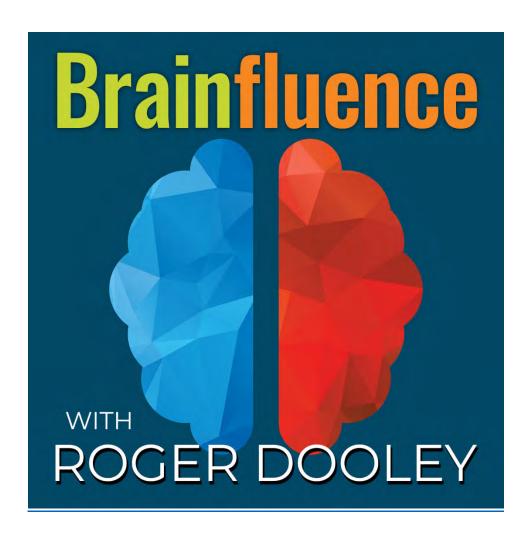
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Full Episode Transcript

Brainfluence with Roger Dooley

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SPEAKERS

Intro, Roger Dooley, John Jantsch, Outro

Intro: 00:00

Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker, Roger Dooley, shares powerful but practical ideas from world-class experts, and sometimes a few of his own. To learn more about Roger's books, "Brainfluence" and "Friction", and to find links to his latest articles and videos, the best place to start is rogerdooley.com. Roger's keynotes will keep your audience entertained and engaged. At the same time, he will change the way they think about customer and employee experience. To check availability for an in-person or virtual keynote or workshop, visit rogerdooley.com

Roger Dooley: 00:37

Welcome to Brainfluence. I'm Roger Dooley. Today, we have a returning guest, John Jantsch. He's a marketing consultant, speaker, entrepreneur, and author. His best-known title is "Duct Tape Marketing", also the name of his network of consultants, which use oddly enough, "The Duct Tape Methodology". This means John and I have a special relationship. Everyone knows you can fix anything with two things, duct tape, and WD 40. My book "Friction" was called a mental can of WD 40, so it makes sense that between the two of us, we can fix just about anything. John's new book is the ultimate marketing engine. Welcome to the show, John.

John Jantsch: 01:10

Oh, thanks for having me again. It's kind of fun. This is my seventh book, and so I'm appearing on a lot of shows that I've been on before, which has really

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been a lot of fun, especially since we have been able to see anybody in real life. Seeing you as we are now has been great.

Roger Dooley: 01:23

Well, I'm hoping that pretty soon we can meet up at the conference in person. Before we started, we just talked about us both getting slowly back into the in-person gigs that are starting to open up again, at least in the United States. So, I look forward to that. And I'm curious, how have you seen the pandemic change the world for your clients who tend to be smaller businesses? It had to be maybe in some cases particularly stressful, but maybe there are some opportunities there too?

John Jantsch: 01:49

Well, I think like all of us, there was a period of what's going to happen to the world, I think. And certainly, some businesses were just in the wrong industry at this time, and really, really struggled. But I also saw a lot of my clients that had actually not just survived, but really thrive. And not just because they were in some industry that saw greater demand. One of the things that really rang true for me, and actually this book we're going to talk about today, my latest book, I signed a contract for March 15, of 2020, and that was really right when all of this was starting to unfold. And I was kind of worried about what am I going to write about? I don't want to write a book about how to market during the pandemic. Nobody certainly wants to read that book.

Roger Dooley: 02:31

Limited shelf life too.

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John Jantsch: 02:31

Yeah, that's right. But one of the things that the pandemic really shone a very bright light on for me was that a lot of businesses grow and scale just because the economy and the momentum is going their way, whatever industry they're in, but in tough times, sometimes you really see businesses that thrive and survive because they're meaningful in the lives of their customers in some way. And that's what I saw a lot of. Businesses that had taken the time to really embrace their customers, really focus on their customers, really create great customer experiences, they were actually getting emails and calls from customers saying, "Look, what can we do? We'll stick with you. Don't worry. We're with you through this." And that's always really been true, but I just think the struggles that a lot of us went through last year really shone a very bright light on that dynamic. And so, that element in probably more ways than one shows up in this new book. The idea is that we look at building customers for life, then we start to look at customers, not for transactions, but for the transformation that we can bring to them. And that's really what informed my whole path for writing this book.

