

Local Small Business Marketing Automation for Generating Sales



Jon Zack
Founder & CEO

CEOCFO: *Mr. Zack, what is the basic concept behind EggZack?*

Mr. Zack: The goal of EggZack is to help small businesses compete in the new digital age. Smaller companies have a real problem making the transition. In my opinion, it is a revolutionary change. It is not just that the world has gone digital; things have completely changed in the marketplace and the smaller service companies have not been able to effectively address the twelve point four million small businesses that EggZack has chosen to target. We are here to help small business over this digital hurdle and get more sales. Period.

CEOCFO: *Helping get more sales and helping with services sounds good. What does it mean day to day? What are you actually doing for and with your clients?*

Mr. Zack: Let me illustrate the big difference. What we have grown used to for the last eighty to hundred years is what I call “one shot” marketing. We would act, and generally speaking, we would expect a result. It was very rare that we did something thinking long term or strategically. Some larger companies (but for the most part, I am speaking of the smaller ones), ran a print ad or offered a coupon or other promotion – that was the extent of their marketing efforts and they expected a return. In the digital revolution, how we do business with people has changed, given that people now want to be more informed. Therefore, we need to stop advertising and start informing. The second thing is once they are informed and have the knowledge to make a decision, they need to be able to act on it 24/7 and make a transaction whenever best suits them. That is a big change from small business of the past – “one shot” marketing and adhering to “store hours” have gone the way of the dinosaur. EggZack’s solution is to automate all of their marketing, because marketing itself on the Internet is completely fragmented. There is no one thing that works for any one individual or one consumer base. Therefore, you need to manage a whole slew of different types of things and about 8 different types of marketing. Therefore, the first thing that we do is automate all of that into one system. It is a patented system that allows with just one single post by them, the updating and management of their website, their email marketing, their social media, their local search, their search engines, their blog and their directories. We automate all of the channels they need to get in front of the consumer. The second thing is, once we get their customers interested in our clients, we make it really convenient for them, the consumer, to transact with them. Whether that is an order from their online menu, a product for pick up or a local delivery, whether it is to register for a class or to make a reservation for a table at the restaurant, to do a prepaid deal; whatever the transaction, we integrate it with our system. We automate it all with the marketing so that the consumer, when interested, can buy 24/7 and do business around the clock. That is what we do as a whole with this system. As we like to say, it is an automated sales and marketing system designed specifically for local business doing their business in a twenty mile radius of their location.

CEOCFO: *What were the biggest challenges in putting together all of the components?*

Mr. Zack: I have been an internet entrepreneur since 1989. I was one of the first eCommerce, even before the web was even around. We were selling stuff online in bulletin boards and using CompuServe and GENie. Then in 1994, I created one of the first web agencies. We pioneered that whole model before the company was acquired. The biggest challenge was figuring out how to integrate all of this stuff that is constantly fragmenting. In the beginning, the goal was to build a website, then it was to be found on search engines and then it was, “you need to be found on blogs, then you better email

market, then hit social media,” which really was Facebook. Lastly, it became Facebook and Twitter and everything else. Therefore, it was integrating all of those disparate and fragmented pieces of marketing, if you will, and placing it where consumers are into one system. However, the biggest challenge in the industry is how to get people to make major changes and turn “one shot” marketing into a marketing process, which is really what digital is all about. It is not a one shot thing. You have to build a process, and without doing that you are lost. That is why many small businesses tried to do something and when it did not work they moved on. However, that is not how it works now. Large companies and the well-run medium sized companies get the marketing process. It has always been a process. Therefore, switching to digital was just figuring out what to do. With the small businesses, it was always about that one shot. They did it, it was done and then they reaped the rewards or not. In this, the process had to get changed. We are in the midst of a revolution, and we are a part of that revolution, we are leading that revolution, but we did not invent it. The internet invented that. You have to get people to change their habits. In small businesses that is extremely difficult. I do not mean that in a bad way, but they are leveraging what they have been doing and that is not going to help these small businesses long term. In fact, it is not going to help them short term either. Therefore, we had to change their habits. That was their biggest thing; how to go in, in a small business that has no time, no resources, is always taxed for something, and get them to say, “I need to invest and commit.” How do we do that on a large scale? That was our biggest challenge. It took us a long time because the market was not ready for it. Therefore, we just had to be patient and pounce when we could.

