

Inspirational Marketers Series

featuring Katy Martin, Service Wire

Piyush Saggi

Greetings, everyone. Welcome to this new episode of Inspirational Marketer series. I'm Piyush Saggi, co-founder and CEO of Parmonic, here in Atlanta.

I have a very special guest with me today, Katy Martin from Service Wire. Katy, thank you for joining me. Please introduce yourself. Tell us a bit about what you do here at Service Wire.

Katy Martin

Yeah, thank you. It is a pleasure to share my story with you guys. I am Katy Martin, I'm with Service Wire company, we are a wire and cable manufacturer across the U.S. We have a location in West Virginia where I'm located and Houston, Texas, and Phoenix, Arizona. And I've been with the company for about three and a half years as a content marketing associate.

Piyush Saggi

Very good. Thank you, Katy. I have a couple fun questions I want to ask you before we talk about the more serious stuff here. So-

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

Tell me a little about your personal journey, where did you grow up? and how did you get to where you are?

Katy Martin

So, I think my personal journey is a little bit different than what you might expect from someone who is in marketing. I've lived in Huntington, west Virginia, my entire life. And I started at Marshall university, which is the local college, right out of high school.

I didn't really know exactly what I wanted to do, so I pursued public relations. So how do I end up in PR and marketing? I did that for a little while, I graduated, I went into a PR medical program and I was like, " Oh, this isn't for me." And I ended up getting my MBA.

So a lot of that is just, didn't know what I wanted to do, loved to learn, loved to try new things. And when I finished in December of 2017 in grad school, I was working full time in nonprofit, in program management, where we had to research topics about blindness, share resources for people.

So it is a very untraditional path. But right in 2018, the market was booming. Everybody was doing really well, jobs were hiring a lot of people, unemployment was really low.

But funding for nonprofit or at least in my industry was very difficult to acquire at this point in time. And unfortunately, I was laid off right out of my first job out of school.

And it gave me a great opportunity to reflect and see what do I really want to do with my life. What industry am I interested in? What type of job? And I was fortunate enough to stumble upon content marketing at Service Wire company.

And so, I was hired in December of 2018 and it was like the light at the end of the tunnel where I was like, "Okay girl, we're back on track." And so professionally, I was like, right where I thought I wanted to be.

And then personally that same time, tying into some of my favorite movie quotes, my father and I, for the last 15 years, we've done musical Christmas lights that we program on the computer and deck the halls, which is an early two thousands movie with Danny DeVito.

That is where their two neighbors compete. And so that instilled that sense of competition and wanting to learn and my love for content marketing and storytelling. And I think that has really made me very well rounded to be in content marketing, such a new and evolving field.

Piyush Saggi

That is such a fascinating story there. And in that hobby you share of programming Christmas lights.

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

I'm a geek at heart. So that is super cool.

Katy Martin

Yeah. Thank you.

Piyush Saggi

What is your favorite snack?

Katy Martin

So again, I love movies, I like eat and popcorn, right? So again, I think a lot of it is just finding ways to take things that are culturally relevant and fun and making them applicable to any part of your marketing journey, right?

Piyush Saggi

That is fabulous. So what is your favorite movie?

Katy Martin

So, favorite movie? I would have to go with Star Wars. Yeah, I love the original trilogy of episodes four, five and six. I am not as partial to the remakes or the newer movies, but, Hey, I'm loving that Rogue One, that is a TV show.

But all the spinoffs of that is what I really like to do.

Piyush Saggi

That is great. Very good. Thank you for sharing that. It is good to understand beyond who you are as a professional, who you are as a person.

So thank you for sharing those little tidbits about yourself. Let's segue into your current role, as well as what Service Wire company is doing.

What is your perspective on... What are the big goals you all have as an organization, from a marketing perspective?

Katy Martin

So we live in the B2B world, which is a lot different from B2C. But a lot of our customers really expect that same level of service, but we're often these smaller, more nimble marketing groups.

So we have to find ways, our number one goal is finding ways to enhance our marketing capabilities, maximize our return. So whether that is finding a great tool that works for us, whether that is hiring someone, that maybe is a jack of all trades or a very specific generalist, or can do something we've never been able to tackle before.