Roger Dooley: 03:34

Locally, here in Austin, I saw that with some businesses, where various restaurants handled the initiation of the pandemic in different ways. One, in particular, was very adept at converting to pickup and delivery and taking care of customers, very customer service oriented. Because initially, things did not go 100% perfectly as you might imagine, where suddenly your business model has changed dramatically, but you did what it took. They fix things if they were wrong and they were very transparent about everything. They talked about how they were keeping all of their people employed.

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They did not immediately lay off all of their people or some of their people. And I think that what they saw was a lot of community support. Other businesses that were more transactional in nature struggled and did not get that same level of support for their customers.

John Jantsch: 04:22

I think one of the things you're going to see is going be a lot of that behavior that changed out of necessity, creating some innovations that I think are going to be with us. QR code menus are probably not going away. Curb pickup. Margaritas are probably not going away. So, in some ways, while it was a very, very tough time, I think the fact that all friction, if I can borrow your term, all friction to change really went away that I think it opened the door for some things that are going to be what we're going to live with them. And so, I think now, if I'm advising a lot of businesses, it's like if you've got some new idea now's the time to try it because people have never been more open to change in their business.

Roger Dooley: 05:00

You kind of stole my next question for John. Because I was going ask you what you thought has changed permanently as we emerge? I think we're emerging for the pandemic. What's changed? I would tend to agree that some of these convenience features like curbside and delivery, home delivery and such, those are going to be permanent features I've seen now where the stores here in Texas are wide open, but there's still a lot of people doing curbside, not because they fear getting infected but because it's pretty darn convenient. They discovered how convenient was and how they didn't have to spend an hour fighting their way through the grocery store at

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rush hour, they could simply place an order and pick it up in a couple of minutes.

John Jantsch: 05:37

And it's funny because groceries chains have been trying to crack that nut for years and nobody really got much traction with it. But I agree with you, now that people have experienced it, they've got all the apps set up to do it and whatnot, it's like, hey that's actually a better way. I think you're going to see that stick with us as well. I'll tell you the one thing that I saw that is not a feature that somebody could add that I hope stays, is that I think there was a real sense because this impacted everyone in the world, (maybe were in different boats, but we were all in the same ocean at sea and [unintelligible][06:08] during the storm) and I think that there was a return in marketing or in business to a little more humaneness if you will, and kindness. And now, obviously, we've got lots of examples of where that's not occurring, but I do hope that a lot of businesses really stick with that vulnerability and that authenticity that seemed to really come from this.

Roger Dooley: 06:31

Now, it's interesting there's sort of a bifurcation there I think, John, because we've seen both. We've seen increasing human behavior on the part of businesses like restaurants and their customers. And at the same time, I just saw an article about some restaurant that shut down for a day because their customers were being so horrible to their people. And I think that it's a strange conundrum where we have this simultaneous license for bad behavior. Another data point is that airline incidents where there are disruptions on flights are an all-time record, probably mostly due to masking and maybe food items and such. But at the same time, other businesses are

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forging better connections with our customers. And that's partially because some customers are open to that.

John Jantsch: 07:15

That's right.

Roger Dooley: 07:15

So, John, what mistakes do you think businesses are making right now? And in other words, you see a lot of businesses, smaller businesses, where do they tend to be going wrong? And what should they be doing to come out of this pandemic in a much stronger condition? Of course, that sort of sets off your quick discussion, what they should be doing, but why don't you lead into that?

