



## **BRAND SECRETS AND STRATEGIES PODCAST #70**

Hello and thank you for joining us today. This is the Brand Secrets and Strategies Podcast #70

Welcome to the Brand Secrets and Strategies podcast where the focus is on empowering brands and raising the bar.

I'm your host Dan Lohman. This weekly show is dedicated to getting your brand on the shelf and keeping it there.

Get ready to learn actionable insights and strategic solutions to grow your brand and save you valuable time and money.

**LETS ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES AND GET STARTED!**

Dan: Welcome. Thank you for listening. I really appreciate you tuning in. This podcast is about you and it's for you. I'm working hard to provide more actionable insights and strategic solutions to help you get your brand on more retail shelves and into the hands of more shoppers. Plus easy to use and adopt strategies to get you an equal seat at the table with the big brands. All of this in addition to interviews with leading industry thought leaders.



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Today's episode is about an innovative new platform. Let me frame our conversation first.

The way consumers buy products has changed dramatically in the last couple of years. Savvy brands need to be creative. They need to think of different ways to get their product in front of current and future shoppers. One of the best strategies is for brands to adopt an online strategy. We've talked about this a lot in different episodes. A strong online strategy is a great way to get your product in front of more consumers. More importantly, it's also a fantastic way to give you more runway, to help you fuel future growth in traditional brick and mortar stores. And the best part is, this is an opportunity for small brands and startups to grab an equal share of voice with the big brands.

So what do I mean by that? This is an opportunity for you to get your product in front of shoppers, to get them to start talking about your product, and hopefully to get them to start asking for it wherever they shop. This is a unique opportunity for you to have your brand become relevant long before a consumer finds it on a traditional retailer's shelf. Leveling the playing field against the most sophisticated big brands in your category. Here's Jen and Jim with NatchCom.



Jen and Jim, thank you for coming on today. Can we start by you just sharing a little bit about yourself and your journey about where you're at currently with NatchCom. Jen can you start first?

Jen:

Sure. So my background is, I spent the majority of my career working at agencies, helping them grow their digital presence, start their digital groups, and help brands really connect to customers, whether that be through advertising or community engagement, you name it. About four years ago, I was introduced to the world of Amazon. I saw a ton of opportunity as it relates to the space. I saw a couple things, I think that are pretty relevant to where we are today. The first is that I saw that brands were really conceding control of their presence to third party sellers. There was this big disconnect between what a customer saw on Amazon versus what they saw on a brand's website. I thought that this was a big opportunity for marketers to get involved.

The second thing I saw was advertising was a huge opportunity for these brands. Again this was four years ago, so there wasn't a lot being done. Amazon had a limited play as it relates to Amazon. They were doing a little bit of sponsored product ads and headlines, but it really hadn't taken off. I saw that Amazon could be the next big Facebook. There was a real opportunity for brands, marketers to plan the space.

The third thing was there weren't a lot of people who were consulting or helping brands navigate the ecosystem. I made the decision to jump all in, and started working at an Amazon agency that focused on Amazon and digital advertising as a whole, so



searched social, and was introduced to Jim and a couple others in the natural product space. Heard about what they were doing, trying to connect these. Digital, trying to help them sell more online, direct to consumer. Over the course of I would say six months we all kind of agreed this was great idea and that we should launch NatchCom. We had a lot of success last year, the team asked me if I would come aboard as CEO and I jumped on it because there's just a ton of opportunity to help this community, a lot of great knowledge to share and there's really this void that NatchCom is currently filling in the space.

Dan: Appreciate that. Jim, could you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background?

Jim: Thanks for having me, Dan, first of all. Appreciate it.

