

Kyle Lacy:

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James Robert Lay:

Greetings and hello. I am James Robert Lay, and welcome to the 196th episode of the Banking on Digital Growth podcast. Today's episode is part of the Exponential Insight series. And I'm excited to welcome Kyle Lacy, who is serving the team at Seismic as the SVP of Marketing. Kyle is also the author of three books: Twitter Marketing for Dummies, Branding Yourself, and Social CRM for Dummies. And today, I look forward to diving into the insights Kyle shares in Branding Yourself, as this has become a common topic of interest for both financial brand, as well as FinTech marketing and sales leaders. Welcome to the show, Kyle. It is so good to share time with you today, buddy.

Kyle Lacy:

Hey, thanks for having me.

James Robert Lay:

Before we dive into Branding Yourself, what is good for you right now personally or professionally? It's your pick to get started on a positive note.

Kyle Lacy:

Man, I've recently jumped on the Peloton bandwagon.

James Robert Lay:

Nice.

Kyle Lacy:

And I tell you what, man, 30, 45 minutes a day in the morning, where an instructor's yelling at me, I'm for it. So the good thing in my life is Peloton. And outside of that, my family and Stephen King. I've been really into Stephen King lately.

James Robert Lay:

Well, let me... because this whole conversation's about Branding Yourself and you're talking Peloton and Peloton has a nice community. And I know that there are a lot of people who listen to this show and ride Peloton as well. You want to throw your screen name out for someone that wanted to connect with you and ride together?

Kyle Lacy:

Yeah, I'm the idiot that just used my name. So it's just Kyle Lacy. It's not any cool, IndieDadBod545 or something. It's just my name, Kyle Lacy.

James Robert Lay:

That's one that we... IndieDadBod500. There you go. That's great.

Kyle Lacy:

Well, I joined and all these members on the leader boards. I'm like, nobody's actually using their real name. I have to be the idiot here out of the 30,000 that I'm tracking.

James Robert Lay:

Yeah. So no connect with Kyle, ride with Kyle. It'd be great to make a-

Kyle Lacy:

Please do.

James Robert Lay:

Make a connection like that off the podcast. I want to come back to the book because writing a book, it's a big undertaking. I've done one. I'm working on my second right now. You've done three. Branding Yourself being the second one and shout out to Bryce Nobles over at MX for connecting this via LinkedIn. I want to get into Branding Yourself. Why write this book in the first place? Where was your mind at the time?

Kyle Lacy:

I'm very passionate about personal branding in general. I think it is a hidden talent. If you figure it out, I think it's a competitive advantage for you. On the side of that, I was talking to my co-author Eric Deckers. And at the time, we were in very different parts of our lives. He was an older individual that was trying to reinvent himself. I was somebody that was inventing my brand coming out of owning an agency and getting into the software world. We were sitting at a coffee shop one day and we were talking about it. We were like, "Actually, that's a pretty cool idea to create a book that you could use for both, individuals who might be leaving a job and trying to reinvent themselves, and people who are coming out of college and trying to figure out what the hell they want to do. And then we just got really excited about it because it's what we love to do and what we love to talk about.

James Robert Lay:

It's interesting. You talk about coming out of college because I remember it was probably 2006, 2007 time period, Chuck Crocker at the University of Houston, Clear Lake where I did my undergrad at MIS and did an MBA. I was guest lecturing in his classes back then about the idea of building a personal brand, not even calling it that. But social media was really in its infancy. And how you could use this to position yourself, differentiate yourself. And the first addition for your book dropped back in 2011, it's now in its six edition. I'm curious if you look back in your mind over this time period, what have been some of the biggest changes that you've seen unfold when it comes to just personal branding?

Kyle Lacy:

It's channels to use, in 2011, we were talking about blogger. And we probably had MySpace thrown in there. And now it's talking about TikTok. Now the fundamentals have not changed at all.

James Robert Lay:

That's key.

Kyle Lacy:

You don't have to do a lot of editing. It's just the fact that we talk about this one feature that Twitter got rid of, Vine. They got rid of it a while ago. Right?

