

Marketing Munchies Podcast Transcript

Episode #5: Ariana Torres

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Announcer: Welcome to the Marketing Munchies Podcast series hosted by Dr. Bridget Behe. Each week Bridget and her guests will share information, insights, research-based findings, and her 30 years of experience to help your horticultural business connect better with current and future customers. Now, let's join our host, Dr. Bridget Behe.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Today I have with me Dr. Ariana Torres who is an assistant professor at Purdue University. Ariana is a recent friend and colleague of mine and she has an appointment both in the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture as well as an appointment in the Department Of Agricultural Economics. Ariana and I have worked on just a couple of projects and I have invited her today to talk about a project that we're looking at that has to do with e-marketing and e-commerce. Welcome, Ariana!

Dr. Ariana Torres: Hi, Bridget. How are you?

Dr. Bridget Behe: I'm good. Thanks for joining me today.

Dr. Ariana Torres: No, thanks for the invitation.

Dr. Bridget Behe: If you were going to advise a new retail business or wholesale or grower business who wanted to do some e-marketing, what are a couple of things that you would tell them to do or a couple of places that you would tell them to look for tips or things to get started on e-marketing?

Dr. Ariana Torres: Actually I was giving a presentation about e-marketing.

I was in Indianapolis and I was talking to the green industry actually, horticultural growers, some agritourism farms, talking about how do you start doing social media and what I would define social media best practices. If you're growing your plants you know the agriculture best practices. Well I think there are best practices for social media marketing. First thing that I say, I have a publication that looks at what are those social medias. Also, if you go to my website you can find that publication, but basically I have five steps or five practices that businesses engaging in social media should look into. The first one is look for inspiration. Try to find, if you are new to this, try to find pages, either in Twitter, Facebook or Instagram that you think are doing a good job drawing customers.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Not necessarily plant pages, just stuff that looks cool to you.

Dr. Ariana Torres: Exactly. For instance, I like the Facebook of REI, the Outdoor Store, and I really like how they do their contents. I look at their photos, when do they post. We know that if a business posts before 7 in the morning or at lunch time or before customers go to bed, they're more likely to read the post.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Interesting.

Dr. Ariana Torres: Looking at frequency. The second practice that I talk about is start with something that is familiar to you. We know that 90% of online, or of adults that are online are using Facebook. Your Facebook is a platform that you're more likely to use or if you've been using Facebook for your personal purposes, then start with Facebook.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Because it is easy. It is something you know.

Dr. Ariana Torres: Exactly. It's the easiest. It has very nice analytics so I think it's important to consider whatever strategy that you do in Facebook is track how much engagement you create.

Dr. Bridget Behe: So you can get it an idea of how successful you are.

Dr. Ariana Torres: Exactly. It's what they call a return on investment on social media. The third one is the same for any operation, you start diversifying. Once you know your plants and you look into other plants well you can diversify to other platforms. For Twitter, if you want to deliver a great customer service, Twitter is the best. You can ask questions to your customers, see what trends are important for your business. Then Instagram you have for visual content. You can post photos of your farm, of your business, and the day to day challenges and experiences. Funny things that you find can be a great.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Yes, sense of humor really helps engage people, doesn't it?

Dr. Ariana Torres: Exactly and that's what you want with social media is build those customer relationships. Customers that engage via social media want to see that their businesses they are buying from, the fourth recommendation, is be real. Any post that you have, try to build a relationship that is beyond a computer. Show what you have, tell your story, what are your values. What is your vision? What is your mission of your business? Try to tell that in social media.

Dr. Bridget Behe: And to be a genuine, authentic business.

Dr. Ariana Torres: Exactly. Yes, you have to keep it real. And the last one that I talk about is be consistent because everybody starts with no followers. I was telling a business that when I created a Facebook page for my extension program that is called Horticulture Business, 3 months later my friend asked me, “How many followers you got?” and I had 5 followers, and 4 of them were my family. That is okay you need to be consistent and post once a day. You can schedule posts early in the weekend. Just make a big nice pot of coffee and schedule all your posts but just be consistent and invest on it. Like anything that you would do in your business, it is another investment strategy that you need to put your time and your passion as you do growing your plants and selling them.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Well that’s great, Ariana. I really appreciate you coming on the podcast today and helping my listeners understand a little bit more about e-commerce and e-marketing. I'm going to put a link in the transcript so if people want to get on your website and they want to see those tips that you have for social media marketing that they can easily refer to that. Thanks again for being on today.

Dr. Ariana Torres: Thank you for the invitation. It was a pleasure.

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Announcer: Thank you for joining us on this week's Marketing Munchies Podcast. For more information or to download the transcript of this podcast, please visit, connect-2-consumer.org. That's C-O-N-N-E-C-T, dash, the number two, dash, C-O-N-S-U-M-E-R, dot, C-O-M.