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CEOCFO: *What has changed? Why is it working now? Where are you in the process?*

Mr. Zack: We are still early in this process, but we are early enough that we are not only getting the early adopters, we are getting the early movers. We have almost always gotten the early adopters. What really changed is that people have gone through two cycles, if you will. They have the “do this now” one shot thing. Get a website. Do the blog. Do the email. They kept going through all of these iterations and then suddenly they realized that, “nothing is working and someone is taking my business and it is online.” Therefore, what really changed was the conversation; that people understood it was not one thing, there were no silver bullets or one hit wonders and that they needed to change that. Therefore, when we went in and told people in less than four minutes, “here is what has changed, you need to inform not advertise, you need to make it convenient for them to transact 24/7 and you need to keep your existing customers well informed and make it even easier for them to do business with you,” they said, “I get it! I get it as a consumer.” Therefore, they as a consumer transitioned to the digital world in a full capacity. Amazon did that, Google did that. As a consumer they understood it. We just had to change it to the business side of it and say, “Now you need to take advantage of that and no, you do not have to be Google or Amazon to do that. You can do that as yourself.” I think that is really where the conversation changed. That, and the other one was their advisors who had been advising them on what they know, which is, say, traditional whether it is online or not, the one shot marketing. They started seeing, “This is not working. We need to make the transition.” Therefore, the combinations of the two moving in lockstep or, let us say, close to each other in lockstep, really made the big difference. The market matured. Not that it is a mature market, but it grew up, if you will.

CEOCFO: *How do you help your clients over and above providing the technical means? Do you help them with strategy? What is the full offering?*

Mr. Zack: The full offering is that we give them the total solution. Rather than giving them tools, which is what many of our competitors do, or even a bunch of tools, we say, “this is how it is done. If you want to buy into our playbook this is what you get.” We give you options in the playbook, but not a lot. That is because it is such a comprehensive and a complex process to market online we did not want to give them tools. What we said is, “We know what is best for you at this point. You might need more than this later, but if you are willing to get started and do it well and succeed with it you need to follow these rules.” These are not our rules. These are, let us say, best practice; standard, that anyone who knows what they are doing in our space will say, “Yes, these are things you need to do.” Therefore, by saying, “We have got you covered,” and we automated it, we just need to do one thing. You post information and you will see what works. That is exactly what they are used to. Do the one shot and we will automate everything else. Therefore, because we are a SaaS model; Software as a Service, we are constantly upgrading and adding to our products. Therefore, when new things are important, like Foursquare for example is becoming more important, we made sure we integrated with Foursquare. We knew about them for a long time. We liked the company. We did not know how it fit in for our customers, nor did they. However, now we see how it fits in. Therefore, we put it in. They do not pay us anything for that. That is included in our software; our subscription. Therefore, we are constantly looking out for our customers. The biggest thing we have done is said, “Look, you do not have to think about this. Just do what we ask you to do. You can add your own flavor to it. You can

pick choices, but they are all within the parameters. We are going to make this easy for you.” Like before, we did the thinking and the strategy for them, but they did not really have to understand it as much. If they want to they can and they can even do more. However, we have taken that away from them, so they can focus on running their business and just see what works and do more of it. I think that is the biggest thing. In addition to that we will set them up properly. Unlike many companies who provide tools instead of a whole automated solution, we actually will get them set up. We will create their website for them. We will set up all of their social media, their blogs, all of that stuff; that digital footprint which is important that most of these people do not have. It is an arduous process. It is a lot of manual. We will actually do that for them. We set it up once and set it up right. Then, they just need our system to automate all of that and they really just need to post the information to keep their customers informed. That is it.

CEOCFO: *Do you see a trend in general for companies wanting more of a solution and not the tools?*

