

# The Reach Factor: Neil Patel on How Small Businesses Compete Effectively Online



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Welcome to Thrive, a Paychex business podcast, where you'll hear timely insights to help you navigate marketplace dynamics and propel your business forward. Here's your host, Gene Marks.

**Gene Marks:**

Hey, everybody, I'm Gene Marks. Thank you so much for joining me today. Hey, today, I had a great conversation with Neil Patel. Neil is the co-founder at Neil Patel Digital, his website, by the way, is npdigital.com. He is a New York Times bestselling author, the Wall Street journalist called him a top influencer on the web, Forbes says he is one of the top 10 marketers, Entrepreneur Magazine says he created one of the 100 most brilliant companies. Listen, I've followed Neil for a long time because he is a legit social media expert. And in this conversation today, he's answering some of the questions I have about my business, which I know is going to impact your businesses, all about advertising on social media. I have questions and we talked a little about advertising on Google and is it really worth it? And how do we know we're getting bang for our buck by doing it? Or does it make more sense just to have organic SEO?

**Gene Marks:**

We also talked about the pros and the cons of doing our social media or spending the resources on LinkedIn versus Facebook, for example. And also, in these times of a very much short supply of labor, Neil had some thoughts on using some of the social media sites out there to help recruit new employees for your business. So, great conversation with Neil — I think you're really going to enjoy it — and we will be back with him in just a moment.

**Gene Marks:**

All right. And we're back, and Neil, thank you so much for joining me.

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah. Thanks for having me.

**Gene Marks:**

So, Neil, listen, I've been a fan of yours for a thousand years, you do great work. You write, you speak, you do a bunch of things in the world of online. I consider, there is a lot of people that profess themselves to be digital marketing experts but I can tell you that, I do consider you to be one of the few really legit ones out there. So, I'm just really happy to have you join us today.

**Neil Patel:**

Thanks for having me and I'm really humbled. So, appreciate the kind words.

**Gene Marks:**

Good. So, listen. So, I've got some specific questions for you, pertaining to my business. Now, I know we don't know each other very well. I run a 10-person company outside of Philadelphia. We sell CRM software, customer relationship management software. We have about 600 active clients and I've been running it for about 25 years. And remember, our audience is small business owners, just like myself. And I have struggled with online marketing, I really have, and I've written about some of my struggles as well. I feel as if online advertising, whether it's Google or Facebook, but let's pick on Google first, is almost a waste of money for small businesses, particularly businesses of my size. And I wanted to get your thoughts on the value proposition, the cost benefit, for smaller companies to be using Google for online advertising. What are your thoughts on that?

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah, sure. So, if you actually look at the majority of the spenders on Google and not the dollar amount but the majority of the accounts, it's actually SMBs, right? No shock there. And they end up churning the fastest. One of my buddies had a company that helped small businesses find experts for AdWords and he was telling me — interesting, he said, this was years and years ago — the average small business would last less than 11 months on Google AdWords. Now, it doesn't mean that it doesn't work for small businesses, and large corporations tend to be the biggest spenders, dollar wise. And in your case, let's say you're a small business selling CRM, the issue that you're running into is, the Salesforces of the world just spend so much money and they optimize for lifetime value and they have a massive ecosystem, which it makes it where, if they buy Salesforce, they can buy Slack then and all the other products, so they have ways to make more money ...

**Neil Patel:**

... and then with the LTV and the price points, right? They can actually make it quite profitable over time. For an SMB, the issue that we all tend to end up running into is, when you spend the money, you're typically selling one product, right? To a customer, your price points may not be as expensive as the large corporations and it's not profitable, and that's typically because — a few things. One is, a lot of small businesses don't have upsells and down-sells, so the upsells and down-sells end up making up a lot of your costs to acquire a customer. And two, they can't afford to optimize for lifetime value of a customer, right? In the CRM space — you know this better than anyone else — is super sticky.

**Gene Marks:**

Yeah.