James Robert Lay:

Correct.

Kyle Lacy:

So that's it. It's mostly the channels of change.

James Robert Lay:

I think that's a key takeaway for the dear listener. The fundamentals will always stay the same, the channels in which you communicate. That is what will continue to transform. And you open up the book with a tremendous question. A very good question. A question for both financial brand and FinTech leaders, doesn't matter if they're coming from marketing, sales, leadership teams, lending. You open up the question. "Why should I care about self-promotion?" And I hear this all the time, especially from those on these different teams, what's the point of building a personal brand? Why should I even take the time to do this? Why should one care about self-promotion to begin with?

Kyle Lacy:

There's two reasons. Number one self-promotion is hard because the word promotion, in general, I think has a negative connotation.

James Robert Lay:

Absolutely.

Kyle Lacy:

And that's not what we mean it to be in this context. For me, it's building trust with a community of people. That could be peers, that could be your prospects, that could be your customers. The second thing is telling a story that's different from everyone else. If I walk out into the community, into the market, and I say, "I'm Kyle Lacey, I lead marketing for a software company." You can add another 5,000 people. That-

James Robert Lay:

Crickets.

Kyle Lacy:

Are exactly like that. And the only thing that it's the perception of you. So it's very important that you control the perception that people are seeing through social, through the way you communicate in person, like all this stuff. So for me, it ultimately about building trust, through telling a unique story. And we all have unique stories. Just most of us are terrible at telling them.

James Robert Lay:

I think about two people in the space come top of my mind right now, Paul T. Long out of the Northwest south sound Washington area. He is an SMB commercial lender has been working to build a personal brand. Same thing with Greg Martin out of College Station, Texas. He frames himself as the entrepreneur's banker. He actually has the entrepreneursbanker.com. And this is exactly what you're talking about. Carrie-Anne Benton Stimson, who's a Chief Marketing Officer out of JMMB Group in Jamaica. Same thing she hosts what's called the Internal Marketing podcast.

James Robert Lay:

And so from your point of view, what is personal branding here? Cause we've talked a little bit about the negative connotation of self-promotion. Now we're moving into personal branding and this is a subject. And you wrote about this in the book. We've been having a lot of conversations. I mentioned a couple of people who've been on the show, but when you wrote the book, you noted, you ask a hundred people what personal branding is, you're going to get a hundred different answers. And I agree. It's like why we define what is digital growth? I think when you define something, you plan a flag of the ground. What is personal branding? How would you define this? And how is it different from self-promotion?

Kyle Lacy:

I said it before, it's the perception that other people have about you and that's their truth. You can have an opinion all day long about what you're good at or how you want to be seen or perceived. You have to lead somebody in the direction that you want them to go, and it can't be false. You can't be a false prophet when you're talking about this stuff. But I think it is the perception people have of you. And it's about building and creating content and telling that story in a way that's meaningful. And it's not about self-promotion, it's just about doing it differently. A great call out in this space, who I love. And he's actually based in indie, he's kind of out of the space now. But it's Pete the Planner, Pete Dunn.

Kyle Lacy:

He is a perfect example of what we're talking about because he differentiated himself. He had a podcast before podcast was cool. He was on the radio, he was doing stuff different. He has now become an entrepreneur and started software company and all that awesome stuff. But he's a great example of, "He had an idea and he went for it." And that is 80% of this thing. I can write a book all day long about how personal rating's important. But if you don't just go do it and put yourself out there, it's very, very hard to try to tell the story a little bit differently.

James Robert Lay:

Pete the Planner is a great. That's a fantastic example. We going to have to get him on the show and just have a conversation.

Kyle Lacy:

I'm more than happy to hook that up.

James Robert Lay:

I'd really appreciate that because I think the more that we can elevate these stories of others, we can provide inspiration. Because a lot of times, and I want to get your take on this, when it comes to financial services, the roadblocks, what is it that holds people back from committing to take this journey? Cause you said a lot of it, you've written the book. Well knowledge is one side of the equation. You got to apply that knowledge to actually grow. There's a difference between knowing and growing. What are some of the roadblocks that hold leaders back from committing to following through to build a personal brand to begin with in the first place?