John Jantsch: 07:35

Well, I'd say the first thing that I focus on when I go into work with a small business is still this thought that, hey, if I sell accounting services that anybody in the world that might need a tax return is my potential customer. And so, a big component of this book, one of the actual steps in the ultimate marketing engine is that I suggest that we should be focusing a great deal of our attention on the top 20% of our customers. And part of the reason for that is they're probably more profitable, they probably have the right problem, the right issue, you probably are delivering a great deal of value to them because of some unique set of circumstances. And so, what if we took our attention to the growth of our business, and instead of just saying, hey, let's go out and get every new customer, what if we thought about scaling with that top customer, that I guarantee or at least experience tells me that 20% of them want to do 10 times more business with you, and some smaller percentage of them want to do 100 times more business with you? But

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we're so scattered, sharing or using up the opportunity cost of just chasing the next lead, that we don't spend our time figuring out what can we do so that they would be so thrilled, that they'd be customers for life, and in fact, become evangelists for our business.

Roger Dooley: 08:52

So, how would a newish business, either a startup or a business that really needs to generate more revenue pretty quickly to stay in business? The temptation, of course, is to go after whoever will do business to the point; yes, we've got an order, we've got a customer, even if it's not perfect. Now, how (a) survive in the short term, but also be selective and be intentional in the kind of businesses they seek out?

John Jantsch: 09:15

Yeah. So, there are two things at play here. You absolutely have to pay the bills that you can take business that maybe isn't a good fit, or that you don't think is a good fit. But the real key is how are you messaging, how are you communicating who you work with, who you can best serve? Because some of the reasons we attract clients that aren't great fits are because we are teaching people how to be an ideal client or what an ideal client looks like. So, a lot of what that comes down to is it's not necessarily a matter of saying, nope, we're not doing a business with these people, it's we're developing a process to educate them, to convert them, to onboard them. That actually ensures that we not only attract the right client but that they understand how to work with us and how to get the most value. We get bad clients sometimes because we teach them to be bad clients. They asked for this deal, or they want a special price or we bend to this whim, and next thing you know we're basically all over the place. And if you create a very systematic process for how you teach somebody what it is that you do, as I

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said, how you convert them, how you onboard them, then, in fact, you're creating ideal clients.

Roger Dooley: 10:22

And really, it sort of pervades all aspects of your marketing and the way you do your customer relations and everything else. Because if you're a financial planner, theoretically, everybody on the planet needs financial planning help of some kind, whether it's getting out of debt, or maximizing their retirement savings, or minimizing taxes, and their windfall, whatever. But chances are if you are a financial planner, you are best at a particular target market, or perhaps you should you choose a target market that you can serve very well and keep serving that kind of clients. So, maybe it is people with a net worth of 1 to 5 million who are 10 years or less away from retirement or something like that, where you can really target your services, you become an expert in all those aspects. And also, your messaging is clear. So, when that person sees your website, your ads, whatever, they say, oh, okay, this sounds like me, I need to talk to this person, as opposed to the CPA down the street, who doesn't seem to really say what they do other than help you.

John Jantsch: 11:17

And while everything you said there I absolutely agree with, one element that I inject and that I'd like to suggest is an innovation in this book, is that financial planners should also be creating what I call the customer success track. And so, those people that they are attracting come to them in a certain stage, and that stage has characteristics which you can identify, which you can describe, it probably has some challenges in terms of the goals they're trying to reach. But you also can identify that what if I help them reach those goals? How can I move them to the next stage? And so,

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that financial planner could actually map out, here's who we attracted, here's where they are right now, but here's where they want to go. So, we can create the entire blueprint of products or service offerings or education, or whatever it involves, where we are not just talking about, hey, we're the best option for you today, we're the best option to mature with you, and grow with you, and give you the transformation, ultimately get you from where you are today to where you want to be. Not just sell you products and services. And that approach, or that mindset or point of view, it can actually create a mission for a business, it could certainly inform their products and services, but also their training and the ability to really scale with their customers instead of going out and looking for new customers.

Roger Dooley: 12:31

Yeah. One of the things you talk about later on in the book is that process of scaling with your customers and using them as a part of a network/ That may seem foreign to some businesses where they feel like, I'm so grateful this person is already my [unintelligible][12:44], this business is already my customer, I don't want to impose on them or bug them in any way, they're already doing so much for me. How do you get them to be on your team and then you become part of their team?