It is finding the right mix of assets and expenses and maximizing our output, while also juggling that harsh balance between how do we grow from this B2B world to this B2C expectation and finding things to just fit that gap.

Piyush Saggi

What is the... That is fascinating. What is the biggest schism you see there? What is the biggest difference you see between how one market to the two audiences as B2B versus B2C?

Katy Martin

Well, so for us, a lot of the times, we sell through electrical distribution. So we have to market to someone who then goes and sells our product to the person who actually may or may not be the interest of that product.

We have to have the challenge of being able to tell a story to someone who sells our product, someone who would specify our product at the engineer level, someone who would install our product at the contractor, and then even someone who would start the project, whether it is like a data center or a steel mill or a pop and paper facility at that end user level.

We have to be able to talk to all of those audiences instead of talking to understanding a handful of personas that maybe purchase our product and that B2B or B2C world that most people are accustomed to.

Piyush Saggi

Sounds like there is multiple layers involved between you and the eventual end user of the product there.

Katy Martin

Right. Exactly.

Piyush Saggi

Okay. Very good. Let's segue through the next question then, which is, what role do videos and webinars play in your marketing mix in your marketing plan?

Katy Martin

So just like I was saying before, we have to find ways to connect that. Like, what is culturally relevant? What are people interested in? How can we maximize our smaller team and still appeal to people?

And I don't know anyone in any marketing, whatever industry you're in that doesn't have webinars or videos is part of their strategy. Since, we're living

in post pandemic era where everybody did everything digitally for two years.

But for Service Wire specifically, we've always done webinars, but what we've really focused on by partnering with Parmonic is finding a way to let that content live beyond that one live session.

Again, we're a small team and we talk to a bunch of different people and that is what is so important is we convey that message in multiple different ways. And by using these on-demand webinars that we've implemented this year, we can make that one piece of content live well beyond the one day in time at the hour that we did it.

So that our sales team can again, we can maximize that capability, enhance our service for our customers, and just really see that return on being an educational leader in our industry.

Piyush Saggi

That is fascinating. I love your catch phrase there, of enhancing the activities, maximizing the outputs, that really captures it so well.

Let's dig a little deeper into your video and webinar program as part of your marketing mix. Let's say, if you can share more about... How do you use Parmonic from end to end?

Katy Martin

Right. So we actually work a little bit of developing a trailer for our piece, so that we have... We have the live session that we promote with select customers, we have that.

And then once we do the recording, we throw it into Parmonic and we make this trailer that teases, why you should watch it if you signed up, but didn't attend the live session or maybe if it didn't catch your eye the first time around and you didn't sign up, how can we encourage you to increase repeatability of that content?

So we'll do a trailer that we mix together, usually about a minute and a half, teasing people what they can expect to learn from our session. And then, we do a gated piece of content where you surrender that valuable information that every marketer wants to have in order...

In return, you get these snackable size clips that we've pulled together from our full recording, using the Parmonic tool. So, my biggest thing with this is...

I don't know very many people who are willing to give you 45 minutes to an hour of their life anymore to watch a webinar. But a lot of people would be interested in these one, two, three minute long snackable clips about a specific topic that they can reference as they need it, or as they have time in their day or through a couple weeks.

And this helps us again, just reuse that content at the level that might be very specific to a challenge that a customer is facing.

Piyush Saggi

That is fabulous. The trailer that you mentioned that you use, the minute and half. Which channels do you typically deploy the trailer on? Is it email? Is it web? Is it social?

Is it elsewhere?

Katy Martin

So, we do a combination. We first send out an email to all of our customers that links to this video, so that we can just get it out there to help them promote it. Because again, we like to be protected with some of our information, we want it to be for our customers and not our competitors when we can and we don't want them to steal our secrets, right?

So we'll send it out to an email list that is predetermined by our sales team, teasing that video where you can click into it and go to a gated landing page where you can watch the full trailer.

Again, it is only about a minute, minute and a half, but you can watch the full trailer on our custom landing page.

Piyush Saggi

I see. Okay. And I guess, that in your industry email probably is one of the most important channels to target people, communicate with people.

Is that right? How does email and social media work with each other for the audience that you are targeting?

Katy Martin

Right. So email is how we just directly talk to our customers. Because again, we have so many, we have this four or five different segmented groups that we have to write messages that appeals to all of them or if we wanted to target...

