

EPISODE 1310

[INTRODUCTION]

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Pieter Limburg (PL): What always amazes me is that there are lots and lots of people that aren't able to capture their business or their product in 30 seconds. So having an elevated pitch that is super simple: this is what we do, this is the type of customer that we help, this is what the problem that it solves.

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Whitney Sewell (WS): Networking is such a powerful tool. But, are you prepared? Are you scared to network and walk up to somebody you've never met before? I would say you kinda get over it, you've got to figure out a way to increase your network. You have to figure out a way to become comfortable talking to people you've never met before. You're in that large room, you're standing over there and by yourself holding your drink and you're not talking to anybody. Man, why is that? Why is that? There are ways to be prepared so you are more confident when you go in there, and the people that you're meeting will remember you. There are ways to do that, so you're prepared, so it's not such a big deal, so you can start getting those reps in and you become more comfortable doing it.

So our guest today, Pieter Limberg is an expert in networking. He's the founder and CEO of Mobilo, a smart business card for people that want to make a great first impression. He had his fingers on the pulse of technology since the 90s, starting multiple companies and taking on 3D printing as well. After a period of consulting and failed startup projects, Pieter stumbled upon RFID, which is a radio frequency identification and its untapped potential. This led to the launch of a Mobilo.

So, Peter and I go into networking and some components about networking that maybe you haven't thought of before, but ways to eliminate errors when you're exchanging contact information, obviously his tech that he's created helps with this. But he's gonna provide a few other things that are gonna help you to come off that wall and actually go over and speak to someone. And that was difficult for me in the very beginning as well, but I knew that's what I

had to do. So I just pushed myself out there and stumbled over my words and kept going till I got better at it. And, I got better at it and got more confident at it. And so, eventually, you're not scared to just walk up to somebody, shake their hand, say, "How are you doing?" And start the conversation.

[INTERVIEW]

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WS: Networking is such a powerful tool. No doubt about it. Pieter, you have become an expert in that field and helping others as well, think through optimizing networking. What does that mean exactly? Get us started and let's dive in.

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PL: Good. Thanks for being on the show. I was incredibly bad at networking. I was shy. I was always the guy in the corner with a coke in one hand and then looking around and figuring out a bit what I was doing at a networking event. But I've certainly found it very, very interesting. And maybe it's because I'm from the Netherlands, so I moved from Europe in 2015, and really found that networking was a whole different ball game over here in the States, and I have really got me excited and I think I've gone a little bit better at it.

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WS: Well, speak to some ways that you can have the listener get better at that component 'cause it is so crucial, right? It is so crucial. What are some ways that you improve or how you're even helping others do the same?

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PL: I think that's very helpful is putting yourself in a mindset that you're there to meet new people and that there's nothing scary or crazy about that everybody's there for the same reason – to have a good time, chat, get to know each other, and basically there are two underlying things that you'd like to know. One, can I help this person by becoming a customer

of theirs or finding them a good supplier. And then the other way around, what can I do for them with my products, is there anything that I can install for them.

But, we have a good conversation, what do you do? What are your biggest customers? And how do you get your product sourcing? Right people and then just have a good community, but how you run your business because that's an end, what people are excited about it, what they wanna talk about, and you might learn something and you might be able to share some tips and tricks. And if you start with that and you can just walk up to anybody, just drive to chat your hand to say "Hi, I'm Whitney, I was going. What are you expecting today and how can I help?"

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WS: I think even having some of those canned questions help break that ice a little easier. I like how you just said that you just laid out some very simple ones, like at least to get the conversation started, then it's so much easier to flow, right? Or to have other questions about what they bring up or say and to get that started.

But how do you stand out when you're networking like that, or when you're in a group or a large group of people in a room, how do you stand out on networking?

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PL: What always amazed me is that there's lots and lots of people that are not able to capture their businesses or their product in 30 seconds, so having an elevated pitch that is super simple, this is what we do, this is the type of customers that we have, this is what our problem solves, and then the returning the question saying, "Hey, did you ever have a need for this, or what have you ever come across this issue or a problem?" Google something like elevated pitch, filling the blanks, rehearse 30 times until you can get it out of your... completely fluent, 30 seconds.

But really, I think everybody should be able to, in 30 seconds, present their company, their products, and open a conversation.

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WS: That's such wise advice right there. I wish I had worked on that more before I started going to a bunch of conferences, 'cause I couldn't do that well and it's not rocket science either. As you said, you could Google a few things, write a few things down, and all of a sudden, you have an elevated pitch. It's probably better than most people. Right? How else would you stand out or what else would you recommend for that listener that's thinking, "Ah, I don't know." Or maybe I've gone to a few conferences, but I really don't feel like I have anything that helps me to stand out, or my business is just like this guy over here.