My background is a little different. I actually spent 15, 16 years as a journalist, running around the world. I fell into branding and advertising and then ultimately for the past eight, or almost 10 years now, I've been in the natural organic space. I'm really most relevant to how NatchCom came about. I was a CEO of a company called Sir Richards Condom Company in the early 2010s. It was really a very special company. It caught a lot of people's attention and imagination. We quickly rolled out in two years from zero to about 10,000 stores. The takeaway from that, and I can now honestly say the roots of NatchCom go back to that, we were staring at 10,000 stores, UK, US, Canada, all the big players. We were having a damn hard time making money and really getting the turns and getting the profile and the



distribution fees and the middlemen and all the nips and tucks that just take away your profit.

It was hard. I think we were caught up in that time was really almost a shift in the industry that today is, I think people openly talking about, I was kind of experiencing it, which is that the cost to go to market in traditional brick and mortar has increased in the natural organic vertical. Meanwhile, the vertical continues to grow. The consequences of that is what motivated me for NatchCom, which is that if the food revolution is going to continue, if we're going to reinvent how we make our food, how we consume our food, how we buy and sell our food, in assuring that it really becomes mass rather than niche, we have to find a better way to allow these companies to survive.

Fortunately somebody created the internet along the way, and e-commerce, and there's really almost no question that companies that are going to market thoughtfully, aggressively online, on e-commerce are quickly seeing a better ROI and they're surviving. Companies that don't, that are really leading into what I call the traditional brick and mortar route, which still has its place, no question about it, still the big gorilla, but without that e-commerce piece and you're full on brick and mortar, you're going to have a much harder time. You're going to need a lot more capital and candidly, I think the company's survival is a lot more in question.

That's the roots of NatchCom. A group of us got together a few years ago, who really have been trying to hack different ways for



brands to do this. We came out with a platform, we tested that. We tried just different things. Ultimately, it led to NatchCom. I always described NatchCom as a eighth grade dance where you have the boys on one side and the girls on the other. That's essentially technology and the natural food industry on the other. We just saw an opportunity to pull it all together, put some music on, let everyone meet each other because together it's a perfect match.

Dan: It is. And I want to thank first of all Robby Vitrano for introducing me to you, and then you introducing me to Jen. I really appreciate that.

I agree with you 100 percent. A lot of people don't understand that retail really is a bloodsport. To your point, it's becoming even more difficult, especially for small brands. One of the things that I'm focused on is helping natural, small brands, healthier, better-for-you brands, get on more retailer shelves and in the hands of more shoppers. To your point, both of you, that's a lot more difficult today. I'm trying to change the equation from being in an ATM machine in the view of some retailers unfortunately, to become a value added resource. So we'll get to more of that in a little bit.

I loved the way that you framed this in terms of the eighth grade dance and how awkward this is and trying to bring the two different groups together. Actually, perhaps, we should back up a little bit and ask what is NatchCom, what does it mean, why is it



important, how is it relevant, and for anyone listening to this podcast, why should they be paying attention?

Jen: Sure. I mean, I can take that.

NatchCom really, as we kind of alluded to, really serves to fill this gap in educating the natural product industry in all things digital. Really enabling them to sell their products direct to consumer whether it be through their website, through Amazon, you name the platform. We're looking to provide them with education, the connections, networking opportunities, and consulting to really help them do that, enable them to sell more products online.

I was going to say, in terms of why folks should care, as Jim said, this is just the way of the world, right? Consumers are looking for products online. You want to make sure that you're discoverable. We want to make sure that these natural brands have a fighting chance in the market and are able to be profitable. Oftentimes we see that there's this shift from launching and starting to be successful through your brick and mortar path versus online. We're seeing this shift to online increasingly in the marketplace.

Dan: Absolutely, couldn't agree with you more. Kinda getting back to what I was saying to frame this, it is expensive. If you've got a strong story, no matter who the retailer is, and you can walk into another retailer and leverage it and say, look what I'm able to produce in this retailer, et cetera, that helps you get on retailer shelves. It helps you become more of a value add. More importantly, if you can leverage your social strategy and your



online strategy to help drive sales within any traditional retailer, that's a win-win.

From my perspective, it gives brands more runway, it's a lot less expensive to get up and running and to gain that runway. More importantly, they're able to really create a solid, strong, loyal base of enthusiastic shoppers that can then help leverage them to help them get their products online, get them in traditional retailers. Your thoughts, Jim?