**Neil Patel:**

But if you make your money in Year Two and Year three and you lose money in Year One, it's hard for a small business because, can they lose money in Year One, even though it's profitable in the long run? So-

**Gene Marks:**

But Neil, it's funny, if I can just interrupt you. I mean, you hit one issue right on the head where, one of the products that we do sell is Salesforce, we also sell Dynamics and Zoho. Those guys spend so much money on online advertising that, if you do any keyword search for anything involving Salesforce, your first one, even two pages of results that comes up are literally coming from Salesforce. Like, mine are way back in the fold. So, how can I even compete with that?

**Neil Patel:**

You don't go after the main terms, you go after high buyer intent terms that aren't as competitive. So, in your case, it would be Salesforce versus Zoho, which one's better? Or comparison. When the volume isn't there but when someone's searching that, you bet they're a buyer, right? Or Salesforce versus Pipe. And there's a lot of CRM solutions and you can do this in any space. Coca-Cola versus Pepsi — I know most people don't sell Coca-Cola and Pepsi — but you get the point.

**Gene Marks:**

Sure-

**Neil Patel:**

Those comparison articles, they don't drive the volume you may think, but the conversion rate's so high, they're worth going after. And as you go after them and you start building more and more revenue, then you can start adding in more and more competitive terms.

**Gene Marks:**

So, let's-let me jump on what you mentioned about volume. When I talk to clients of mine that are also trying hard to advertise online — I mean, Google, for example, calculates its cost, primarily based on clicks — there's views, there's impressions as well, but clicks is the big dollars that you're going to be paying for. Doesn't it seem a little crazy that I'm going to be spending advertising money with Google and then Google is coming back to me and saying, "Oh, here's how many clicks went on your ad and sorry, but now you're out of budget." In other words, you're paying the fox to look after the hen house, you know?

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah. And keep in mind, they have tools within Google that helps you optimize for conversions and targeting, so that way you don't waste too much money on the quote-unquote "clicks." But yeah, right? Because Google can't control your website, they can't control your own conversion rate. And if people are spending it, it's because they're making money, so they're going to keep giving it to whoever's giving money, because whether you're Salesforce or SMB or a large, you know, Amazon or Microsoft or Apple — one of the largest companies — they all look at it from an ROI standpoint eventually, right? Because no one's spending millions of dollars without making sure that they're actually making more money than what they're spending, in the long run. And you just got to optimize your site. That's the sad part of it, but Google can't control that.

**Gene Marks:**

Yeah. But, I mean, it-I don't know how to explain it to a client when they're like, "I'm going to give \$5,000 of my money to Google, and then Google is going to come back to me, and tell me how often people clicked on my ads," and by the way, that tracking is done by Google. So, if Google comes and says, "You got a thousand clicks or you got a million clicks," I have no way to prove that because it's coming from Google, the very people that I gave my money to. Do you understand what I mean?

**Neil Patel:**

I do. But you can use analytics tools and it doesn't have to be Google's analytics tools — there's a lot of providers out there, like Adobe — and there's some free solutions out there as well. And when you have these ads on Google, you can use what's called a UTM variable, so it's like a specific URL string. It doesn't mean you have to adjust your website or anything, it's just something that you're pinning at the end of your ad URL, not your website URL and the analytics providers can track it and actually tell you how many clicks Google drove, and you can compare them.

**Gene Marks:**

All right. That's great. Great advice-

**Neil Patel:**

Massive discrepancy? You should reach out to Google and be like, "Hey, you charged me for 500 clicks, my analytics is only showing two clicks — something's off." And I've seen cases where there was fraudulent clicks and Google's happy to refund money. And on top of that, their systems are much more advanced now, they themselves also can detect fraudulent clicks and they don't want to charge you for them and they will be one of the first to try to give you your money back.