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PL: Everybody has something that they're good at, that they're better at somebody else, that they can be more personal, more relatable, the quality could be better, pricing, of course, matters for a lot of people. But I wouldn't talk about that too much. I would stay away from that. I would really say, "Hey, we're close by, we always do what we say we do." And that goes for any type of business person, and if that's not in your core, then that's something to think about.

But everybody has something that they're really, really great that makes them stand out, and if you don't know about it, then I think the first one to discuss tomorrow at your team meeting is, "What are we good at? Let's ask our customers. Why did you choose to buy me? Why are we on the phone today? Tell me, how did you find his? And what was important to you?"

So finding your own strength is really, really important, but we should also not make it a bigger deal than it is, right? It is just a networking event, you go to meet some people. I think your biggest win is in follow-up, making sure that the people that you've met... How many people tell me that they have to draw out full of a thousand business cards, so how many do you have Whitney?

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WS: Business cards like that are just printed, ready to go to a networking event? Oh my goodness. Yeah, thousands. No doubt about it.

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PL: Right, so did you follow up all those with everybody?

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WS: Not with everybody. For all the business cards I've gathered over the last number of years, probably a fourth of them.

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PL: So there's four times more opportunity out there for you to stay in touch with. I think we should do it. And to be honest, to be fair, I'll tell you about my wife. My wife is a natural in these kinds of things. She knows everybody's name, she knows everybody's birthdays, she knows everybody that we met at some party, whatever their life or her husband's name was and their pet's name, and I don't know all of that. I'm just not very good at that. So I need technology to be the assistant, the Butler, the server for me to assist with this kind of stuff.

And it's maybe the biggest reason why I started the Mobilo is to make up for that weakness that I have, that I'm not good at following up with people, not good at making sure that I remember all of those things. And so, what I do is I make sure that at the end of the day, immediately after that, the networking event, I go sit down, we in a computer that stores every CRM with notes and everything that a follow-up task schedule, whether it is the newsletter, email or try to schedule a demo or learn more about their products. But there has to be some sort of next step, so following up with everybody that you meet or coding them on a nurturing campaign is just fragile, stay in touch every now and then that's, I think, step number one. And for you Whitney, you reach out to a quarter of all of your business cards that's already excellent, that is way better than most people do. So I would say a great job on that.

But lots of people, will think now and say, "Maybe, I could have done a little bit better there." Ad here's the technology to help you do that.

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WS: Awesome, speak maybe even a little more in-depth of using a technology like that or things about the technology that you created, how that helps somebody in the networking field? What does that do for them exactly? Going a little more in-depth, so the listener can think about that technology or maybe something they should be considering as you're scaling your business. It's very difficult to keep up with thousands of people, right? And yes, I use tech

as well, I have to. And I want to, because I want to do that well, I want to follow up, I want to stay in touch, right? How does this platform help with that?

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PL: Yep, so there are lots of options down there. Many people tried Salesforce and Hubspot, there are a couple in the real state industry that is hot like Follow-Up Boss, and a couple more that I don't even know. I think there are at least 300 CRMs out there that you can pick and choose from, and all of them are probably good because they make sure that you stay in touch with people and move them through sort of a stage, to stage, to stage. And one could be a follow-up, one could be scheduled viewing of a house, or look for a certain type of product for these people, and making sure that they get a proposal and negotiation, and then close the deal. And there's a percentage of that that works out and doesn't work.

But in many of these events, CRM is unknown to a lot of small and medium-sized businesses. They don't have one, they have an Excel sheet, retake track of their potential customers, or we say nothing, and maybe they do keep business cards on their desk and say these five people I need to follow up with, and maybe you lost the business card of the best person you spoke with, then you spent hours searching for their name and their company, and then you try and reach out. And then you need their email address to connect with them. There are so many things that can go along with meeting people.

I've seen people organizing events just to generate leads, walking around with the Notes app on their phone, and asking people to type in their names and phone number. I don't understand, and you're spending tens of thousands of dollars organizing and then you risk losing all of those contacts because you're not using the right systems.

So, the first thing that we wanted to do with Mobilo is to make a contact exchange super seamless. Whitney, when I would ask you for your name and your phone, I would probably make five grammar and spelling mistakes and putting in your name, and then hopefully I put in all the right digits, and then I have to save it, and then I really don't know Whitney was anymore, because there might be multiple Whitneys in there, and I might confuse you with Whitney Houston. I don't know, there might be a lot of things that can go wrong. If I share my details through Mobilo, I tap it on your phone and a full profile, the photo, name, and title, company, so notes about myself, links to my LinkedIn profile, even my socials, if that's

important, maybe a sign-up form, maybe a YouTube video, there's a whole full that helps and that sorts your phone, so the moment somebody will look for real estate or for whatever, or a keyword there is associated with your profile, your name will go up on their phone and you've gone to First Step already there.