John Jantsch: 12:55

Well, some of its mindset. What you just described, you know, belies the fact that you are generating tremendous value for them. Why wouldn't they want to share that with their friends, neighbors, and colleagues? Some of that is just up here in the head. But you're right, the entire last step, step five, is scale with your customers by impacting... I have to read it almost, but by serving their entire ecosystem. And what I mean, essentially, that last section of the book is all about referral generation. But it's not simply about

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asking for referrals. One of the [unintelligible][13:27] main tactics, but one of the tactics that I suggest in that is that you actually start looking at all the other service professionals, or products, or services or needs that they have and start asking how can I become a source of referrals for those services to them? How can I build a strategic partner network, for example, where if my clients need anything related or unrelated to what I do, that I would actually be able to recommend somebody that I trust? So, that's one of the elements. But the other element is how could I actually work with their other providers so that we're actually both providing even more value? One of the examples I cite in the book is we had an author, speaker, influencer, come to us and say, "Look, I've got a nice brand, but it's all over the place. I've written three books. I don't have any products to sell with those so it's like whatever speech they hire before, that's my brand." So, they hired us to create a cohesive brand, to bring all of their things together, to help them develop some products and things, so standard brand stuff. And [unintelligible][14:25] at the time, was also working with an executive coach who was helping her build a team internally of folks who support her growth. And so, we went to work immediately with that executive coach and taught him; here's exactly what we're doing, here's what we're recommending, here's the idea behind all of this. And so, all of a sudden, by working with that executive coach, another one of her providers, which we just volunteered to do, we were actually able to give him the roadmap that he needed to actually do a better job with his work. And so, we both now were able to provide I think even more value to our mutual clients. But guess what? That coach also became a pretty active referral source for referring his other clients to us because he just appreciated that approach. So, there are many, many ways that you can scale with your clients. It's not just asking them for referrals. So, that last whole section is a masterclass in

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all the ways to really get referrals, word of mouth thinking ingrained in your business.

Roger Dooley: 15:24

That's great. And of course, you could be a source of referrals for that coach too. If you start working with a company where the leader is clearly all over the place and needs more hand-holding, then you can provide, then that works that way too. Since we're jumping around in order. John, why don't you provide the 40,000 foot level of the five-step process?

John Jantsch: 15:44

Yeah. I think we've covered them all, actually, but just not in any order.

Roger Dooley: 15:47

Okay, well, let's put them in.

John Jantsch: 15:48

Yeah, exactly. So, the first step is to map where your customers are today and where they want to be. That's essentially the customer journey and the customer success map. The second one is to uncover the real problems you solve for your ideal customers. And let me give you a hint, it's not what you sell. Nobody wants what we sell. They want their problems solved and so we spend an entire section on really getting into that idea. The third one is, and we talked about this idea of narrowing your focus to your top 20% of your ideal clients so that you can really figure out how to grow with them. Now, all the strategy work in the first three steps comes together in attracting more ideal clients. So, we spend a lot of time talking about the role of content, the role of your web presence, all of your digital marketing aspects. So, that's probably the more tactical, if you will, of the steps. And then step

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number five, as we just talked about, is to then now that you've got this machine running, this engine running, to scale with your ideal clients by impacting their entire ecosystem.

Roger Dooley: 16:46

Coming back to that second step of what problem you solve, now we've been hearing for years, sell the sizzle, not the steak, but there's also the customer doesn't want a quarter-inch drill, he wants a quarter-inch hole and so on. But what are some examples of that, real-world examples where the business had a good idea and a good product, but they weren't really recognizing what the customer needed from that

John Jantsch: 17:09

Sure. So, I'll give you a great example I cite all the time because I think it drives home a real significant point. We were working with a tree service, a residential tree service that essentially your need a tree down, they would go come out and cut your tree down. They've been in business for about 30 or 40 years I think maybe at the time. They were a family-owned secondgeneration business. So, their message was family-owned, local, secondgeneration business. Which is nice. Nobody didn't like that idea. But when we interviewed their customers, which is one of the things that we do, and then increasingly, we really scan Google reviews today because people turn to third-party tools like that voluntarily, and talk about something that exceeded their expectations, something they didn't expect to get, essentially the problem that you solve for them. So, as I said, this company had all over, local business, been in business for many, many years. All of their customers said some version of they showed up when they said they were, and they cleaned up the job site thoroughly. And that was the problem that their best customers, the ones that were giving them five stars were saying that this

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company solves for them. Because anybody who hires somebody to come into their home and do some sort of service.... we've all experienced that appointment window, around five hours or something of that nature...