**Gene Marks:**

Fair enough. Fair enough. So, Neil, what do you think would be a better place for businesses to spend their money? Again, we're still talking about Google. Is it on advertising Google AdWords to drive traffic to a website or if you're advising a client, would you say, "Listen, you're probably better off taking your resources and just putting it into organic SEO." What do you think is a better use of my limited resources?

**Neil Patel:**

I would actually change it, in which, I would tell businesses, don't compare channels on which one's better or worse. Compare channels on what's profitable or not. Because as a business, it's really simple: you need positive economics, right? If your ROI is great, spend. If it's not, then it doesn't mean you should stop, but just park that channel off to the side. So, a great example of this is, if I'm an SMB and I'm running Google Ads and it's not profitable for me, but it's profitable for my competitors and at the same time, I'm also testing search engine optimization, which is getting listed in the organic listings and it's driving a better ROI. What I would do is, I would say, "All right, I'm an SMB, I'm strapped for time and cash. I'm going to focus on the organic side because currently it's driving a better ROI." Take the paid stuff and park it to the side, and just put it on pause for now.

**Neil Patel:**

Once I get the organic to a place where I'm happy, and it's generating me even more money than it is now, and I have more free time, then I will go back and expand into the paid and make it work, and spend the time and resources to make it profitable. Plus, my business will be a little bit larger by then, which then gives me more flexibility to compete with the bigger guys. And it could also be the opposite scenario, right? We see it with a lot of companies, especially SMBs, where it works first with them with Google Ads and they're like, SEO organic is too long-term of approach, I don't have time to wait three, six months, a year, I need results now because I got to pay bills now. And what we tell them is, "All right, let's scale up the paid ads. Let's optimize, let's make it work the best we can."

**Neil Patel:**

And then once it gets going, the business is more profitable, more revenue, we're like, "Now let's invest some of that profit into organic," because no SMB wants a feeling of, hey, you stop spending money, you

make zero the next day, right? It's a terrible feeling. And it doesn't mean that paid is bad, it's you should do all channels that are profitable for as long as you can.

**Gene Marks:**

That's great advice. I went to — obviously you're familiar with Moz, the SEO company that provides a lot of online tools — and I went to their conference right before COVID. It was in Seattle. And I sat there for two days and listened to people talking, these were all social and online SEO experts. And they worked at branding agencies and companies that their clients were General Motors and Pepsi and Toyota and like, large brands. And they worked for agencies that were trying to help them, these brands, maximize their online presence and obviously drive traffic to their sites. And I, swear to God, Neil... I must have heard 15 speakers and every single one had the comm — these are the smartest minds in SEO. And the common theme that I heard was: we have no idea what Google's doing next. It's like the entire industry is just trying to figure out what Google is going to do next and so that they can stay on top of it on behalf of their clients. And I don't know what your thoughts are on that and how, again — this gets back to my original question — like, how can a smaller company even compete in that kind of a world, when these minds don't even know?

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah. So, I actually can tell you what Google's going to do next or over time, is probably actually even easier than next. Because Google... what they want to do next is for one mission, which is, do what's best for the user. It's really simple. If you go and do a search on Google, it doesn't matter if you click on the paid or the organic listing, if you search for a BMW and you're looking for a BMW car and you see at the top, Mercedes, Toyota, Volkswagen, Porsche, Ferrari, but you're looking for a BMW, would you be happy?

**Gene Marks:**

Of course not.

**Neil Patel:**

Exactly. And then next, if you search for Coca-Cola and instead you see Aquafina, Kool-Aid, Sunkist, Pepsi, would you be happy?

**Gene Marks:**

Well, maybe if Dr. Pepper showed up I'd be a little happy, but still not completely.

**Neil Patel:**

Exactly. So, Google wants to satisfy users, in essence, because if they don't, they won't keep coming back and searching. If you stop going back and searching, that means there's a less chance that they'll generate revenue from you by clicking on the ads. So, they need you to keep coming back. And people talk about all these SEO elements, like one of the factors in how high you rank organically is how many other websites link to yours. But when you, as a searcher are searching for the word cars or shoes, you don't really care if the number one listing has a million other websites linking to them or one website linking to them or zero. All you care about is, did I search and did the website give me what I'm looking for? And as quick as possible, as fast... as ideal solution, as cheap as possible, with the best shipping or the best offer, or whatever it may be. They really care about the user because that's what makes them money.

