



Richard: Hello everybody, Richard Tubb here and I'm thrilled to be joined today by a friend of mine from Fife, Scotland, Chris Marr.

Now, Chris is the founder of Learning Every day which is a small business with marketing and business developments. Now, by his own admission, Chris has a healthy obsession with marketing, specifically with content marketing and social media. And quite honestly, he's one of the most energetic and inspiring people that I know.

Today, Chris will be talking to us about using social media to win business locally. Chris, it's a real honor to welcome you to the show, thanks for joining us!

Chris: Thanks, Richard, it's really great to be on your show, it's a real pleasure, and an honor for myself as well, so thanks very much for inviting me on to talk to you today.

Richard: My pleasure. Now, you're very active on social media. I know you enjoy it from talking to you but enjoyment aside, what does social media deliver for learning every day from a business perspective?

Chris: Yeah, I think it's a great topic to talk about. And because I feel that although social media and these platforms have been around for a while now, people still – to sound, they're going to get it wrong a little bit, I think. And they do squander for that opportunity to get that message out there.

And for us, it's really – and I think this is for most people and again it's something that people misses that it's mainly about engagement for us. It's mainly about connecting with people, building that audience. My own philosophy behind this or approach or mindset about building that audience, is one person at a time. So for me, that's what's social's all about.

Social media is – the clue's in the name. It's connecting with people on their level and doing that through platforms like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, whatever it may be, and that's my approach to it.

Yes, if you know me, we make business out of it. We may get customers from it but it's never really a direct result of just social because of the type of business that we are, but it's about connection and relationships, and building that trust.

Richard: So I'm going to jump in with a common objection I have from people who are not using social media at the moment, and I'm really intrigued to hear your thoughts on this. And the objection I hear is, "Well, we don't use social media because our customers don't use it." What will you say to anyone who use that as an objection for not using social media?

Chris: Okay, well, my first question would be, how do we know? They're not for sure. That's definitely the case.

This is the thing that I've been trying to get my head around as well is, "Why is social media definitely on the internet?" That's like almost saying our customers don't use the internet by saying we don't use social media, and there's a lot of other things to say.

I suggest you're just going to use social to connect with your current customers, or you're looking to create more awareness of your business. And I think that people miss the fact that in social media, there's a lot of conversations happening out there. You could be tapping into those conversations.

You don't have to approach social to be selling to people. You could go there to help people. I think that's a big factor that's missed in most businesses as well. My argument would be that your customers are probably there but maybe not in the capacity that you think they are, and they're probably out there having a conversations with their friends and their families and stuff like that.

Yeah, I would say, how do you know? First of all, can you prove to me that that is the case? And then maybe, you need to think about, well, maybe social media, maybe the strategy for us for our social, is going to be slightly different.

There's no denying that social media is a massive opportunity to connect with people. It doesn't always have to, the strategy that you might need may not be the first thing that you think of. Like for example, our customers aren't there. Well, how else can we use social media to create awareness of our business? How else can we use social media to connect with people and help people?

So there's other things to do on social, I think, that can still benefit your business that may not necessarily be the first that you really want to do there.

Richard: Absolutely agree. I recall you say, you know how passionate I am about social media as well and I've been delivering a presentation on social media to, for lack of a better word, a group of, should we say naysayers? People who are against social media and that exact question came. They said, "We don't use social media because our customers don't," and so I said, "What about the people who you'd like to be customers but aren't your customers?" That stops them in their tracks and filters that out.

So let's dive down a little bit on to social media for small businesses, specifically local businesses. So the listeners of this podcast are primarily IT business owners, typically small businesses who work with small businesses local to them. So is social media worthwhile for local businesses?

Chris: I think the short answer is yes. It definitely is. You have to do the right things. You have to have the right approach to social. So I think that absolutely is beneficial as trying to just get a strategy around that and applying our input as you actually what you want to achieve there.

Just to kind of follow on from what you're saying there and I think we can bring this in, is that you need to consider, whether your customers are on social media or not. You need to consider or you need to understand that people are not in buying mode all the time. In fact, most of the time, you could probably argue that 98% of the time, people are not in buying mode. They're not ready to buy

your service. They're not ready to buy your product. They might not be even be considering your product or service, and that's where social media comes in that's where you can connect to people when they're not in buying mode and you need to think to yourself, "Well, social media is not about selling. It's about connecting."