Kyle Lacy:

They don't know where to start. They don't know what content to produce. They think too hard about it. They listen to somebody that says you need to build a content calendar to publish. When in reality you just need to go do it. I think the other side of it, especially in this world, is it's a very hard answer. It's a very hard challenge to overcome as compliance. You need to make sure the right content's being shared at the right time. Especially if you are a leader of a group of people who want to also get their personal brands out there. And this is an age old discussion, age old meaning, since 2002, where the difference between your professional brand and your personal brand.

Kyle Lacy:

And I think a lot of times with somebody like Pete the Planner. He is so good and was so good at melding his personal and professional life together. Now he was independent for a long time. So there's differences there. But I think that it's about how do you bring your best self forward? And for me, my best content is about servant leadership, my family and time management.

James Robert Lay:

It's what I connected with you on. The idea of time management of family, because I'm right there with you. One of the best questions I think that we can ask ourselves as leaders is, 'How are you teeing things up? Or how do you tee things up? Where are you spending your time? Where are you spending your effort? Where are you spending your energy?'

Kyle Lacy:

I think people get really overwhelmed when they think about digital. And the reality is it's all the same concepts. It's just a different delivery mechanism. It's one of my good friends is in asset management and his personal brand is he remembers everybody's name. He writes handwritten notes to everybody that he meets and he connects people via LinkedIn all the time. That's his personal brand and that's what he lives by. He doesn't post on LinkedIn every day, but he has built a brand around a specific thing that he really enjoys. I listed three things that I enjoy talking about outside of marketing. But I would pick one thing, just one thing. And sometimes you might have people that say, "Nobody cares about hearing about my son or blah, blah, blah."

Kyle Lacy:

But they do. And we are human beings. I don't want to hear about your ten steps to better financial outcomes. I want to hear about that probably. But also, what was your experience at your son's soccer game this weekend that really made you think about life? Because we're all humans and that's where people fail. In my opinion, is that they don't try to connect the two. They're just doing their professional persona within digital channels. And I think it's a losing argument.

James Robert Lay:

So this is something that I'm really going to be digging deeper into on Banking on Change. The concept of what I've defined as exponential growth. Exponential growth is where one is growing personally, as well as professionally at the same time. Because I do feel it's going to be a struggle to try to disassociate or break these two worlds apart as we go forward. And as we go forward, I'm really predicting over the next five years, the micro has the potential to beat the macro, when it comes to reach digitally. And you had touched on this before we started hit record. And I look at the personal brands of leaders and lenders at financial brands. If we can empower them to build personal brands, to connect with people, to establish trust. What's your take on this? And what are y'all doing over at Seismic? Because this really is a seismic shift, if you will, in the way of thinking about go to market. Sorry, I couldn't help myself on that pun.

Kyle Lacy:

No, I know ultimately Seismic is about personalization of communication with clients. That's it. Whether that is an interactive doc or training and coaching with reps, or you interacting with a client or a prospect on LinkedIn. As an example on Twitter, or you providing content for your reps to share that is meaningful and also compliant and gives them the ability to build their personal brand at the same time. Right. So for me, it's all about, I talked about this before, but it's about building trust. And so, as you're thinking about your personal brand, and you're thinking about your professional brand, all it is trust base. So what are the vehicles and what are the content that you need to weather micro? I a hundred percent agree that it's micro and it's personalized and micro interactions that are personalized build trust.

Kyle Lacy:

And you don't go and sit at a lunch with a client and talk all day long about their portfolio and not ask anything about their personal life. Some might, they're not very successful. I'm not going to keep that person around because I want interaction and I want to know about the personal life. So I think that

social opened that up. Especially, we can go back as far as GeoCities, but I don't think we want to get into that or FriendFeed or what was the journal site? Oh man, I used it. It was all my teenage angst was poured into it.

James Robert Lay:

Oh, you're right there. It's on the tip of my tongue and I got it.