**Neil Patel:**

So, what I always tell businesses is, yes, we don't know what the next Google algorithm update will be and what factors to adjust, or what can help you or hurt you. And a lot of times, Google keeps making these algorithm changes because it's never perfect. They're always trying to optimize for users and users want

different things over time and patterns change. So, all I tell companies is, really try to understand your customers, your ideal customers and optimize from them. From surveying them, talking to them, from support — all these little factors will help you understand what your customers want and what they don't want, and then the goal is to solve their problems as fast as possible, as automated as possible and as affordable as possible.

**Gene Marks:**

Great message. All right. Let's pivot a little bit from Google. I think I've picked on them enough. Let-let's talk a little bit about Facebook and I'd also like to talk a little bit about LinkedIn, because Twitter's just crazy, right? Facebook. I have clients and customers that do have active Facebook pages. Tell me your thoughts on advertising on Facebook. What are - what's your advice? What are some of the mistakes you see people making? Do you think it's a good platform to spend money on?

**Neil Patel:**

It's a good platform to spend money on. The big mistake I see people making in the business world is, oh, I don't like Facebook, the data and the privacy. I'm like, but as a business, if it can drive revenue, you don't really have a choice. There's tons of people that have data on you — I know this sounds bad — credit card companies probably have more data on you than you can imagine: your buying patterns of what you buy and your wife buys, or your spouse, your husband buys, your kids. And the way I tell businesses is, other than not being on Facebook and now most businesses are, the second big mistake that people make is, they just go throw up ads and they think it's going to work, similar to Google. And you want to actually see what your competition's doing.

**Neil Patel:**

What Facebook provides is something called Facebook Ad Library, okay? So, Google's a little bit easier because you can pick a keyword, cheap laptops. You offer cheap laptops, someone searches for it, they're probably a good fit. Facebook is about targeting, people don't really search. So, what you ideally want to do is upload a list of customers and then they can do something called lookalike campaigns. Lookalike campaigns tells Facebook: find all the customers that are just like these, that have already purchased from me. And then, by looking at the Facebook Ad Library, you can see what other people in your space, what ads they run and what's working for them. So, it'll give you ideas of the type of ads that you should create, that should also work for you.

**Gene Marks:**

How about LinkedIn?

**Neil Patel:**

So, LinkedIn is one of my favorite social networks because — interesting stat for you is — unlike most social networks, the last stat that I saw online was, only 3% of LinkedIn users create content. So, if you create content on LinkedIn, LinkedIn loves you because unlike Facebook and all the other social networks, they struggle to get users to create content. So, the goal for you is just, go and create content. Ideally, it needs to be good content but even if it's mediocre content, you're going to do better on LinkedIn than most the social networks because they're just craving for content. They don't have enough of it.

**Gene Marks:**

Does content mean just simple comments, involvement in LinkedIn groups, or are you talking about literally making a post, blog posts, on LinkedIn?

**Neil Patel:**

It could be anything. Comments on LinkedIn groups, it could be a few sentences on a post, on your feed. It could be uploading a video. It could be uploading a picture with a quote. You could go live on LinkedIn, they'll take whatever they can get. And the more you engage, you can even write an article on LinkedIn. Heck, you can take your blog article that you already wrote on your website, copy and paste it into LinkedIn and republish it — in other words, that's called repurposing content — and they'll give you traffic for it. They are craving for content and there's a lot of businesses on there with tons of money.