Roger Dooley: 17:16

Or three days later.

John Jantsch: 17:21

Or three days later. And so, to me that's what their customers were screaming loud and clear, is that this company was exceeding our expectations by doing something we weren't getting from anybody else. Nobody said anything about they cut the tree down beautifully. Generally, that's the expectation. They've got trucks, they've got chainsaws, surely...

Roger Dooley: 18:45

You don't expect to find any of the trees left on your property.

John Jantsch: 18:48

Exactly. So, we actually changed that to their core message. But not just change that to their core message, we developed processes around an ontime appointment. 15-minute appointment window or you get \$100 off. That problem and solving that problem became the entire voice of their strategy as well.

Roger Dooley: 19:06

I think it's so important for anybody in that contracting business. I'm sure you've gone through some improvement projects or other kinds of projects. I have. And after every one, [unintelligible][19:17] successful contractors, if

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we knew nothing about that particular trade, but we simply (a) showed up on time, if we weren't going to show up on time, we call the customer and said, "Hey, we're not going to show up on time. We're gonna show up at this other time instead," and mentioned why perhaps. That simple bit of communication would solve all the problems. But as you mentioned, when you're sitting around waiting, wondering where they are at and their time has passed? Are they going to show up in 10 minutes, are they going show up in two hours, or are they not going to show up at all? It's super, super frustrating. But I think that if you look at these businesses, and I'm sure you have looked at these kinds of businesses, it's an overwhelming situation where you've got one key person or two key people, and they're getting checks from people on job sites saying, "Hey, this part isn't right," and they're dealing with all this stuff, and it falls through the cracks. When you encounter a situation like that, where do you begin to reduce the overwhelm factor, get things more organized, and businesslike, and heading into some kind of a framework?

John Jantsch: 20:17

Well, my mantra has always been that marketing as a system. And pretty much any way, shape, and form in which your business comes into contact with a prospect or a customer, you're performing a marketing function. So, for us that marketing sales service is all really one thing, and we have to actually figure out ways to start building processes to make sure that people have a great customer experience. But it really starts with just analyzing what would a customer's goals be at each stage of the customer journey, what would their questions be? So, we start anticipating that. Part of the challenge, and I know that you mentioned the overwhelm word, and it's increasingly getting harder to staff organizations, but part of it is anticipating

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what somebody would expect, what would make a great experience, and start building those systems so that you are not just completely reacting at all times.

Roger Dooley: 21:07

Now, speaking of overwhelm, later in the book, you talk about digital presence, and digital activities, and websites and inquiries and social media and such, that seems to be an area where not even just contractors, but every business, even at any size, is experiencing overwhelmed because you've got all these social media channels, you've got, obviously, your website, you've got changes going on, you've got the need to transform your processes, do a better job digitally. Hopefully, many companies are well along that path now, but there are certainly some that still haven't begun to improve. How do you cope with that digital overwhelmed and say, okay, [unintelligible][21:40] we get focused and say, we don't have to do TikTok, maybe, or we should be on TikTok?

John Jantsch: 21:45

Well, you use the word focus but everything that we do in those first three steps is all about getting them to narrow their attention, narrow their focus, get the right message of problem-solving in front of the right people, and then what that ultimately allows us to do is it informs what not to do. If we're going to work with our top 20% of our best customers, maybe we don't need to be on social media at all. Again, I'm not suggesting that that's universally applicable, but I think it could be for certain kinds of businesses. I work with consultants and trained consultants as part of the duct tape marketing consultant network, a lot of them are solopreneurs that really have a very nice business and really no more objective than having 8 or 10 clients at a time because we do almost like an outsource CM model. And

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yet, they're getting on all these platforms with the hope of getting in front of 1000s of people, they just need 4 more clients. Maybe they should put all their attention on going to a couple of networking events, instead of worrying about TikTok or other things. And so, when you develop strategy from the framework that I present in "The Ultimate Marketing Media", I think it informs what you should be focusing on, and it really helps you identify the priorities, so you can stick to what's going to be effective.