But for our Parmonics, since it is such a valuable resource for us, we try to appeal to everybody. Oh, can you hear me?

Piyush Saggi

Yes. I can hear you, Katy.

Katy Martin

Oh, sorry.

Piyush Saggi

Yeah.

Katy Martin

Sorry. I just got a message that cut out. But with our Parmonic messaging, we try to make that appeal to everybody. And email is a great way for us to send that out. But social media is a little trickier for us because again, we don't sell direct to the customer, we sell through electrical distribution.

So pushing some of these sales-driven webinar posts on LinkedIn is a little bit trickier for us. Instead, the value for our Parmonic videos that we have planned to implement is those educational led pieces about why our product has an advantage over certain products and certain applications.

Or maybe just to help people understand the industry because let's be honest, not very many people are talking about low voltage, copper wiring cable in their spare time, or maybe even know how it is used in a still mill, a data center, a wastewater treatment plant.

And we want to just help our customers and the people who then represent us feel very knowledgeable about that subject.

Piyush Saggi

Right. That is great. And you've talked a bit about Parmonic in terms of what it has been doing for you. Can you elaborate a little more on what impact it has had for you, your team, your brand, overall?

Katy Martin

So we're pretty new to Parmonic, this is the first year that we've had it. But so far we've had three very successful webinars that we've hosted through

them. But I think the big impact for us is it has helped us again, improve that longevity or the life cycle of that content that we develop.

We spend so much time in writing the outline, putting together presentation, promoting this live session. And Parmonic is a quick and easy tool that allows us to repurpose that for an on- demand session or break it out into different topical elements and circulate it back out in an email.

It is just such an easy to use thing that just... Again, going back to it, enhances our capabilities that we've already planned and we've already established and maximizing the output in a low cost solution.

Piyush Saggi

Great. Thank you for sharing that. It almost reminds me of this adage that sometimes it is better to invest more in winning tactics and webinars.

You've been doing them for a while. It seems like it is a winning tactic and by investing a little more in that you can actually make that yield even bigger results.

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

And, so thank you for sharing that. My last question for you, Katy, is what are your three big tips for other marketers? And you're a storyteller by profession as well as-

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

In terms of our conversation here today. So, three tips and then how can every one of us become a better storyteller?

Katy Martin

Yeah. So again, you've already stole my first tip, right? So rounding it all back around from my Christmas light story, I think a good tip for any content marketer is you always need to be ready to tell a story quickly, about yourself, about your profession or about the brand or company that you represent.

You have to frame that in it like your elevator speech, right? You have to frame that for the customer to make them interested and want to learn

more. We compete with so many different things and so many different mediums that you have to have something unique that catches people's attention quickly.

So always be ready to tell your story. The second tip I would have is always have built-in flexibility with your plans. Just like I referenced, my career didn't start out the way that I would've planned it or expected.

But with this built-in flexibility that I've put into my life, into my work, you can navigate around these challenges and have pieces that really stand out and live on longer than you maybe initially planned and get even more return on your investment.

And the last tip I'll everybody with is just always keep learning. No marketer can finish school, get into a job, change jobs and just stay right where they are.

You have to be willing to research, see what is out there, learn more about the industry, learn more of what your customers are looking for. And the case with me in Parmonic, I set in on a demo call where they were just talking about what is new in the industry?

What are customers looking for? And one of the suggestions, and that was snackable video. I would've... We think of TikTok and Instagram stories and all this stuff in this B2C commercial world.

And if you're not willing to stay up to date on that and keep learning and jump in on these calls that you might not have time for. In my case, I would've never found this Parmonic tool that we've found to be so useful.

Piyush Saggi

That is fascinating. Thanks for sharing that. I think that applies so much both to our roles as marketers, as well as just for all of us professionals. There is constant learning, the world is changing so fast that-

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

We can no longer just say, "I've gone to grad school. I'm done with my education."

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

Education is lifelong. Katy, thank you very much. I'm really grateful for the time you spent today. Thank you for being a Parmonic user and customer and for sharing all these great insights with the people who will be watching some portion of this as a snackable byte sized segment.

Katy Martin

Right.

Piyush Saggi

Thank you very much.

Katy Martin

You're welcome. Thank you.