**Gene Marks:**

Yeah. It's funny about LinkedIn, Neil, if I post something on LinkedIn about ... I mean, I write for "The Hill" every week and so, I'll write something maybe on minimum wage and I'll post it like, oh, I don't think there should be a minimum wage increase, or I do think, or whatever it is. On LinkedIn, I'll have a lot of conversations going back and forth in a very professional way, they're like, "Well, I disagree, Gene, and here's the reason why" or "Maybe we should consider this" or whatever. Meanwhile, I can post that exact same comment on Twitter and it becomes crazy, you know what I mean?

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah. People start attacking you.

**Gene Marks:**

Yes.

**Neil Patel:**

It's very different. LinkedIn is very professional and that's why I love it. One of the biggest reasons I love it is, people respect other people's opinions, more so on LinkedIn, from what I've seen, versus the other social networks.

**Gene Marks:**

Yeah. They do. They don't seem to have the problem with bots or anonymous users on LinkedIn — it's like, that doesn't really happen in that environment. You can see everything there is to know about them. How about advertising on LinkedIn? I mean, my take away when we're on LinkedIn is that, it's pretty expensive but at the time, it's a great - like, we sell B2B software, so it seems like my audience is there. What are your thoughts on advertising on LinkedIn?

**Neil Patel:**

It's harder to make it work from an ROI perspective, because businesses who advertise on LinkedIn advertise for two main purposes. One has a ROI, the other doesn't have a direct ROI. One of the main purposes that people advertise on LinkedIn is purely for lead generation or sales, which — in your case, selling CRM, so that would be a great example — and people looking for ROI. But the reason LinkedIn ads are super expensive is, a lot of people advertise on LinkedIn purely for recruiting, right? It's expensive to find good talent and LinkedIn's one of the best places to go to find amazing talent and big companies like the Microsoft or the Apples or the Googles or whoever may be of the world, will spend an arm and a leg to recruit people. And for them it's, how do you put a cost or an ROI on amazing talent? It's a hard thing to calculate. Which then, jacks up the cost for people who are doing traditional advertising for lead generation, right? And that's what makes it a little bit more difficult on LinkedIn when it comes to advertising.

**Gene Marks:**

And as far as you know, LinkedIn doesn't have a different cost structure ... I'm not looking for people, I'm looking for leads, for CRM, there's not a different ... it's priced the same, is that what you're saying?

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah. It's pretty much ... because when you're running your own ads, you can run it for whatever you want. We actually have companies who paid my ad agency to manage their ads on LinkedIn just to help them recruit more candidates. And they have different programs for that as well, but companies will blatantly target engineers and stuff and show them the ads and try to get them to go to landing pages and fill out applications. It's a big area where large corporations will spend an arm and a leg.

**Gene Marks:**

So, we were talking about people on LinkedIn, and LinkedIn is a great site to go and find people. And, obviously, as you know, everybody's biggest problem right now, which I'm sure is yours and your business, is finding good talent for your business, right?

**Neil Patel:**

Yep.

**Gene Marks:**

So, I hear, and I want to get your thoughts on this, I hear from some larger brands, that they've been dipping their toes into certain social media sites — Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat even — to find employees because there's a demographic there that they're going after. What are your thoughts on using those platforms as a potential recruiting resource for your business?

**Neil Patel:**

They work well. We've recruited people from places like Instagram, we've even recruited customers from place like Instagram, for B2B, shockingly. At B2C, of course, it's really easy to get from some of those networks. But from Snapchat, to TikTok, to LinkedIn, to Instagram, to Reddit, to even Quora, some of these networks that people aren't thinking of, there's talent everywhere, because we have to remember, we're all end users of most of these networks. And whether you're in B2B or B2C, it doesn't matter — you're still a human. And you may be on Pinterest looking for design ideas for your office space or your house or your bathroom that you're remodeling, right? So, we're on all these places.

**Gene Marks:**

Any advice that you have for people that might want to use one of these platforms? I'm thinking ones that are more photo or image focused, like an Instagram or a TikTok or a Snapchat. Any advice?