Jim: I think you're spot on. It's the place for the early adopter which any young brand has to find. Not only do you get the early adopter, but you actually get an ROI. You can actually make money. We have case after case after case, cause it's kind of one of these things, we hung the flag out then, and all of a sudden all these companies are saying, that's what I'm doing or this is working for us. You are able to make money early on. Wild Zora, which is a great meat bar, Josh Taban and Zora his wife, up in Fort Collins, Colorado, has been very aggressive online. Every time I see Josh, it's just another tick up on Amazon online sales, and he's profitable. He's making money. He has a nice business, he's employing people, he can think about his products. He acquired a small company, made that profitable very quickly. This is small company stuff, too. This isn't big acquisitions. But he is smartly using digital to allow him to grow a company, like companies should frankly be grown.

Dan: Yes.



Jim: There's always the bars that come out and suddenly two years later they're in General Mills or whomever. It's an exciting new time for the category, for natural organic. It's almost back to the beginning when, you know, you had the Whole Foods and others hanging their shingles for these small manufacturers to come out and sell. That's almost where we are with the internet. You're talking, again, nine, ten percent of total sales, but it's just a place where these companies can go, can sell, make money, experiment, disrupt marketplaces ultimately, and I think that's exciting. I really feel like we're back at the beginning of the natural food revolution.

Dan: Absolutely. In fact, I remember talking to Josh when he was just getting ready to launch. He asked me what I thought about going online and whether or not he needed to be in traditional brick and mortar. I tell a lot of brands, you need to have both strategies, you can't just do one. I think, to your point, I think the brands that try to go strictly in traditional retail first are making a huge mistake. One of the things that I want to point out, or highlight, and this is why I love what you guys are doing, is because in traditional retail, the larger brands, the big brands, are the ones that control where you go on the shelf, how your merchandise, your assortment, everything else. If you're online, that levels the playing field automatically. My point being, is that you have the equal share of voice with the larger brands if you have a solid strategy to develop a strong consumer preference around that.



That gets me to what I wanted to go back to, Jen, something you said. You said brands are conceding control to third party organizations. Can you talk a little bit about that? The reason I wanted to bring this up or go back to this is that one of the challenges that I find regardless of where brands launch is they tend to do things the way they've always done. They don't think about the scrappy strategies that they used to get their product into the farmers market, to get on the first retailer's shelf. How are you going to help brands, or how do you help brands remain loyal to or consistent with their messaging and their mission, et cetera?

Jen: Using Amazon as an example, Amazon essentially is customer centric, and customer first. They allow these third party sellers, so, let's take myself for instance. I could buy or I could somehow obtain a bunch of product. I could sell that on Amazon. I can jump on a big brand listing and compete with them on price, and undercut them.

Jen: These third party sellers, in the past, they were essentially taking control of a brand's presence on Amazon because brands weren't playing on the space. They saw Amazon, as a consignment play, right? That's not the case, so you had all these third party sellers who were essentially owning a brand's presence, changing the content of the listings, because brands simply weren't selling their goods on the platform. I would say over the last two, three years, brands are starting to jump in, some a little bit more than others,



and really start to take control of what they look like on the platform.

Amazon has done some things to enable these brands to really market themselves that are a little bit more consistent. You see things like brand registry now as one of those things that allows you to control the content on your page. They're starting to equal the playing field between the two platforms, whether it be vendor or seller central in terms of the features and functionality that are available to brands. I think that what we're seeing is brands starting to understand how to jump in, how to play the game. But make no mistake, the ecosystem is very complicated and I think that that's where NatchCom comes in and provides brands, large and small, with the tips, the tools and the resources to help them be successful on whatever platform they decide they want to jump into. It could be Facebook, it could be Amazon, it could be Google. We're really here to help support them in a way that's consistent with their marketing off these channels, so in a more traditional sense.