Kyle Lacy:

Doesn't matter.

James Robert Lay:

Well, I got to tell you too. But as you're talking through this, I think I experienced this early on and my friend from high school, we had graduated high school. We were early college. He was at Baylor University. I was at University of Houston and he called me up and he said, "Hey, we got a big problem." I was like, "What's that?" He's like, "The bookstore." I'm like, "Absolutely. The bookstore's a problem because you buy a book for 150, 200 bucks and then they buy it back for 10." And we built an early social network called bearswap.com. And we probably had about 20,000 users and it was early digital. It was pre-Facebook and it was 2002, 2003. And we figured out a way to bypass the middle. And we connected people directly with people. We didn't even know this idea what we were doing, but it was just human nature. And I think that right there is that human nature. It doesn't matter what you've been doing as a financial brand leader for, in some cases, decades, can still be applied in this space.

Kyle Lacy:

Well, let's put it into an actual example. Let's say, I'm searching for something to manage my assets or whatever. I'm completely butchering that. And I have somebody on LinkedIn that has followed me, that is commented on content, that is giving examples within the comments on how they deal with their kids and things that I'm posting about. And they call me or email me and then somebody that doesn't do that at all, calls me and emails me. Who do you think I'm going to connect with faster? It is not the person that didn't have any interaction with me. And they called/emailed me. It is the person that spent a little bit of time to give feedback and put a little bit of themselves out there. And I know I'm a very specific, where I'm just a power user, but I think that applies to a lot. There's a reason why we have millions upon millions upon millions of people using this stuff.

James Robert Lay:

Yeah. The idea of asset management I can't help in. He's been a guest on the podcast. Chad Willardson wrote a book called Smart, not Spoiled: The 7 Money Skills Kids Must Master Before Leaving the Nest. I think maybe there's an opportunity here. You're an author. I'm an author. I know Bryce is writing a book as well when it comes to personal branding that almost starts to bleed over a little bit into this, what some call, quote unquote "thought leadership." And you mentioned, too, a roadblock or a challenge is, "Where do we even start this?"

James Robert Lay:

I'm going to put a really big idea out there. Maybe we start with a book. Because writing a book is more accessible today than it's ever been before. And the reason I say with that because it's a forcing function that allows you to package your ideas up. And then that book becomes all of the micro content that you can repurpose and reuse through multiple channels. So it really is a true pillar piece of content that gives you about probably two to three years, if you do it right. Of how to just continuously repurpose, and reuse, and recycle this.

Kyle Lacy:

Or you just flip it. I know a lot of people have just posted LinkedIn post for a year and rolled them up into an edited book of 300 pages, but you could go either way. I do think that the best place to start is to spend some time thinking about what is meaningful to you. What's the favorite thing about your job? And what's the favorite thing about what's going on in your personal life and write one LinkedIn post about each. Or Twitter or TikTok. I do not care what you use. I could spend 30 minutes just talking about the financial planners and stuff that are on TikTok. Cause that's a whole nother world where there serving micro pieces of content, bite-sized. And in some cases they're completely wrong with what they write. You probably shouldn't listen to them. But that goes across all things. Do not get overwhelmed with the amount of content you think you need to create, just go do it.

James Robert Lay:

One of the exercises that I had to get really practical to build upon your thinking and you're right. The idea of TikTok and the disinformation or misinformation out there. I want to give a shout out to Jennifer Beeston who is in the mortgage space. And she has been utilizing platforms like YouTube, Insta, TikTok.

Kyle Lacy:

No, that's awesome.

James Robert Lay:

As a nationwide mortgage lender to help first, sell second, to answer people's questions. And I have an exercise that I teach and coach. I call it 3,2, 1, Contact, and it's an old rip off from the old PBS days of there's a show called 3, 2, 1, Contact. It's literally every day you make three new connections. And you can do this at a local market level because you can search and filter based on city. So now you're not connecting with anyone in the ecosphere.

