

June 16, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

Socially Present was birthed out of the desire to make a difference in the world. While my father was a painter, mother cleaned homes and both of them worked incredibly long hours to provide for myself and 5 other siblings. I saw the challenges they faced trying to run their business while they continually strived to make their children's lives better. Their biggest challenges were keeping up with a continually changing marketplace and the rapid increase of technology. This was what drove me to study business and start a company that's mission is to help companies succeed.

Their story echoes throughout the world and many companies at many different stages face the same challenges. The world is changing and technology is growing, and they are finding it more and more difficult to communicate with clarity to their customers. They follow the trends that result in more work and produce the same results of being one step behind. In addition to that, the humanity of shaking someone's hand you trust and doing business with people you know is thrown out and all that is left is a sterile web presence that does nothing to communicate how you are different than the next person.

Our mission at Socially Present is to combine the strengths of timeless values with the power of these new forms of communication. We take a timeless approach to modern marketing and build a strategic marketing and sales process that builds trust and strengthens our clients' relationship with their customer at every stage. Our strategic plans and creative services are designed with the simple principle that people are more important than products, and relationships are more valuable than revenue. We believe in making profit and don't apologize for wanting success, but we also believe it is best achieved when the focus is on clarity and building strong relationships. The customer is always worth more than the one time sale.

When I first launched Socially Present over 6 years ago, there were several obstacles I ran into but also several resources that helped me get started. The main obstacle was a lack of organized information and the complexity of putting together a business plan. Business is multi-dimensional, and I work with aspiring entrepreneurs all the time who seem to be missing one of the major pieces of information they need for their business. Some struggle with clarity in their messaging and marketing. Others lack understanding on how to put together proper financials. Managing human resources seems to be a rising issue as well. These are just a few of the many facets of business that entrepreneurs have to understand and work through on a daily basis. Seeing that need, we launched our own program called "Small Town Big Idea" to

help budding entrepreneurs develop their idea to a place where it is ready to launch. Chris Wooldridge from the Kentucky Small Business Development Center has been helping our organizing further develop this program into something that will help address this need. It is definitely a program that I wish existed or I had known about when I was just starting.

As far as resources, I would say the greatest for me was having a mentor. I was fortunate enough to have a personal mentor that helped me navigate through many tough decisions and provide encouragement along the way. Looking back, this was probably the greatest contributor to my success, and I realize now how rare it is. There are so many people I see without access to a mentor. Many public organizations are trying to fill this gap, but it appears they are overburdened with demand. I would love to see their time multiplied by setting up a mentor program that engages seasoned local business owners and pairs them with budding entrepreneurs.

I was fortunate enough to start our business without going into debt. I know much of that was the type of business I launched, but I would argue that knowledge is more valuable than giving away money. Loans and grants are very much needed for some startups, and I don't argue those are a valuable resource, but if people are not taught how to run a profitable business it will only result in more businesses shutting down a couple years in. I believe the best thing we can do to help small businesses is to give them more access to great minds.

Sincerely,

Jonas Neihoff
President
Socially Present