. You do not need 3,600 technology solutions in one organization, but you do need a handful. It's what we call a mandate stack. So you stack all the products that you need, you make sure there's an open API system between each of the technologies, you ensure there are data flow between them, that is then how you build your mandate stack, engage with your customer to ensure there is a 5 star experience. From the client point of view, our customer points of view, they love it because they've got a lot more information at their fingertips. We are able to compare and make choices.

And by what you describe, it's enabled us to make a relationship, even through technology, and to say, I like dealing with that, it was easy to make the process, it was friendly, I like the result, and I can recommend them.

Yeah, and when you think about education, a university is an option for people. It's a big decision for them to make. It's going to be their second or third biggest purchase decision in their entire life. It will take more than one visit to make that decision. And as a university, I'm only a business tool for each of the years we're going to take a new student. So our ability to engage people through that decision-making process is pretty important. I don't have enough physical resources that they can go and have one-to-one conversations with them. Because if you think about just the first intake here in the year, we have over 16,000 new students coming to look at that. But what we do know from the research that we've done in the market is, a lot of students, prospective students, they go onto a university's website to investigate what the options are, what courses are on offer that is available, how much will it cost, how is the course constructed, all those very relevant questions to have answered before you can make a decision. And we know that the experience someone has on our website when they're investigating what they're going to do, that customer associates the experience on our website during their research, with the experience they've had when they're actually being able to go to the university.

So they're not taught on our website, they're taught in lecture meetings, they're taught on our online learning platform, it's a completely different system. The psychology of the consumer is, I go into your website, has a beautiful, elegant, easy experience, it's frictionless, therefore when I'm learning it will be a beautiful, elegant, frictionless learning experience, and that's

what we need to create for them. Both in fact.

It's really interesting that they equate experience of the website with attendance. Because like, you're not experiencing learning with us. It's a big leap of faith, and that's why it's so important for a really strong website. It's akin to the idea that, within your online experience, particularly the services area, that you give them something of value before you ask something of them. In that experience, you're giving them something of value to them, that reassures them, that they trust you, that they like you, that they know you, and they can then make the decision of you.

There has been the foray of massive online courses which has really been taking over for most of the last few years. You can now do an online free course, it's typically two weeks, it's a taster. You learn through the program, at the pace it sets or at your own pace, thousands of people around the world are doing at the same time with you. Yes, so there's a lot of interaction, it's managed well, and it's for free. They were giving you the best ones, the best academic times, and the deep subject matter area, that is an interest to you personally. How helpful is that?

It brings up two points, that in terms of your competition, your business, that you now have competition worldwide, and that regardless of the country or the states, the choice of whether students pay all of them, is that there is an opportunity for education, for everyone, at the extra level, which is wonderful. It's all about access, equity, inclusion, everyone should have the opportunity to be educated, and unfortunately, they're not there yet.

So in that sense, then do you, as an organisation, identify your ideal client, your ideal student?

Well, it's not about ideal, it's about trying to identify who has got the best opportunity to succeed. Sometimes the criteria that's put on by the government or by universities themselves, are the right measurement. We have skills that we get when we finish our school certificate, and each state calls it something different in Victoria, we call it a Vic score in New South Wales, it's U-A. So it's different wherever we go, but the theory is, if you get a basic score, then you must have the learning acumen to be able to succeed in the university level. But we know that that is so swayed to your social environment, background. Did you go to a private school? Were you regional or city-based? Are you first in family? And these have a big profound impact on the schooling that you don't get. Now the government does realise that, and the sector does accept they can try to normalise it, but some people still, despite that, attempting online, still don't qualify based on them having to get to the university. The good news is that there are options for those people, it's what we call power wise. So you can go to a tutor, you can go to a college, and based on your success, there's a lot to do with a related course. After the first year, you could then go back into the university system, and we look at numbers very closely. Those people coming in through those pathway programs do get better outcomes. The people that came direct, the answer is, it does not make a difference. And I think the more exciting thing is that people have to go through a pathway, they really want to get to university. You find they're often hard workers, they know that it's a privileged position to be able to get this education. So many people come to the university, they're trying to make a difference, set themselves a fantastic life, and they think it's much more meaningful to their education. That would be very true for

overseas people, so people that come from overseas, then they're schooling overseas. They come and use the pathway to get to university, they will give it everything, and then they will do well. And the difference there is, of course, is that a lot of money, that's the result of getting it. So therefore it's only the privileged people I can see who can afford to do it. So again, we don't have full equity, inclusion, across the world globally.

I was thinking more about migrants, migrants here, citizens of the country, they've got to go through a pathway. I certainly had to do that. Sometimes those people are well-supported, yes, by their families and sometimes they're not understood, because it's first in family and parents, or that one in community just don't understand why.

We're going to take a break in our conversation with Trisca Scott-Brannigan, so join us again for part two. I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn and this is Inside Exec.