**Neil Patel:**

Let them know in your bio that you guys are recruiting. And the other thing I do is, every once in a while, I will post images of new hires that we have, so people know, because then it causes other people like, oh, you're hiring, maybe, what else, other roles do you have, right? So it's like saying, "Congratulations for so-and-so for joining the team, they're leading up this now." And then we also, every once in a while, do a post saying, "We're hiring. If you're interested in the job, go here."

**Gene Marks:**

When you do that, are you paying for the posts?



**Neil Patel:**

No. You just post it on your own profile.

**Gene Marks:**

So, it's just all organic and hoping whoever sees it, sees it.

**Neil Patel:**

Yep.

**Gene Marks:**

Have you done any advertising on any of those platforms yourself or for your clients on Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat?

**Neil Patel:**

We've done a lot. Works really well for B2C. Works not as good for B2B but it can work in B2B, depending on the offer.

**Gene Marks:**

Got it. All right. So, all the stuff that we've been talking about, I mean, we started with Google and SEO and Google AdWords. We talked about LinkedIn, we talked about, briefly, Facebook, the other platforms like TikTok. All of these platforms, depending if your, if the demographics make sense, could really make sense for your business, but you're in the business of helping your clients do this. And I know for a fact that there are a good percentage of my clients that would fail at doing this because they just don't have the resources to do it. So, Neil, if I were to introduce you to one of my clients and say, they want to advertise online, they want to do Google AdWords, or they want to do advertising on Facebook or they need help with their social media. Tell me some of the red flags that would appear to you, when you meet this client for the first time and you'd be like, "Uh-oh, these guys probably aren't going to do very, very well on social," whatever the platform.

**Neil Patel:**

The biggest red flag is, they try to jump in, with their- instead of dipping their toes. And I know that sounds backwards, speaking from agency world. Because if you're running something for the first time, you don't know what's going to work or not. Just because something works for your competitors doesn't mean it's going to work for you. And I always recommend, first, that people need to dip their toes, and have realistic expectations. You're not going to get a million dollars in sales in the next day or even a hundred grand. It takes time to ramp up. Slow and steady wins a race. The second issue that we end up seeing is, companies don't want to be involved. What I mean by that, they're like, "Here's your product, here's your service, go make me money," but whams [what happens] if you need something adjusted with your sales process, whams [what happens] if you collect a lead and your drop off-

**Gene Marks:**

It dies.

**Neil Patel:**

Yeah. Whams [What happens] if your drop offs from lead to actually getting people on the phone. Whams [What happens] if we told you, hey, you had to do web-based schedulers, like the schedule ones and stuff to actually increase your conversion rates, right? The company sometimes has to be willing to adjust how they do business to make the numbers work. But if they do it, their business will change, and they'll be a much healthier and a bigger business. And they can take a lot of those learnings and apply it to their

channels that aren't necessarily paid, and they typically will see a lift from there as well. The big thing is, if I had to give one piece of advice for an SMB that's looking to dive into marketing, and you're just starting off: you have to be willing to experiment. If you don't experiment, you're screwed in the long run, because what works today may not work tomorrow.

**Neil Patel:**

And what works- what doesn't work today may work tomorrow. So, you got to keep experimenting. A great example of this is, we used to tell people, when we had a lead-gen company for our analytics solution — similar to CRM, it's a software — and we found out that if we put "login with Google," instead of asking them for their information, when they just click button makes it easier, we saw a massive lift, upwards of 80 to 90% and that was years ago. If I ran that experiment today, I would actually, and I force people and give them no other options — in most cases, we're seeing a decrease in convergence because people are scared of their privacy and data and they have all those concerns. So, the point I'm trying to make is, you got to keep experimenting because just because you found something that works today, doesn't mean it'll work in the future, so you also have to retest.