James Robert Lay:

Now it's becoming really hyper local. So physical community begins to bleed over into digital community. So three contacts or three connections a day, two comments on someone else's content. And I'm thinking through now the lens of maybe just LinkedIn here, but this could applied to any other channel. And then finally one piece of unique, original content from your own point of view, back to what you're talking about. Maybe that's personal, maybe that's professional. Maybe you mix it in. But 3, 2, 1 Contact is a very simple exercise to build some habits. That's what it boils down to, it's the habit building, I think is the hardest part is establish the habit and the routine to start doing this day in and day out. What's your thought?

Kyle Lacy:

Yeah. The hardest part of that is the original content. And some pointers that I have towards that is if you are a reader, pull excerpts from a book that you just read and put it within the content and give your feedback on the excerpt. That's a big win. One, if you get very passionate about something throughout your day, an email you responded to, or a conversation you had with a direct report or a customer, as long as you're not sharing financial data post it, that type of stuff. I think it's easy for you and I, because we grew up in the AOL, ICQ space. And for me I've been posting micro pieces of content since I was seven, to my friends via ICQ and then text messaging and then MySpace and then FriendFeed and then blogging. And I'm 37. I've been doing it for 30 years.

James Robert Lay:

Right.

Kyle Lacy:

Me sitting down and writing a LinkedIn post is second nature. It is just so easy for me to do.

James Robert Lay:

It's so interesting that you say that because as of recording, Elon just acquired Twitter. And so I was curious, I want to go back and look at what were my first tweets. And it was back 2007, 2008, when you could tweet via SMS into the platform. And I'm like, "My gosh. Now so much has transformed since that time." But you're right. It's I think it becomes second nature. It becomes, I want to say, second life. But that's a once again, that's a whole nother thing.

Kyle Lacy:

Sure. We wrote about that at one point in our book.

James Robert Lay:

But now it's like, "Okay, what can we do to empower individuals, to empower teams, to empower organizations?" And I almost see cohort based, number one, learning to help people see things a little bit differently. And then number two, cohort based coaching to help teams begin to establish the habits and hold each other accountable going forward here.

Kyle Lacy:

Yeah. A hundred percent. And for us at Seismic and some of our customers, we have the training coaching component. But then what's very important is that you feed content to people to share. And that could be Newsfeeds or anything. But that is another part of this is to say, "It's okay if it's very hard for you to think up content." If your organization is thinking about social and marketing in your personal brand appropriately, they should be giving you the tools and giving you the content to comment on. Elon buying Twitter, what should you be thinking about on the stock? I'm an owner of the stock. What should I be thinking about on cashing out, blah, blah, blah, all the stuff. So there is a production element of this. But there's also a feeding to people on your team for them to share content as well.

James Robert Lay:

Well, that's where-

Kyle Lacy:

There's a sharing component for sure.

James Robert Lay:

Yeah. A promotion or what I look at as a content multiplier. Because you have to produce and then you also have to promote and back to your point on the idea, if you're a reader, digest what you're reading and give your own perspective. Audrey who's on our team over here, Audrey Canata, she's doing that on LinkedIn. And I've been encouraging her. "You love to read, just start sharing this and giving some perspective." Jennifer Steele, she's a Wealth Management Advisor at Northwestern Mutual. I went to high school with her and seeing how she's using content through her own LinkedIn. It's actually being tagged by her. So it's all about using the UTMs and the cookies. And it's just very unique of ways to take something that was done once and then repurpose it time and time and time again.

James Robert Lay:

I want to paint a picture here of two futures for the dear listeners. We start to wrap up it doesn't matter if they're at a financial brand or a FinTech or if they're marketing sales leadership team, I want to leap ahead five years. I want to leap ahead into the future and reflect back onto this conversation today, for

those that are listening, but maybe they failed to act. They failed to help build the personal brands of lenders and leaders five years ahead. Look back. What does that future look like for those that might still be a little bit behind.

Kyle Lacy:

You're still going to be looking for a job instead of building a career. That's how I frame it. The idea of personal branding and using digital channels to promote it is that you are thinking about a career, not your job.