Dan: So very important. I talk a lot about this on the podcast, my free course, et cetera. When you think about your brand messaging, if you as the founder came out and you were to sell your product to literally every store, if you could physically call on every single store and share your story with the same passion and enthusiasm, if your sales team had that same unified voice that you could share your story with that same passion and



enthusiasm with, you would probably knock the ball out of the park on most every sales opportunity.

The challenge is this: how do you have that unified voice that you can leverage across your entire sales funnel? Where I'm going with this is, the bigger brands tend to talk at us. We're better because we're X Brand, because we're big brand and you need to listen to us, we know what you want. The difference being that the small brands are innovating based upon what we're asking for. The point being, is that the way that they communicate is so very, very important. I love the fact that you shared that.

When you're talking about a consignment play, that draws- I love the way that you frame that. Instead of giving your product to a broker, distributor, in this case I would call them a broker, and letting them have the keys to your store and say, here you go, sell my stuff, I love the fact that you're giving brands a platform or the opportunity, the tools, tips and strategies to be able to control their messaging. So what does that look like? If I'm a young, health-based brand, how can I leverage your platform to communicate properly in the same passion, the same enthusiasm, as the founder?

Jim: I'll take that. I guess, I can give you a little bit of an example. Obviously all we're doing with NatchCom is, as I said, we have the eighth grade dance, we're kind of dropping the needle on the record and trying to get everyone to dance. It worked, strikingly so, on the first event. To give you an example, really it's all about who we bring into this, right?



Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Jim: We just found out that we'll have the Global Creative Director of Small Businesses for Facebook and Instagram to be a keynote.

Dan: Cool.

Jim: Wonderful resource who's going to be able to come in and help these young brands, tell these young brands how they need to shape and explain and share their story to do just what you said. To inspire people uniformly across the board about what that brand, what that product is trying to do. Frankly, again, natural organic, across the board, all of it is aimed to disrupt, all of it is aimed to reinvent what has really been a broken food system.

Dan: Yes.

Jim: I say that's the best we can do, I'm proud that we're able to do that, but that's pretty good too. We can bring these people in and really, what was striking again, from the first event was these companies, and I say young, up to a 100, 150 million, 200 million dollar, and frankly McCormicks were even there, large companies were there. They are able to chat with Facebook, Instagram, Amazon, all for the first time. That's really what NatchCom is about, and that's pretty exciting.

Dan: So then let's talk about the event, since you've referenced it a couple times. Jen, do you want to talk about the event? What is NatchCom's event? What was it like last year? And what is coming up in the future?



Jen: Yeah, so last year we, I think Jim mentioned this, we were hoping to get, you know, 150. We're like, you know what? We're going to try this first time, we can get 150 in the room, we'd consider it a success. We ended up overselling, we had nearly 300 when it was all said and done.

Dan: Congratulations.

Jen: When you include speakers and sponsors and all that great stuff. We had to close registration. We had some of these big names, these big name players in the room so that these brands could have face-to-face conversations with, you know, a variety of folks, whether it be the vendor or the rep at Google, or at Amazon, or Pinterest, or Bing. Really sit down and have meaningful conversations and then we also had providers like agencies in the room who were able to provide these companies with consultations, real time sessions, where they can sit down and actually help them with a problem they were trying to solve. That was all part of the ticket price, right?

Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Jen: We got a lot of great feedback from the first event, which was, again, a huge success. We're implementing some changes this go round, so the next event is October 5th through 7th in Boulder. As Jim mentioned, Facebook's going to be there, we have confirmation from Amazon, we have some other exciting speakers that we're going to be announcing in the next week or so. The whole idea is to do it all over again but to change the event and



the way that addresses some of the things that came up from attendees. More workshops, more one-on-one actually helping these companies with their problems that they have, and then really giving them ideas and case studies and learnings from other companies who are doing it right.

That was one thing in particular that really resonated with the crowd. You had a variety of companies, all different shapes and sizes, telling and sharing their stories, good and bad, you know, how they might have failed and how they might have succeeded, so that attendees could take those nuggets and go back to work the next day and start to implement. I think that's what makes this event so special, and quite frankly, this community so special is that there really is this commitment to have each other succeed because it's going to better the way we all eat and I think that's what we're all about.