So when it comes to social media and you ask, "Is it worthwhile for local businesses?" And you think to yourself, "Well, if it's about connecting with people and building relationships with people," then absolutely it's worthwhile. You just need to sort of reframe your objective with social.

And the reason I think that it's worthwhile, or perhaps it's maybe worth saying why people think it maybe isn't worthwhile to begin with, like what are the barriers or the challenges that people have when it comes to social? What's stopping them getting started? Why are they asking these questions in the first place?

And I think people see us as perhaps, resource-heavy, and they think to themselves it's going to take time; it's going to take money; it's going to take effort to do this thing; it's going to take a whole lot of resource to go into social, to understand it, to learn it. And I think that kind of follows on to one of the other big barriers which is the fact – and I speak to people every day about this – they just don't make it a priority. They don't make social media; they don't make any sort of internet marketing a priority in their business.

In fact, the marketing in general tends to be at the bottom of the list. It's a thing that at the end of the day, they say, "Oh, that can wait until tomorrow." And if it's not a priority, then they're not going to give it the attention that it needs. And I think that those two together really are, sort of, 90% of the reasons why people don't actually engage in social.

And out of all of that, I think effort is the one thing, effort and patience, is the one thing that people just don't have enough. They don't have enough patience and they're not putting enough effort into it. So that and not having a plan is the key things, or the common challenges associated with that.

So if we can get over those barriers and get people to understand maybe perhaps the benefits of why it's worthwhile, why people need to get into social for local business, then they can actually see what the benefits are. I think that would be absolutely key.

And as I've already mentioned, the benefits are, the opportunity for small businesses in a local area are massive. You know, things like, for example, I kind of already

mentioned in the start, those conversations happening online at the moment, right?

So one platform that I'd like to talk about – and you're a big fan of this as well Richard, is Twitter, yeah? So there's so many conversations happening on Twitter just now. I think if you're on local area, you should be able to tap into – like especially in IT businesses, right? IT is kind of, B2B, so there's no reason why you couldn't jump on to Twitter and start engaging with other local businesses on Twitter, right?

So that would be a case of going on to Twitter and engaging in relevant conversations that you can get involved in. It could just be simply retweeting other businesses, tweets, replying to them, and getting involved in that conversation with other local businesses. And that's a way of establishing yourself online, you can do that.

You can also do that on Facebook, you can also do that on LinkedIn as well, it's just on different ways, but Twitter just seems to be sort of tappable when it comes to conversations.

Richard: The key point, sorry to interrupt. To pick up on one really important thing that you said earlier on there, that social media isn't specifically about selling. And I think that might be one of the barriers to people taking it up. Because most IT companies don't think of themselves as sales people, so they feel deeply uncomfortable with that actually, you know, the idea of selling to people. And so, when they look at social media they think, "Well I don't want to go out there and sell to people." It's not about that though, is it?

Chris: No, it's not, you need to do the exact opposite of that. You need to go out there and not sell to people.

So I see all the time, and again, these platforms have been around for a while now. You think about, "We wouldn't know what to do with them though," but we don't. It has to be, because you're in social, in an area where people are being social, you need to have the ability to have a conversation with people. You need to feel comfortable and confident to reply to someone's tweet that perhaps you've never met before. And you need to be able to start those conversations as well, and I think that's absolutely key.

Those conversations are happening whether you're there or not. If you are there, you're going to have the ability to create more awareness of your business, and you're going to have the ability to probably get more customers out of it, but you're

doing it in a way which put sales at the end of all that, not at the start. At the start is about building that relationship up.

And I think it's worth saying that when it comes to social media, when it comes to the internet, when it comes to marketing in general, it's getting harder and harder all the time because you're not just competing with other IT businesses in your local area, you're competing with the conversation that I'm having with my friends and family on social media as well. Why would I want to take the time of the day to engage with an IT business, right? You have to give me a reason to want to do that.

So you've got try and cut through that noise somehow. And the only way to do that, I think on social, is to get them to the level of talking to people. Don't be an organization trying to talk to a customer and get away from this whole B2B and B2C mentality and think, "Well, how can I build my audience? How can I build my relationship up with people, one person at a time, person to person level?" That's what people want, especially on things like Twitter for example.

I'm not going to talk to a brand. There's only so many brands out there that I've managed to track us that's like Coca-Cola and Disney and thing like that, big, emotional brands.