James Robert Lay:

One of the concerns I hear a lot when coaching and training around this subject is, "Okay, this is great. But we're going to invest all of this time, effort and energy. We're going to tee it up with our teams, but then what if they leave? Are they going to take everyone with us?" And I want to get your take on that.

Kyle Lacy:

I think it's always been that issue.

James Robert Lay:

Correct.

Kyle Lacy:

You could amplify it now. That's why I get frustrated when people say that, because if you invest in your team and you invest in them appropriately and their business grows because you're doing it. They're probably not going to leave. They're probably going to leave because of they either should leave for a lot of reasons or you're just doing a terrible job supporting them. That's the reality. And most of the time, people don't understand how to build. We talk about personal brand, but it's more than just... If we're talking about brand it's everything. Each personal brand within your company is part of the brand of your company, is part of the culture, is part of how you promote it. And it's just important to think about it holistically instead of, "Hey, we're going to support Gary's ability to get more business. And then he is going to peace out because now he knows how to do it on his own." Well fine. Good job, Gary. You actually built, you actually helped somebody build a career. It's probably going to come back tenfold for you.

James Robert Lay:

Absolutely.

Kyle Lacy:

He's going to pay it back.

James Robert Lay:

Yeah. And once again, I think it's the way that you view the world. Is it from a sense place of abundance or is it from a place of lack and scarcity. And I want to, I want to leap out on the opposite side of the equation. It's five years in the future, we're reflecting back on this conversation. Someone has applied this thinking, maybe they haven't even started yet. But they're listening to this. And what I've been hearing about this, not just from you, not just from me, not just from others. But it's to the point now to where they realize they're seeing things differently and thinking about things differently. Their feelings are now at a point to where they're wanting to take some action. What does that future look like for them? Those that just start and make the commitment.

Kyle Lacy:

There's tons of different examples, but you're never going to have to chase business. It's going to come to you. And the second thing is you're never going to have to use your resume to get a job. It depends on the context of the person we're talking to. But that is my reality that I've discovered. Because ultimately it's about the community of people I've built around me. It's the people that I've invested in. It's the people, it's past customers, it's customers at Lessonly, it's customers at Seismic, it's portfolio companies of OpenView, the venture capital firm I work for. It's CEOs. It's known it's more about from a personal branding perspective, it is about the content that you create, but it's also how you invest in others. And if you do that appropriately, it's going to come back appropriately. And five years from now that is what you're looking at and I have multiple examples of people who have done that.

James Robert Lay:

And I think it's playing the long game. You can't play a short game with this. It's a banking acronym. It's the more that you place deposits into the minds of other people, positive deposits, it's going to make it grow and it's investment over time. And then you'll have a huge return in that five year time period.

Kyle Lacy:

And what's so hard about especially social and using social is because social is built to get our dopamine hit. I want a bunch of likes and so it's really hard for people to stick with it because they could spend four months and not get any interaction at all. But the key is your framework that you laid out, which is the 3, 2, 1. Because most of the time people go in and just post content. And they're two weeks later, "What the hell's nobody is coming. This is stupid." But if you're interacting as well, it's going to come back and it gets fun because people are investing in you as well. It's not just you screaming into the void.

James Robert Lay:

Yeah. It's like Joe Polish over at Genius Network. One of the things that he says, "Life gives to the giver and takes from the taker." I want to give something here together, as we wrap up, get really practical. I'm a big believer that all transformation that leads to future growth starts with a single, simple step forward. And we talked about, "Where do I start? Where do I begin?" What would the small commitment that the dear listener can take next to start to build their personal brand, to maximize their financial brands, future digital growth potential, what is one small thing that they can commit to do next?

Kyle Lacy:

So in the book, we talk about an elevator pitch and trying to figure out how to tell your story in a sentence when you're meeting somebody. That's where I would start on top of that. I would just post once on LinkedIn. Honestly, I love your 3, 2, 1 framework to be honest with you. It's easy to follow. You can set it up to where you do it. But for me, you've got to figure out your value statement and your elevate and how you tell your story.

