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Elle: Dan is back — and this time, she's all over AI for small business.

Dan MacInnis: I'm Dan MacInnis, and I did a podcast for about 11 years, almost 15 years ago. But I've jumped back into the recording studio because what I've found is small businesses are now grappling with another change, and that is AI. So this podcast is about how you leverage AI for small business marketing, what you need to know, and how you get the best brains in the room, making sure that one of them is yours. So I started with AI, oh, I think it was April last year, and it was over the Easter break, and I was really just playing with ChatGPT.

I was doing the usual things like you might do, putting in where I was going to plan [00:01:00] my next holiday, um, you know, asking it questions, researching, and doing the usual things like taking a draft of something I've written and trying to make it sound better. And over that experiment of those four days, I went from understanding how to use ChatGPT from a resource of knowledge to how to customise it to make it like another employee for my business.

And I, I imagine that a lot of you out there are playing with lots of tools and trying to work out how this could be a point of leverage for your business. And that's what I encourage you to do., Taking what you do in your business and seeing how these tools cannot replace [00:02:00] you, but it's actually a new way of thinking.

It's low-level, a way of trying to use the tools to improve your decision-making and take away some of those tasks, sure, that are low-level, to be able to do some more high-level strategic thinking. So it's about thinking about how you work with AI, not just creating more of what they call AI slop, which is just more content, just more output.

And I know it's tempting to do that, but this is a really powerful shift in the way, um, people work, and particularly for small businesses. It now gives you the ability to be an expert in so many areas because it can take over lots of different tasks that you're perhaps doing manually or outsourcing. But without having a

harness on that, [00:03:00] um, on whichever tool you're using, and without customising it, it really isn't going to serve your business as well as perhaps it could.

So let's talk about the first thing that I would do. Um, I would definitely spend a weekend just playing with it if you've never played with ChatGPT before, or Claude or Copilot. Perhaps use all of them and just ask it questions. Um, just play. I think that that's the key thing. After you've done that for one weekend, I think the next thing is to try and customise it so that it's going to be useful for you.

And so what does that mean? In each of the different tools, there's an area of personalisation. Whenever you're in doubt, just ask the tool and it'll show you where it is. And what I would encourage you to do is [00:04:00] ask it to interview you so that you can customise it for the best use for your business. And it'll ask you things about, you know, what your business is about, how you work, um, who your ideal customer is, what makes your brand different to other brands.

And the reason that you wanna do that is that if you can upload that into the personalised section of the tool, and it doesn't matter which tool, that will help you with the output tenfold, in that instead of providing just general advice, all of a sudden it starts to fit you like a tailored suit. It starts to recommend things that are much more relevant.

It will, um, give you, I guess, a little insight into how powerful this new platform is, and [00:05:00] then you can start to harness it to do much better workflows, outputs, et cetera. So first play, then customise, and then the next thing we're talk about in, in podcast two is how to build skills and workflows that will streamline how you work