Whereas, when it comes to SMEs or small businesses, you got to get away from that. Especially on social, you need to talk to people at their level. So I feel that that's another big, mistake almost, that businesses are making, as they think that they can talk to people as a business. You can't do that, you need to throw back that curtain. You need to put your face on Twitter profile. You need to start having conversations with people at that lower level, that person to person level.

In fact, it's a higher level, actually. It's not a lower level. It's a higher level of emotional connection. So I think that's another big barrier perhaps, or something that's just misunderstood and could potentially put you into a different mode of communication. As soon as you put your face and your name on your Twitter profile for example, "Now that's me that's talking," and that's just a different approach entirely.

Richard: It makes a world of difference, doesn't it? I think one concrete example of this, most of the IT companies that I work with, whatever shape or size they are, they tend to work with small businesses locally of, say between five and 25 employees.

Now, one of my clients recently was saying they're not getting a lot of engagements on social media, the website. The type of leads that are coming through tend to be a lot bigger than they'd like.

And when we examined their social media profile and their website, it pretty much came across that they were a big business who did business with big businesses, you know? And so it absolutely hits the heart of what you were saying there which is, they were given a perception of themselves as with other people which wasn't authentic to who they actually were.

So once they started showing the faces, the people behind the Twitter accounts, behind the website, and started talking in the language that their small business customers – they started to get a lot more success.

Yes, I absolutely agree with what you said there.

Chris: Yeah, exactly, when it comes to decision making time, when it comes to that moment where someone needs to make a decision, whether they're going to buy from you or not, that's a person that's making that decision as well.

I was in a seminar recently and there was another seminar coming up and they were trying to sell it to everyone, "You should come along to this next seminar." It was, B2B Social Media Marketing. And I was just like, this is like an oxymoron, B2B Social Media Marketing, I'm thinking to myself, "Surely that's a mistake." Because when it comes to social media marketing, it's about people, it's about conversations, especially when we get into the smaller businesses, like that's what we're talking about today, local businesses. It's local people doing business with other local people.

Whether you're selling to a business or if you're a B2C business, selling to other consumers, I don't think there's a lot of difference. And in fact, I think, we're all very guilty of trying to overcomplicate this whole process, this whole thing, and I think that's another big barrier when it comes to business. We seem to want to overcomplicate it.

Richard: Yeah, and maybe the old adage, I've never found anyone who disagrees with this that people do business with people they know, like and trust, you know? We all agree with that. Social enables you to do that. It really does.

Chris: Yes, that's a really good point and something that I wanted to cover as well, Richard, is that I take a lot of influence from you. I think you do your social

media stuff really well and it aligns directly with your philosophy in your offline world as well.

And I think that's definitely a thing that people need to consider is that the principles of offline networking should be, or should transfer into the principles of online networking as well. Those dots should join. It's the same activity.

Like you said, people do business with the people they know, like and trust. That's what you're trying to do on social. You should try and build that relationship up. You've got to accept it. It takes time for people to trust you.

So I think that if you're a good offline networker, then you just got to take those principles and that same approach and think to yourself, "How can I join that up online as well?"

A good example there is what you do, Richard. And I've got a good friend of mine that does it really, really well. He will tweet at me before I go to an event. He will say, "Looking forward to seeing you, Chris at this next event." Then, at the event, he'll say, "I just bumped into @ChrisMarr101 at this event."

And then afterwards, we follow up and say, "It's great to see you at..." specific event." And he's joining the dots. It's just like, he's starting a conversation before we even see each other. The conversation is still taking place when we meet each other and the conversation then takes place afterwards as well.

And for anyone that's listening that's thinking to themselves, "How do I start conversations?" You know, for example, you're standing there and people don't feel comfortable in sales mode, well just think about how social media can really warm people up to you before you actually get into a room with people. And you know, you can start that conversation online, you can build that relationship up online with people on social media platforms before you get in a room with someone; before you actually go face to face. And that makes things just so much easier when you already got some of that relationship up built up already. I think you would agree with me on that one, Richard.

Richard: Oh, absolutely, and you know, an example springs to mind. When I go to networking events or any event really - conferences and things and I bump into people and I say, "Oh hey, Chris, how's the office move going?" And sometimes people look at me almost slack-jawed, it was like, "Oh, how'd you know about that?" "Oh, he tweeted about it."