Dan: That's why you and I connected. My mission is to help healthy brands get their products on more retailer shelves and in the hands of more shoppers. To make our healthy way of life more accessible. Many of my guests on this show and I talk about how we can change the way consumers look at food. The point is this: if we can make these products more available, more accessible, throughout online and in traditional stores, this is how we improve the health of the nation, this is how we change things. Where I'm really going with this, I had a great conversation with Gary Hirshberg. We were talking about how we vote with our dollars and what's happening in retail. I've got a link to it that I



will share later in the podcast. I did a project where I wrote an article for the 2016 Category Management Handbook where I was able to prove that it's the small sliver of health-based products that are driving sustainable sales in every category.

The point being is this: if you remove those healthy products from the shelves of traditional retailers, those categories are down or declining, across every category, across every channel. This is the perfect intersection to be able to help those brands gain traction, gain extra runway, and help them get their products in front of more shoppers, more potential shoppers.

We've talked a lot about the event. Is NatchCom anything more than the event? Jim, you want to take that? What else does NatchCom do beyond the two events?

Jim: Great question, Dan. That's something that we're actually planning right now.

Dan: Good.

Jim: One of the things that, you know, I think just the numbers and the excitement and the success is the need, it runs deeper than just getting everybody in the room twice a year. The need is also from beginners to, obviously, intermediates and then, you know, large companies that are truly investing in e-comm.

I think it's a stay-tuned. We have a great board and great investors and great people backing us, and great minds, and I



think you'll see some great products coming out of NatchCom in the future.

Dan: Looking forward to that. I've had a conversations with each of you about that. As I've shared with you, I think one of the biggest challenges is the opportunity, the real opportunity for these small brands to have a voice in the industry. What I'm getting at is that there really isn't a good runway, when you talk about the incubators and the accelerators, and all that other stuff, they're not really helping the brands get in front of the customers. At the end of the day, if you're not selling your products to someone, then you have no purpose for being. I would love to see what you guys are able to come up with and really excited to see what you have coming out.

Jen, going back to the event, you said that advertising offers a lot of opportunities for brands. I talk about this a lot in terms of social media, free advertising, share of voice, being able to help align the consumer with the products. How are you helping those consumers amplify that voice through NatchCom?

Jen: We think of advertising in terms of how can these brands leverage digital channels to raise awareness and drive sales?

Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Jen: There are a plethora of channels and opportunities for brands to do this, right?

Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-



Jen: One of the ways that we help facilitate these conversations and learnings is we bring the providers, like the Facebook and Google and Pinterest and Bing in the room, Amazon, in the room, to have a conversation about what are the best practices as it relates to your different ad types or ad units that you make available to customers? What are the best practices? If I'm a start up brand and I only have, you know, five thousand dollars, where do I start? I'm not an expert in this. Do I do it myself, in house? Or do I hire an agency to do this for me?

Really, what NatchCom's about is just facilitating those conversations, right? As Jim said. Bringing everyone into a room, talking about it, talking about the challenges and the benefits of doing things differently in the different channels. It's not very often you get all those different media players in room, talking about their services and doing it in a way that isn't competitive, right?

Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Jen: It's really about wanting to help these companies succeed online, and I think everyone in the room, whether it be different companies or brands or the providers themselves, all have a vested interest in making that happen.

Dan: And I think that's one of the things that's great about natural, or as I would say, what makes natural natural, is that it's not all about, hey you're my competitor, I can't talk to you, you're the enemy. But rather, how can we help each other grow? Robby



Vitrano talks with Justin Gold. They compete in the same space. Alex Hannafin's talking to one of the coffee brokers, et cetera-

Jim: That's right.

Dan: Yeah, so it's great that we bring these resources together. When you're talking about telling and sharing and you're talking about these conversations, how do they exist beyond the two different events, last year and this years?