**Gene Marks:**

It's funny, this stuff is not rocket science. I mean, hiring you and your firm, for example, like any good digital marketing firm, I mean, I'm sure you can provide the strategy, but you know, I wouldn't want to pay you. I know your rates are what? \$400 bucks an hour, \$500? — I'm just kidding! But whatever your rates are, I wouldn't want to pay a marketing firm to be doing — and I don't want this to sound wrong — but really the grunt work, the chopping wood that's in marketing, right? I mean, it's- you just said, it's, you've got to test, test, test and see what's working, and be looking at the metrics and changing. And that should be done by somebody internally, correct? Somebody-

**Neil Patel:**

It's the opposite. So, when you do it internally, you may not have enough tests, so you're paying full-time for someone to actually run part experiments or fill up their calendar. And don't get me wrong, they probably can. But if you're paying them, let's say, to experiment or get some of the work done and they're going to test an experiment, they're testing an experiment with your website. And you may pay them less per hour, but if I have hundreds of clients and we're running tests at massive scale and we know your industry like the back of our hand ... Yes, we'll have to test on your business but I bet you, coming out of the gate, our probability of picking the tests that win and grow your business faster for ROI perspective, right, for how much you're making, for how much you're spending? You'll get a higher ROI in the shorter-term.

**Neil Patel:**

When it is worth bringing things in-house is when you're at scale and you can cut some of your costs and be like, look, we're already spending \$75 million a year, we don't need to be paying someone five, six, 7% of our spend because that gets expensive — it's way cheaper to just hire people internally to run it.

**Gene Marks:**

Sure. Final question for you, Neil. When a business is looking to hire a digital marketing agency, somebody to help them do this, what are some of the questions that I should be asking? How do I know that you're doing the job that I've hired you to do?

**Neil Patel:**

So, the big thing that you need to do is ask for case studies, ask for references, ask for industry experience. You need to look at the team that's on your account. Everyone looks at an agency like, "Oh, they're big and

well-known." But it doesn't matter how big and well-known the agency is; if the people on your account suck, you're screwed, so you need to look at the references. And they don't always give references for individuals because it's a little bit weird, but you need to look at the accounts that that individual's worked on, their industry expertise. So, that's really important.

**Neil Patel:**

The other thing that I would look for in an agency is, hey, how are they going to actually show me they're producing results? It's not your job to figure that out, it's their job. So, what do the reports look like? How do they track ROI? How long will it take? What are estimates that they think they can provide in results for my spend, whether it's with organic or paid? Because it's all a calculation of ROI and they need to be able to produce a lot of this for you — ideally all of it for you — before you even start. And it may not be 100% because no one has a crystal ball, but you should go in asking those questions early on before you sign anything.

**Gene Marks:**

Final question. What's your favorite Instagram account to follow?

**Neil Patel:**

I love following Gary Vaynerchuk — I think he produces a ton of amazing content- [crosstalk]

**Gene Marks:**

He does.

**Neil Patel:**

And I've been following him for a long time.

**Gene Marks:**

Mine is Devon Rodriguez, do you ever follow him on Instagram? He's the guy that sits on the subway and he does drawings of people that are on the subway, like during the ride. And then these brilliant drawings, then he hands them the drawing at the end, and you see the reaction and they're always like, wow. It's very uplifting-

**Neil Patel:**

Very cool. Another one of mine is Fitwaffle. They actually break down cooking recipes in 30 seconds and like, "Here's how you make a cheesecake out of Oreos: crush this up, do this, and do that." And I've tried. It's never 30 seconds. It's never easy, but it is fun.

**Gene Marks:**

Neil Patel is the co-founder of Neil Patel Digital, that's npdigital.com. Neil, thank you very much for joining us. Learned a lot, as I expected to, and I hope to talk to you again in the future. Thank you.

**Neil Patel:**

Thanks for having me.

**Gene Marks:**

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HR, payroll benefits or insurance services, see how Paychex can help, visit the resource hub at [paychex.com/worx](https://paychex.com/worx), that's W-O-R-X. Paychex can help manage those complexities while you focus on all the ways you want your business to thrive. I'm your host Gene Marks and thanks for joining us. 'Til next time, take care.

**Announcer:**

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