

UNSCRIPTED SEO PODCAST

You Might Not Be Ready for Ads.

An honest field guide to creative, targeting, and marketing that means it.

Ten lessons from a paid-media operator who would rather tell you the truth than sell you traffic.

MM

Matthew Slaymaker · Slaymaker Marketing

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Ten Truths, One Honest Playbook

- 01** You Might Not Be Ready for Ads
- 02** The Storefront Moved Off Your Website
- 03** Creative Is the New Targeting
- 04** Sell the Pain Point, Not the Product
- 05** Authentic Values Must Be Shown, Not Stated
- 06** You Don't Have to Do the TikTok Dance
- 07** Point AI at the Real Bottleneck
- 08** Ideas Worth Stealing + Connect

A note from Matthew:

I run a paid-media agency, which means I've watched a lot of businesses light money on fire. This little book is the advice I actually give — not the version that maximizes your ad budget, but the version that would make me proud to have you as a client.

CHAPTER 01

You Might Not Be Ready for Ads

It sounds crazy coming from an agency owner, but the first honest thing Matt Slaymaker will tell a small business is to consider turning the ads OFF. Too many brands flip on a campaign, burn ten thousand dollars, and get nothing — because the problem was never the ad account.

“You might not be ready for ads yet. If you're not getting an organic conversion rate of two to three percent already, your ads probably are never gonna work.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

The tell is your website. If organic traffic — people who already know you and searched for you — isn't converting at two to three percent, paid traffic won't either. Ad traffic converts 30 to 50 percent worse than organic. Fix the unique selling proposition, the positioning, and the conversion path first; then, and only then, buy attention.

CHAPTER 02

The Storefront Moved Off Your Website

The digital storefront is no longer a single page you control. Google now lets people check out directly from an ad; YouTube and TikTok Shop let them buy inside the feed. The moment a shopper sees your Shopping ad or your YouTube pre-roll may be the only chance you get to explain who you are.

“The storefront is kind of moving. It's not gonna be just on your website — that digital storefront is gonna be everywhere.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

That reframes the job. Every touchpoint — ad copy, thumbnail, the first five seconds — has to carry your value on its own, because the visitor may never reach the homepage you spent months polishing.

CHAPTER 03

Creative Is the New Targeting

On Meta, creative is roughly 70 percent of the outcome. The winning setup for almost every brand is broad targeting or Advantage+ — you tell the algorithm to go find your customers, and it does, once it sees a few conversions. Convuluted interest-and-lookalike layering usually performs worse.

“Creative is 60, 70% of it on Meta — probably more like 70%. The better your creative is, the better Facebook can do of finding the right people.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

The lever, then, is angle diversity. Give Meta radically different creatives — the same meal kit sold as a gym hack, a busy-mom fix, and a working-professional shortcut — and it will match each angle to a different person. On Google, though, targeting is still about half the game: the best copy in the world can't sell dog food to a cat-food search.

CHAPTER 04

Sell the Pain Point, Not the Product

Every business that deserves to exist solves a real problem — so marketing isn't 'buy this product,' it's 'here is your pain, and here is how this ends it.' A boring car sensor becomes 'find out if your mechanic is ripping you off.' Agricultural equipment, concrete walls, oxygen monitoring — each has one thing the buyer is genuinely excited about.

“A lot of times with marketing, it's not about just saying 'buy this product' — it's about, here's this pain point, and here's how this solves for that.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

Matt's favorite idea source is the comment section: run an ad, then read what people trash and what they love. The objections become your next hook; the praise reveals angles you never considered.

CHAPTER 05

Authentic Values Must Be Shown, Not Stated

Can marketing be genuinely from the heart? Yes — but only if you show it. Everyone now claims to be sustainable, made in the USA, cruelty-free, so the words alone no longer make you stand out. Patagonia earned belief through real donations and real materials, not a tagline.

“If you just say, 'We're charitable,' people don't really trust or believe you nowadays. But if you can actually show it and bring it to life for them, that's a very different thing.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

Matt's example: Yellow Leaf Hammocks, whose owner walks the Thai villages where the hammocks are handwoven, and whose every hammock carries the name of the person who wove it. That is a value brought to life. Say 'we're charitable' and people shrug; show the faces

and the names and it becomes a reason to buy.

CHAPTER 06

You Don't Have to Do the TikTok Dance

Do small business owners really have to put on a hat and dance for the algorithm? Matt's answer is no. Be real to who you are — people see through performance, and it won't resonate if it isn't you. You also don't need to be on every platform; go where your audience actually is.

“Be real to who you are. Don't be someone that you're not because you feel like you should be. I feel like people see through that.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

His own channel is LinkedIn, in the format he's comfortable with: writing and conversation, not talking to a camera. If video is where your audience lives, find a format that fits — get interviewed, hand the camera to an employee who enjoys it, or edit so you're not staring down the lens.

CHAPTER 07

Point AI at the Real Bottleneck

The best AI use Matt has found isn't a flashy autonomous ad platform — it's a workflow. He wires Claude into Slack and email to score which team members are being proactive and which accounts are getting attention, so a growing agency stays on top of client communication without him touching every account.

“I have Claude analyzing call recordings... it reads the transcripts and comes up with content. But I need a true MCP to do what you're doing where it just auto-pushes out to all these places.”

— Matthew Slaymaker

Jeremy's leverage point is content: one 45-minute interview is 4,000-plus words that an MCP-to-WordPress pipeline publishes across several sites, with Blotato scheduling weeks of social posts across eight channels. Same principle — automate the leverage, not the busywork.

IDEAS WORTH STEALING

Six things to do Monday morning

- 01 Audit organic conversion before you ever fund an ad — under 2–3%, fix the site first.
- 02 Treat every ad, thumbnail and Shopping listing as a storefront; the homepage may never load.
- 03 On Meta, feed the algorithm broad targeting and radically different creative angles.
- 04 Turn boring products into pain-point stories; mine your ad comments for the next hook.
- 05 Show your values with evidence — names, faces, receipts — never just adjectives.
- 06 Aim AI at your real bottleneck (team ops, content leverage), not at busywork.

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