Jen: There's a couple ways. One, we recently launched a weekly newsletter where we compile all the latest and greatest news as it relates to digital and tech. We try and relate it and convey it back to the natural products industry, our subscribers, in a way that's relevant to them. Whether it be, what are the best practices for launching an ad campaign? Or, what's going on with Amazon and Whole Foods and what's the latest and greatest there? Or, what are the five things I should think about when I'm launching an email marketing campaign?

These weekly newsletters are designed to provide companies and brands with just little nuggets of information. You read what you're interested in or pass what you might be relevant to a friend or a colleague.

The other thing is we're getting ready to launch a series where we provide different companies. Those that are doing it right in the space or who have had a lot of success with e-comm, as a way of, again, educating other companies on what's worked and



what hasn't, and using real life examples. We're not just talking in general terms, or trying to relate to another industry, that it really is their peers having an honest conversation about, this is what I find the most impactful, this is what worked for me. While that may not work for you, you might want to consider it.

Those are the ways currently that we're engaging beyond the events. But as Jim mentioned, there's more to come, some exciting things, I'm sure you're going to hear from us in the not too distant future.

Dan: Looking forward to it, I'd love to be a part of it.

What else can you share? What are the things we've missed? Jim, you want to go first?

Jim: I think you've covered a lot. I guess, I just, I find it all very exciting. We are, first and foremost, mission-driven. That is to help, again, hack the food revolution. Our tagline is hashtag hack natural. I just think we're at the beginning days of that. Really, I mean, you know, just first couple of days of what could be just, I think, one of the most exciting next phases of the natural organic revolution. I say that in lieu of a lot of people are seeing the big companies come into the category, you know Expo West has never been bigger. There's a lot of crossover. I just know that online is obviously a critical piece for really what has to be a victory around food and products, and a reinventing of our system.



It's just a great, exciting time, and very grateful to be able to contribute something to be able to participate in this.

Jen: I'll say that the two things that really excite me about this space and the fact that NatchCom is involved is one, you're starting to see larger players in this space, like Kroger, for instance, really shift how they're doing business to address quite frankly the needs of their customers and the demand for more digital ways to purchase or have goods delivered. I get really excited when I see these large, large companies start to make changes. Obviously Kroger comes to mind. Walmart's made some big changes. A lot of these are in response to the Whole Foods/Amazon acquisition.

The other thing that really excites me, so that the first thing is that innovation, right?

Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Jen: That these larger companies are really starting to invest in that digital innovation. The second thing is, I love reading stories about companies who go all in on digital and then all of a sudden become these darlings in brick and mortar.

Dan: Yep, that's right.

Jen: Brands like Madeline Haden's NutPods, that was designed to be shelf stable so that she could actually sell digital first, and became one of the highest seller or highest performing nut milks on Amazon, right?



Dan: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Jen: She's killing it right now, right? I think she's in like, something like, over I want to say 15,000 stores, if not more. It was all because she went online first and these brands are using all this rich data they're getting from selling online, direct to consumer, again, whether it be on Amazon or their own website or Walmart.com, and they're taking all of that information and they're going to brick and mortar and they're saying, look, we know your customers are buying our goods and here's all the data to back that up.

I think that is really, really exciting and to be honest with you, I think we've only scratched the surface on that. I think brands are getting much smarter about how they leverage all the digital data they're getting, to really help them be successful with brick and mortar, to sell through more products.

Those two things really, really get me excited. I think, again, NatchCom's going to be a big part of that ongoing conversation.

Dan: Sounds exciting and that's exactly the intersection that I play in.