You put that Tweet public and I'm interested in you and follow the stuff that you do. And it does build that sort of bonding rapport really, I think, with the conversations.

So let's touch upon that a little bit deeper. Small businesses connecting with other small businesses locally, how would you recommend in practical terms, for small business to build a social media following locally – what practical tips could you give to people to actually connect with people?

Chris: Okay, so, I guess it's kind of like making a start. So one of the things that we did very early on was we just quite simply if you look at Twitter again – I don't know why I keep coming back to Twitter. It seems to be popular itself. In fact...

Richard: It does, doesn't it?

Chris: Yeah, keeping up with Twitter is actually the only real social platform that's left actually. And Twitter really, I don't know if people are aware actually of Twitter lists for example. It's a really good way to kind of start building up a list of people that are relevant to a conversation that you want to have.

So for example, in your local area, you can create a list of local businesses that happen to do business in your local area. That allows you to kind of really, just quickly tap into what they're up to on Twitter, for example.

So that's one thing you can do, and building up in that sort of following, well, that's a hard thing to do, I think. There used to be a real purpose behind what it is you're doing regardless actually, when you come to social media marketing or any marketing. There does have to be purpose behind it.

A lot of people look at social media and think, "Well, how can we automate this?" And it's like you're saying, when you have a conversation with someone and you sort of bring in the fact that they just moved office or something like that, they're like, "Oh right, so you actually do, you're not just automatically tweeting but you're actually using it and actually paying attention." And I think that's a really good point that you made.

But when it comes to building a following, you really need to build the relationships up first. That's absolutely key. And the way to do that on Twitter is just to be around, be involved in that conversation.

When it comes to, for example, Richard, I know that you're kind of referring to the fact that we've built a kind of community. We're starting to really get traction in our community that we built up on Facebook, on our Facebook group. And if I was to kind of reflect on my own experience, I think that's the only thing that I can really do is that the first thing that we did was we draw our customers together into one place where they were already. So they didn't have to log in and sign in to something completely separate. We got, we said, "Well most of customers do seem to be on Facebook. So why don't we just start engaging with them a little bit more there?" So we started a group page. It might seem quite simple but it was quite difficult to then get traction on that.

The key thing thereafter is not only just bringing people together or you know who you are, it's actually starting to build or starting to create some sort of culture within that group, within that community. The key thing with any community or with any audience is that they've all kind of got one thing in common and trying to solve a problem of some distraction.

So for any IT business, it could be – it has to come from some sort of purpose. Like my purpose is always to help people with content marketing, to give them a place where they can get a solution to a problem for example, an answer to a question, and try to bring really good like-minded people together.

So for some businesses, it'll lend itself to listen for others at one. Because IT business, I just think to myself, if I was an IT business, I would want to be the most helpful IT business that I could possibly be. And that would be about, say for example, you start off accumulating a following, or you want to start a following from local trade, I would be the most helpful business in that area.

So if you've gotten about two or three competitors in your local area or maybe more, how can I be even more helpful than them up front? You're not looking for any – you're going to give as much as possible. Again, it comes back to this sort of, the offline world. If you want to really connect with people, you've got to give before you can get or gives gain or whatever you want to call it.

And that's how I would do it. Again, it comes back to step by step, one person at a time. If you're looking to build a following or an audience of loyal fans or community, it is absolutely one person at a time and that's how you build it.

It comes back to what I was talking about earlier, Richard, which is that it takes time; it takes effort; it takes patience, and those three things are aspects or elements or resource that people just aren't willing to give.

Richard: And so by being patient, by being consistent by building those relationships, you actually jump into the 5% that's just so far ahead your competition. You know, you talked about making yourself valuable and helpful to other people in the local community. Of course a lot of companies would say, "What's in it for me?"

I'm absolutely with you on this. I'd say, put that to one side; play the long game here; be the most helpful IT company in the area.

And you touched upon two things there and I'll just close the loop on the first one. Twitter lists is overly, overly unused by most companies. I use Twitter lists absolutely heavily. So just an insight or a secret for people who listens to podcasts, I get a lot MSPs who contact me and say, "Hey, do you know of another IT company in a different part of the world?" And I pride myself in coming back and say, "Absolutely, let me make the connection for you." And you know, some people have said, "Man, you've got such a memory," or whatever. I've got the memory span of a goldfish, but I use Twitter lists.