Roger Dooley: 22:55

Yeah. It reminds me a bit of Gabe Weinberg's strategy. He wrote a book called "Traction" which lists 26 different ways that you can grow, but then also it says you should focus on the one that works for you, not try and do all of them. Which is a trap we all fall into. The new shiny thing comes along and "Well, man, I'm on LinkedIn, and Facebook and Twitter. And holy cow! Now there is TikTok or Pinterest. Nan, I should be on that because I hear about all these people getting business that way." You really have to decide.

John Jantsch: 23:20

It comes from that very first thing I think I mentioned, trying to be all things to all people. That's what leads people to say I need to be in all places [unintelligible][23:29] all people. It's actually very stress relieving to businesses when I can get them to realize they actually should be doing less instead of more.

Roger Dooley: 23:37

Is there anything else, any other advice, John, that you'd have for businesses, [unintelligible][23:42] smaller businesses, but really of any size?

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John Jantsch: 23:44

The advice that I've been giving for years if somebody says what's one thing people could do, I always default to this, and that is really do this exercise to figure out who your most profitable customers are (and maybe they're the ones that are referring business to you today, as well) and really sit down and talk to them. Make it a habit quarterly or maybe even more than that to start talking, not just about how you're doing or what you could do for them, but what else are they not getting? How could you think in terms of this idea of scaling with them? How could you think in terms of growing with them? When you get very laser-focused on serving this top 20% of your clients, it will help inform what's the next product or the next service offering that you should bring to those people. Because when you've got a great working relationship with somebody, they already trust you, it is much easier to work with them in ways that are far more profitable than it is to go out and try to build a new division of your company and go out and get new clients. So, that's really my biggest advice, get closer and closer to your ideal customer.

Roger Dooley: 24:45

Yeah. Such great advice, John, and it makes me think of the arborist or the tree company that you're talking about. And clearly, they are focused on trees, and most companies like that are. If you [unintelligible][24:55] trucks, [unintelligible][24:56] people or services, they are focused on maintaining trees, and cutting them down, maybe planting them too. But if they have a reputation for being very reliable, for showing up on time, for being responsive, having people who clean up when they're done and don't leave the yard looking a mess, clearly, there would be demand for landscaping services that would be very complementary that to their business. But I

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think often too, we don't think that. We think "Well, hey, we're in the tree business, man. My guys know nothing about landscaping. That's a totally different business." From the client standpoint though, it's not a totally different business. You've got these big living things and the smaller living things, they're all to make the exterior of the house look good. It's pretty much the same area. And if you can extend what is already a good reputation in one area into a new area of endeavor, then, by all means, it could make a lot of sense.

John Jantsch: 25:46

Absolutely.

Roger Dooley: 25:47

John, how can people find you and your ideas?

John Jantsch: 25:49

Sure. So, pretty much everything I've been writing about and doing you can find at ducttapemarketing.com. Now I have a special website just for the ultimate marketing engine. And guess what? It's

theultimatemarketingengine.com. And when you go there, depending upon when you're listening to this, if you go there prior to September 21, you're going to see an offer to get a free companion course. So, just click on that link, it'll tell you how to get our six video course with worksheets and resources attached if you preorder a copy of "The Ultimate Marketing Engine". So, you can preorder that copy, it'll be shipped to you in September, but you can start consuming the material in the course right away when you do that.

Roger Dooley: 26:29

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Awesome. We will link to all of those places and anything else we talked about on the show notes page at rogerdooley.com/podcast. John, thanks for being on the show.

John Jantsch: 26:39

Oh, my pleasure.

Outro: 26:40

Thank you for tuning in to Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's books, articles, videos, and resources, the best starting point is rogerdooley.com. To check availability for a game-changing keynote or workshop in person or virtual, visit rogerdooley.com

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