James Robert Lay:

Let me give you another one to take away too. It's 3, 2, 1 and then right off of that is playing the game of tag. And the game of tag is this. Once you make a connection, you have to thank them for connecting with you. Then you can ask them, "Is there a question that you might have about financial services, about money?"

James Robert Lay:

And then you have to guide them. And this is a great way to start building a content portfolio or a content library is by just thanking, asking, collecting all of those questions and then guiding them

through. Maybe it's a 62nd Loom video and you don't address it. That way you could repurpose this content or you do. It's, "Hey Kyle, thanks so much for your question. I just wanted to follow up with you. One of the top stresses that I see when it comes to buying a home is X, Y, or Z." 60 to 90 seconds. Boom, done. That's a private DM. Then you're making a deposit in someone else's life. You might then take that and repurpose it into TikTok or onto YouTube. So play the game of tag.

Kyle Lacy:

The only caution I would put there is hit the personal side of this first because a lot of times, what I see is that people feel like they always have to put a DM in and then they try to game it by sending the same DM to a bunch of people. So for me, it's why I loved your 3, 2, 1 is that you're commenting. If I were in listener's shoes, it would be, go create a list. You can buy Sales Nav if you want. For what it's worth, it's cheap for what it gives you. But Sales Nav on LinkedIn. Go and create a list of the 30 people you want to meet in the future and go comment on their posts if they're active. And do that for a couple weeks before you send out the LinkedIn.

James Robert Lay:

The game of tag. Yeah, absolutely.

Kyle Lacy:

Yeah. Game of tag.

James Robert Lay:

That game of tag is a secondary action to the 3, 2, 1 as a way to dive deeper into the relationship. And I think framing on that is important too, because I always frame it around when I connect with someone, particularly if they're in the banking space. It's always good to connect with great people who are working to transform banking. It's just something along those lines. It's a very simple, sweet, positive, and the connection rate is typically high. And then I just follow that up with, "Hey, just thanks. Great to connect with you. Looking forward to learning together with you growing together." Just something along those lines.

Kyle Lacy:

But the main key is personalization. If there's any realm of possibility that it was a canned statement, you are screwed.

James Robert Lay:

Exactly.

Kyle Lacy:

Because people can sniff it out and they understand.

James Robert Lay:

And that's where taking a little bit of time to make those comments, to make those initial discoveries in the general feed, maybe dive deeper into the profile. Would've been the last couple of things that they've posted, like we did today. I was like, "Hey dude, I really liked your thinking around commitment."

Kyle Lacy:

Exactly, exactly.

James Robert Lay:
Takes 10 seconds.

Kyle Lacy:
But, you can't automate personal branding.

James Robert Lay:
No. Its-

Kyle Lacy:
Zerochance you can automate it.

James Robert Lay:
And that's once again, I think where the micro has the potential to beat the macro because as we move further into this world of AI and automation. I think we're going to see the pendulum start to swing back to one to one as a way to differentiate and not a sea of mass, but a sea of automation. So this has been a lot of fun, Kyle. Thanks so much for the conversation with you today. Speaking of that, how can someone continue the dialogue and the discussion that we've started here? What's the best way for them to connect with you? Say, hello.

Kyle Lacy:
You can connect with me on LinkedIn. You can connect with me on Twitter. You can connect with me on Peloton. And my email is KyleLacey@gmail.com. It's pretty straightforward. And all my LinkedIn, Twitter, all of it's Kyle Lacey. So connect with me there. Always open.

James Robert Lay:
Connect with Kyle, learn from Kyle, get the book too. Where can they get the book?

Kyle Lacy:
Best place to go is probably Amazon.

James Robert Lay:
Get the book.

Kyle Lacy:
Go check Branding Yourself. Make sure that you're looking at the most recent edition and it's in four or five languages too. So if there's anyone here that needs something different, I would just go to Amazon.

James Robert Lay:
Fantastic. Grab the book, connect with Kyle, ride with Kyle on Peloton. Kyle, thanks for joining me for another episode of Banking on Digital Growth.

Kyle Lacy:
Thank you. It was a pleasure.

James Robert Lay:
As always and until next time be well, do good, and make your bed.