When I connect with people, I add them to Twitter lists so I know there's people in different parts of the world. I go back and look at lists and say, "Hey, you want an IT, a manage, service provider in Houston, Texas?" "Absolutely! I know one because I stay in touch with them on Twitter." So Twitter lists is a great way to do, to keep track and to maintain relationships.

But specifically, when you talked about the content marketing academy on Facebook, I just want to give a shout out for that because that is a phenomenal group. You've really created value there. I, myself, am a member of that group. There's lots of really great conversations going on there. I'd go as far to say it's one of the only Facebook groups that I'm actively engaged in and it's because of the people who are involved in it, the value that it gives.

So for anybody listening, let's give a shout out to, what's the URL?

Chris: Yeah, we've got a redirect on that URL there, so it's just www.tcma-fb.co.uk, and that will be directed to the page where you can request to join.

Richard: Really strong resource, so for anybody listening, I encourage you to check that out and I'll make sure that we include something about Twitter lists and The Content Marketing Academy on Facebook in the show notes for this as well.

So let's continue the conversation a little bit about engaging locally. So a number of my IT business clients have engaged in Twitter business hours, Twitter chat around a

specific hashtag. So I know you're familiar with them and they speak very highly of them, but for anybody listening that, you know, how to Twitter chat work and why should anybody who listens to the podcast seek one of those out?

Chris: Okay, so this is a good one. I think it's a great way to connect with people. Again, you got to come back to this purpose or this philosophy or approach to what it is you're trying to do with social.

Before you even send your first tweet, it's like, "Why are we doing this? And why should anyone care about why we're doing this?" It doesn't matter if it's Twitter chat that you're on or anything. You've got to be consistent in that approach, right?

So when it comes to Twitter chat, again, I would abdicate yourself from that. It's not about us; it's not about our brand; it's not about our products and services. And they'll be like, "Well, how can we help? How can we help as much as possible in this Twitter chat?" Yes, so there's a hashtag associated with that, you absolutely have to get involved in the conversation.

And something I wanted to bring up as well, Richard, and I think that some people, you know, when it comes to Twitter chat, someone's obviously started that somewhere. That person does not have to be you, okay? As a business, you don't have to be the one that's at the front of the room. There's actually some things more important just to be in the room or to be in the conversation. So that's one thing that Twitter really lends itself to. It's just finding those relevant conversations and getting involved.

If it isn't a Twitter chat and you're on the topic that you feel that you could, it could be a local business chat or something like that or chat or business or whatever you want to call it; then maybe you do need to start one. But really, it'd be much, much more effective I think in the earlier days to just find the conversations and get stuck in there and be helpful.

I can't over-emphasize this enough because it's so – it's like you've mentioned already, Richard. It's like undervalued or underrated, people just want to go in there and just get as quick when there's no silver bullet; it's one person at a time, and it comes from the purpose of what you're trying to do.

So even with Twitter chats, I would go in there and be as helpful as I can, and people will recognize that or see that, that that is what you're trying to do; that they can see that you're being helpful and they value that and they start to trust you. And then, they'll come to you with their questions and they'll want answers or

they will come to you with their problems and that's when you can start to really build that relationship up.

So again, it's trying to think what's the long-term goal here, even when you're getting stuck into Twitter chat, is to be helpful and to try and build those relationships.

Richard: Fantastic advice and I think picking up on the thread that sort of permeates it all the way through our conversation here. It's not that difficult.

To make the comparison, think about business networking. We've all been at a business networking events and you got the guy in the room and you all know the guy. He comes up to you, and within 30 seconds he's trying to sell to you. And how do you feel about that? You're turned off aren't you? You're not interested at all.

And the flipside of the coin is the people in the room who come up to you, chat to you, get to know you, or are interested in your business, are helpful, introduce you to other people, I'd say you're much more likely to do business with those type of people.

And you know, so the conversion from the offline world to the online world, it's very, very – there's no difference at all, really. It's just about doing the same type of things.

Chris: You still get those guys, even those guys you're talking about, they exist on social media as well. But like you said, if you do, if you take the strategy of being helpful, valuable, useful to people, and you really just do it for yourself and to that top 5%, like you said, people just don't see the direct return on investment on that strategy.