Mr. Zack: Absolutely. They do not have the time. They do not have the experience, for example, to say, “Should I do email marketing or should I do a blog.” You need to do both. When you look at digital marketing; digital marketing is like a puzzle. If you move one piece you could see the picture, but you are missing the interconnection. For example, Google likes when you have a YouTube video, but they also like when you take that YouTube video and you put it on your website, because that promotes YouTube. Therefore, they will rank you higher. Google also likes it when you update a blog. Therefore, if you are not updating your blog and your website, integrating your YouTube video on your website, all interrelated, you are losing major points in their search. That is just one area. If you are not sending out an email to people and they missed you on socials, no matter how social they actual are or using social networks, the email is always going to come in and they have to do something with it. Therefore, you cannot just do email or just do social and say, “I am going to do Facebook because I like it, not LinkedIn,” that is a big change for some people. “I am not a big LinkedIn person.” That is fine, but I am and I am your consumer. Therefore, if you have these tools to do these things you are going to spend a lot of time and it is very complex. In fact, most agencies are not very good at doing all of it, because the benefits to the ROI are sometimes very small on each thing; two percent here and two percent there. Your real value comes when you integrate all of them. They bump automatically. However, more importantly you are getting all of these little one and two percent increases across many, many different places. Therefore, that automation and that solution coming together is very, very important, again, for the small business. Large businesses have people who focus on, let us say, just Facebook or a team or even a medium company, so they can put some more resources and energy behind that. The smaller businesses; companies with twenty-five or even thirty or less employees, they just do not have the resources to figure it out. They also do not have the time or the money that it would take. Therefore, they need to do something. We are the first three steps in any small company; getting them started, helping them grow and helping them maintain. If they go beyond that, that is good! We helped them graduate to a small, medium sized company or a company that has really, really got their market down. If they graduate on to different tools or modules then great! We have done our job.

CEOCFO: *What has precipitated the flurry of interest that you are receiving?*

Mr. Zack: People are starting to understand that the solution is very, very important, number one. There are many people who are trying to bring solutions to their customers, so that they get the “reseller” or their part in the digital marketing pie. A local printing company; newspapers for example, local media, publishers, the guys who are doing websites, or the guys who are doing search engine optimization that is what they do. They are also realizing that yes, I am helping these people with digital marketing, but I am only doing a part of it and these small businesses are not either staying with us or they need more. Up until now they have been selling products that have really enriched other people. They might help their customers a little bit; again, a piece of the puzzle, but not the whole puzzle. However, they really did not help them or their customer dramatically. In fact, some of it was semi effective, if not very mildly effective. Therefore, ROI was not there. However, for them as businesses trying to help these people in their local markets, which they are doing in other capacities, they did not have anything that gave them a sustainable product or sustainable living. That is probably the biggest thing that we have given them; that we now can offer them a product or a solution that they can actually make money on. In fact, we encourage them. Therefore, if you are a website developing company and customers want a website for less than five thousand dollars, we have an incredible package so that they can keep a nice chunk of the money and create a residual income for themselves, plus upgrade services or additional services that bolster what they do. Therefore, by helping the local marketing or publisher or whatever, we are helping, not only their customer, but we are helping them get a piece of the digital pie in a sustainable and evergreen way for them from a money standpoint. That has been where we see a big uptick. It is that they are looking for their piece, but it is not much different than the frustration that the consumers have had; their clients, the local business and the business consumer. Therefore, that flurry is coming from people saying, “This is incredible! We have been thinking about solving this problem, but you have taken it to the nth degree and you have allowed for a nice living for us and not cannibalizing our business. In fact, you are enriching our business and our customers and their client’s experience!” Therefore, that is where we are seeing a huge uptick.

CEOCFO: *What might be different in a year down the road at EggZack?*

Mr. Zack: That is a good question! I could tell you what I believe. We believe that out of all the eight startups that I have done; I have always believed in getting to a certain level and we are realistic and still optimistic that this is the one company that I have ever looked at to, no matter how hard it got or how early we got, that we get to a billion dollars. It has become more evident that our business plan in 2007 is going to make us one of those companies. We just had to bide our time. I think that what is going to change dramatically is that we are going to go from nineteen people and relatively unknown; meaning that we are known in certain markets, that I think we will become an early household name, both to consumers and to local businesses and local partners. I think that the one area that we have looked to help was the local publishers. We are big fans and big supporters of the local media, because they bring everyone together and we have always wanted to help them to really create a great business model and we think that they are not doing that. Obviously, they have been hit hard, but I do not think they are doing it in a way that is sustainable and rewarding for them and their community. I think we can solve that problem. In fact, we know that we can. For me, that would be a personal satisfaction. That is because I really do believe in local media, the publications and so forth and helping that would really grow our communities a lot stronger. We are here to make a lot of money, but we also want to help local communities become important to local people and local businesses. Therefore, I think we will be on the edge of a major breakout by 2015. In New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and the East Coast and the Mid Atlantic; we are already starting to spread there. We will start becoming, not just a national company, but a nationally recognized company in its early stages. That is what I believe is going to happen in 2015, 2016.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine



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