Let me frame it this way. A lot of brands walk into a retailer and say, hi, look, I printed off this topline report and say, hey, this is enough, and it's almost as if they expect the retailer to be impressed that they were able to hit the print button on the computer. I don't mean to be sarcastic but the point is this. Retailers need actionable insights. Insights that they don't have



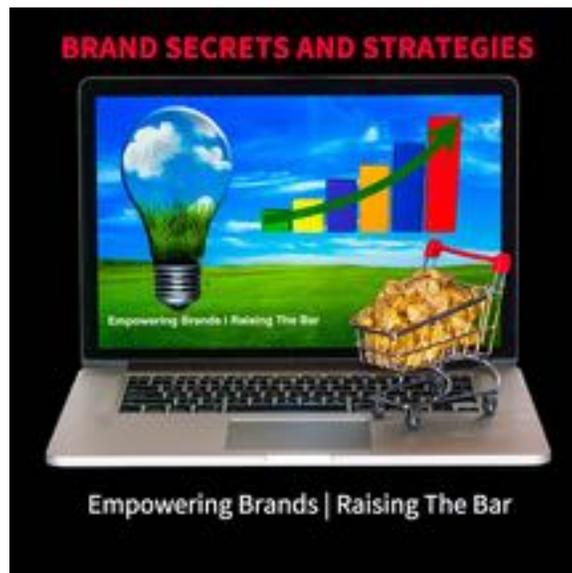
ready access to. Savvy retailers already know how well your brand is performing on their shelf. They want to know who your shopper is, who is your consumer? Where do they shop, where do they live? When they buy your product, what other things do they buy? What are their habits online?

Any brand, and I do mean literally any brand, that can leverage those insights to help them build their story at retail, is going to win at shelf. What I'm getting at is this. A lot of retailers view brands as sort of an ATM machine. It's unfortunate. I want to try and change that conversation by helping these brands leverage whatever valuable insights they have, especially from online, social media, et cetera, to help them show the retailer why their consumer is better or different than the other brand.

Back to one of the things you said, you're talking about a lot of brands getting into this space. Again, this really is an opportunity to level the playing field, so I love what you guys are doing and I love the fact that you guys are in a space that is so desperately needing a overhaul, a change, a way to rethink it. I love the fact that you guys are helping the brands develop a unified strong voice at retail rather than handing the keys to someone who doesn't understand their brand or their customer and hoping they'll be successful. So thank you for both for doing that.

Anything else you want to share?

Jim: I would just add, yeah, sure, we have NatchCom coming up in October. It's already shaping up to be bigger and better. Any



ideas out there, people who listen to this that have thoughts around some of the tools we need to bring or share or people or speakers, we're all ears. We're really about the community, trying to build this vertical that is nothing but the future.

Dan: Appreciate that. Jen, do you have any last comments?

Jen: Just to echo what Jim said, we love hearing from other companies, large and small, that are having a lot of success digitally. We welcome feedback or if you want to tell your story, again, we're going to be launching that series here shortly. Please get in touch with us at [info@natchcom.com](mailto:info@natchcom.com). We'll get back to as soon as we can.

Dan: I'll be sure to include a link to your website in the show notes and on this podcast's webpage.

Again, I want to thank you guys for coming on, I really appreciate it.

Jen: Thank you, Dan. This was awesome.

Dan: Yeah.

Jim: Yeah. Dan, thank you, yeah.

I think just one other point, just to, as you say, another thought that just popped. This is designed for the start up company, but it's really designed all the way up to companies that are doing 100, 200, 300 million dollars in revenue. We weren't sure on the



first event, whether that would resonate, but it clearly did. Again, we saw the start ups all the way up to McCormicks there and, frankly, getting a lot out of the speakers and the break outs that we had. That was exciting, the swath of companies that really saw a lot of value in it.

Dan: One of the things I run into, I mentor a lot of brands of all different sizes. There's a notion that the small brands don't know anything, so where do they need to go. They're sponges, they're trying to learn this stuff. A lot of times the larger brands think I know it already, or I hired a broker or a sales team or an agency or someone. I'm not trying to pick on brokers, sales teams, or agencies that run things, well they know it all. My point is this: if you do what you've always done, then you're not going to get any different results. The definition of insanity, I didn't say it right-

Jim: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Dan: But my point is this: to be able to provide a unique point of view, again, focusing on the consumer first because that's what matters in the long run, and develop the strategies around how do you connect your product with that consumer, and so leveraging that where the consumer lives. We're talking about millennials primarily, younger generations that are digital natives. Again, this is, to me, the perfect blend of strategy, technology, and opportunity, to give these brands the runway that they need to develop a successful story that they can then, like you said with NutPods, later take to a retailer.