So you know, whether it's Twitter chats or anything like that, but Twitter chat is a really good place to start. It's a really good place to sort of jump in to conversations that's happening online already without really, you know – you won't risk anything there at all if you just go in and just start having conversations with people.

People want that though, that's another thing that people need to realize or understand is, you need to be confident that you can go on to Twitter and reply to someone's tweet who you've never met before. Just think of the reason why they sent tweet out in the first place. They're looking for that engagement. So you're doing them a favor by retweeting their tweet, replying to their tweet. That's what people are looking for.

I spoke with a friend wa long time ago was, he deliberately goes on to Twitter and finds tweets that people haven't replied to, and replies to them, because that's what people are looking for. They're looking for that connection.

And on this other flipside of the coin with that one Richard, and I think this is something that you and I have spoken about before. In fact, it is something that we've spoken about before, is that when someone replies to your tweet, you have to really understand how powerful that is because 95% of people that are on Twitter, looking at your tweets, looking at your content, whatever it is, do not engage, you know, they just don't. They're just looking in the background, watching.

When someone retweets or replies, you've got to recognize that, probably reply more than anything. You've got to recognize how much effort that has, that have been for that person to do and you've got to reward that in some way by replying or by then, you'll get involved in more of their content or something like that. I don't know if you could emphasize that, Richard.

Richard: It's so important, isn't it? It's absolutely so important and I think of a great example recently, and sometimes it's not what you do, it's what you don't do, which can have a negative effect online.

So I was thinking, I saw a standup comedian recently at a local show, and I thought the show was brilliant. I gave the guy a shout out on Twitter said, "Fantastic show, really appreciated it." He retweeted that but at no point did he engage with me.

Now, we're not talking about a top comedian of BBC TV or anything like that. We're talking about a local comedian in a local area, and actually, it made me feel a little bit like, "Oh, so you're happy to tag my tweet and use it as self-promotion, but you're not happy enough to sort of reply and say, "Hey, thanks, really glad you enjoyed the show," to continue the conversation.

And so I, sort of, really, we talked about this before definitely, take almost pride now, if people respond to you, they're asking you to start the conversation. And so you're letting yourself down, you're letting then down if you don't respond and don't do something with that which is really important. Sometimes, it's not so much what you do, it's what you don't do. You can send messages across differently.

Chris: It's almost like, most people are thinking of, they've only done one step deep into social. There's one factor that's like, it needs to go another step. It's like, there's just this whole other area of social media that people just aren't exploring.

Yeah, they do retweet, but then that's lip service. That's not how to use social, that's not what you want to do. You want to go a step further than that and that would be to reply; and that would be then putting you on to a list, Richard, of a person that has been at one of my shows, that might know other people that want to come to some of my other shows. And if our engagement is like that, you got to have this higher level of understanding of how social, of how it all joins together over the longer term.

With building relationships, it's never an overnight thing. It might be a few, if we went out to the pub and had a few drinks and we became friends, but even then, that takes time. You know, you've got to see how, you've got to have an understanding of how social plays, of how you could play social at that level, and that is that higher level where most people aren't doing that, and that's a long-term thing.

Just look at someone like, I'm a big fan of Gary Vaynerchuck. You just look at the effort that he's put in over the years. Yes, he's selling books and he runs an agency and all the rest of it, but he's engaged in our level that other people just weren't at the time. He just went so deep and realized how important it was to make those connections and to build that audience. And I think that's the level that most people aren't playing at, and I think it's a good example that you gave there, Richard.

Richard: Yeah, you're absolutely right. And as I say, we keep talking about this 5% but actually, to get into that top 5%, to gain the competitive advantage if you want to boil it down to purely business terms – although it is much more than that – it's actually not that difficult, and the techniques, you know, it's just about being consistent, being authentic, giving the right things, treating people the way you would like to be treated.

So perhaps that's a good segue way, so that's actually the topic that I'm going to be talking about at your event, your big event coming up in Edinburgh, Scotland on the third and fourth of September 2015 at The Content Marketing Academy. So perhaps you could tell us a little bit more about the Content Marketing Academy 2015.

Chris: Absolutely, I'd love to tell you all about it. The Content Marketing Academy is a content marketing conference. It's aimed at business owners; it's aimed at marketing people. If you're a business owner, you're a marketer as well, I

always say. It's aimed at anyone who's in marketing and any organization as well.