Thank you for sharing that.

Jim: That's right.

Jen: Jim, I was going to say, I don't know if it's worth you mentioning anything about the mission-driven nature of these companies and sustainability. I know we touched on it slightly. Is there anything you wanted to add, just given your background and where you are today?

Jim: I work a lot with major brands, emerging brands around purpose and their ability to express it online and just in culture. That's really something that's at the heart of the natural organic world as well. There really, you couldn't have invented a better tool and a more evening of the playing field tool, if you will, than the internet, obviously, and the social platforms to allow brands to do that. One of the things that I think that's natural organic has clearly shown is that, you know, purpose is a wonderful tool, if you will, for early adoption and to bring folks into the brand and frankly to even bring retailers into the brand. We are seeing a seismic change with millennials and every piece of data shows Gen Z, which is teens that are right behind millennials, are even more so going to be demanding that authenticity, that transparency, that accessibility, that conversation, than ever before.

These are the things that brands, big and small, and I work with some of the largest brands in the world that are having a hard time with this. We all have to learn. We have to understand. It's



moving ground very quickly. How we talk about it in the world of food, how we talk about it in the world of products, is it's own nuance.

Dan: Yes.

Jim: That's an important piece of NatchCom. Frankly, I think that's the only place that conversation is really happening in a very focused way, over a course of a few days. I'm excited about that, because, again, that is the fodder, the flames, the fuel, that will allow the food revolution, the product revolution to continue forward.

Dan: Appreciate that. I go one step further to say what's unique about the shopper today is that they look beyond the four corners of the package. What I mean by that is it's not just your message at shelf that resonates with customers. As you said, customers today are very different than they were years before. They walk up to the store shelf, they look at the product, they do the research on their phone, they talk to their family and friends, and they leverage that information. They want true transparency. In fact, I've been actually doing a lot of work understanding, in a lot of my talks, et cetera, talking about or identifying or trying to understand these consumers. To your point, the younger consumers, especially the Gen Z consumers, they want products that are mission-based. They want products that resonate with what they identify as being important to themselves.



So I couldn't agree with you more. What's unique about this is, again, the larger brands, fortunately unfortunately, they tend to talk at us. To be able to leverage that unique way that they communicate off the four corners of their package is, I think, the opportunity for a lot of small brands. So thank you for sharing that.

Jim: My pleasure. And thank you for taking an interest in it. It's critical we get the word out. Obviously we have an interest in NatchCom, but it's critical to get the word out to these young companies and, frankly, the larger ones too.

Dan: Yes.

Jim: Attention to this path of digital, online, et cetera, is not just important, it's really becoming mission critical.

Dan: Oh, it is.

Jim: We'll do everything we can do to help.

Dan: Thank you for sharing that.

Jen: Alright, sounds great, thanks so much Dan.

Jim: Thanks Dan.

Dan: Thanks, you take care. Bye.



I want to thank Jim and Jen for making time for us today and for sharing this information about NatchCom. I'll be sure to put a link to their website on this podcast's webpage and in the show notes.

Today's freebie is my simple solutions to maximize broker-distributor effectiveness. You can get there by going to the show notes on [BrandSecretsandStrategies.com/70](https://www.brandsecretsandstrategies.com/70). Thank you again for listening, and I look forward to seeing you at the next show.

NatchCom <https://www.natchcom.com>

SECRETS 042 [Gary Hirshberg of Stonyfield shares his passion for natural organic brands and how we need to inspire and educate shoppers - why this matters](#)

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I appreciate all the positive feedback. Keep your suggestions coming.



Until next time, this is Dan Lohman with Brand Secrets and Strategies where the focus is on empowering brands and raising the bar.