And really, there's a couple of big things that I want to do with this event. It started last year, but really, it's about bringing like-minded people together. And that's one of the big things I want to do, is to build this community of marketers. In Scotland, especially because we feel like we kind of get missed out a little bit when it comes to these sort of events.

But The Content Marketing Academy, like I said, is all about getting people to talk about more about content marketing, what it really means and almost sell the concept of content marketing and the way we're doing that is through different ways.

We started The Content Marketing Academy last year as a conference. It was very small, but it's always been my – I don't know. It's always been my objective really, with this to not just have a speaker-like conference because you go and passively listen to the information, but actually, get some real value out of it. So what we wanted to do – and we did this last year and we're going to do it this year – is to have a workshop element as well, an area where you can actually go and learn and take action, and we've drafted that into this year's one as well.

So on the third of September, we have a master class session with Marcus Sheridan, the Sales Lion from Virginia in the States. He's coming across, he's going to do a master class session with us. And everybody that attends that day, I know will change the game for them for years to come. So that's the master class.

He's also, Marcus is going to be our closing keynote speaker on the Friday, which is on the fourth of September, along with five other speakers including yourself, Richard.

One other, just to kind of to tell the story about it further, one of the other elements that I really want to get across in the conference is it's not just a marketing conference for marketers. It's a marketing conference for business owners as well. And that's a really important distinction because when I go to marketing conferences as a marketer, it's all the marketing jargon. It's all the, I don't even get half of it, to be honest.

And then when you go to one that's for business owners, it's much more real. They've got a story of where they're taking content. Like Marcus Sheridan is a great example. Richard, you're a good example as well – where they've actually started their business, or they made their success in their business through some sort of content, through some sort of marketing. So they were a

business owner, and then they're getting into this space where they're actually teaching other people about the success that they've had and the principles that other people can adopt based on their own success story. And I think that's a really important for business owners especially, so they can relate to the speakers.

So that's kind of, in a nutshell, what The Content Marketing Academy is all about. You can probably tell that I'm pretty excited about it and I'm glad that I've actually managed to bring it to life, the idea, the concept.

Richard: I'm so excited about it myself, you know, I'll be a speaker at the event. But quite honestly, if I wasn't a speaker, I'd be an attendee, and I genuinely mean that because I'm so excited about the conference that you're putting together there.

And I should give a shout out, if you are planning on coming along and you're an IT company, do let me know, do get in touch at richard@tubblog.co.uk or @tubblog on twitter because I will be putting together a get-together maybe one evening for attendees there who are IT companies, specifically to talk about marketing issues facing IT companies, so do get in touch there.

And as I said, I will be a speaker at the event this year, and Chris is very kindly extended a special offer to my clients and listeners of this podcast for a discount on the ticket price. So you can visit tubb.co/TCMAatubb. And if you use the code AVIP15, you'll receive 15% off your tickets.

So, really excited about being a speaker at the event. And as I said, if I wasn't a speaker, I'd definitely be an attendee.

Chris: Yeah, absolutely. I might say it as well, Richard, it's going to be great to spend time with you and other speakers. And you're talking about getting people together as well; I think that's going to be absolutely fantastic for people. One of the big benefits of attending a conference just like this is the stuff is happening with the actual conference as well, that value, and everything that we just talked about today to be fair, is building those relationships with people; making some new friends, why not?

Richard: Absolutely, absolutely. So, I'm very conscious of your time, but this has been fantastic. And I'm going to say right now, can we get you back on the podcast to talk about content marketing in the very near future?

Chris: Yeah, sure. I'd love to.

Richard: We've barely scratched the surface of things. We touched upon one topic here but I know people will find this valuable. So thanks so much for your time today, Chris. Now, how do people find you on social media?

Chris: Sure, yeah, I'd love to connect. If you've got any questions, anything you want to ask me about anything that I've covered here, and anything else as well, the best place to get me is on Twitter @ChrisMarr101. That's the way in, I think, basically that's the easiest way to get in touch.

Richard: Fantastic, and again, just to give a shout out for The Content Marketing Academy takes place in Edinburgh, Scotland on the third and fourth of September. Go across to The Content Marketing Academy on Facebook to get a flavor of the type of people who are going to be there. But you're going to be sold; you're going to be sold as soon as you have a look at the content people are sharing in that Facebook group so, looking forward to that.

So Chris, thanks again for your time today, really do appreciate it and thank you everyone for listening.