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WS: Wow, so I have it on a card, I tap it on their phone and it imports all that information. And you know it's accurate, right. You didn't make those five mistakes as I'd be the same way, I'd be like, "Well, how do you spell your name again? Or wait a minute."

So, they have that information and then anything after that. What do you do then after you have this person's information, you were talking about following up, what do you do after that?

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PL: Our cards have multiple modes. So if you're meeting with somebody that is a pre-set meeting and you just wanna share your ideas, this is the way to go, you tap to regard on their phone to can save it to their phone and they have everything they need to follow up with you. But, if you really wanna stay in charge of the conversation, you switch our card to a mode, and what it does then instead of sharing just your information is asking for the other person's information with the promise that if they do so, they give their email address in the phone number, if you're gonna send them a text message with your contact details.

So I would meet you, Whitney, I would get my card on your phone, and you say, "Sure, Pieter, I'd love to get your contact info." So I'll fill out my email address, and phone number, you can get an automated text passage with all my contact details. On the back end, I get yours as well, because you're doing input that. We enrich that data, so we'll find online from 150 sources, your title, and your LinkedIn profile, we'll scour the Internet and reach that profile, and then save that into Mobilo as an open lead. So that leads to a status which is open and you can either select when you go home, you say, "Hey, I met 10 people, this one I need to follow up with, this one I can hide, this one, I am waiting for information on." There's a list of actions, for you ready to go, that you can follow up with. And there's nothing you have to do.

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WS: Awesome. We all need something like that, right? If you're in this space or if you're networking, no doubt about it. Is Mobio, the CRM as well, or does somebody need a CRM in addition to that?

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PL: So you can use it just like I mentioned, so the statuses are there, you can use it as a lead generator and you have your lead list right there if that's okay with you. And that's enough for you. And then that's a great start. So if you're new to terms, you're just looking for a way to organize the contacts that you make and to make sure you keep up and expand much with people. This is a great start.

Now, if you're ready to roll this out to your team and you wanna have full visibility with notable team members, and you can use the data statistics from Mobilo to look at the top of the funnel, but then eventually you can synchronize it and send it to over 3,000 apps. So, you can automate steps off of that, so when we exchange contact details, it'll be in Mobilo apps, maybe you also connect it to your Salesforce, and therefore that contact is immediately sent to Salesforce and that can go into a campaign. It can go into any other reporting that you'd like to see, but that's the whole integrations that are included in the system.

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WS: Speak to networking versus advertising. Just your thoughts around networking versus advertising, I know like lead gen through ads versus actually meeting people in person, the networking component. Maybe how you've seen one work better than the other, or relationships built one way the other that lead to deals or whatever.

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PL: Yeah. Okay. Well, I believe that there's no right or wrong, but there's a matter of strategic fit. It has to think about your product, your service, your type of people, so start with what are my types of customers? Where do live? Why do they play? It's really about where they are and meeting your customers where they are is the only thing you can do. If I would put on a Mobilo and go stand in Times Square, I would meet 120,000 people every single day. But will they be

interested in Mobilo? I don't think so. They are there to have a good time, to see a show, to codes and McDonald's. I don't know what people do in Time Square, I try to avoid it.

But anyway, that's not right. So I might see a lot of people and that you could compare it to advertising. However, with all kinds of advertising channels, we have these days, you can get really granular about who you want to have look at your ads. So as long as you know who you wanna be in touch with, advertising can be incredibly powerful. Finding ride networking events, however, is going one step further because you have time with a specific person.

So look at your XL deals, if you're selling five, six-figure deals, networking is probably more important for you and you wanna see to a couple of people, and you really have a pitless say, "Okay, these are the targets that I'm going after, these are the companies that I wanna see on my next big slide with all the logos that you have in mind, those are the customers that I wanna land." And then you go find them.

For a previous company, I went to CES to visit one company, and I just hung around at their booth until I spoke to the right people and landed the conversation, and it started to partner. That is good enough for me to make it happen. But the risk is obviously super big because if that just didn't happen and I spent two days in a hotel doing nothing, sometimes you gotta roll the dice.

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WS: No doubt, you do have to test and evaluate and it may be change towards of action sometimes as well, right? Before we move to a few final questions, I wanna just allow you to speak to the networking component again, 'cause I feel like you're just an expert in that, and it's so important in almost any business, especially in ours. Any other ways that you have found that you follow up with people in certain amounts of times, or calling them or texting, or any ways that you have found that, man, when I do these things or we created sequences based on these things, or to follow up with people, so we build that relationship and to continue the networking.

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PL: That's a good question, and there are a lot of things you can test and try. What I think the most important word here is what you're looking for is relevance. So you can reach out as

many times as you want to a person without being annoying, as long as your message is relevant. Because you have to assume that other people are busy, Whitney, this is podcast number 1300, I don't know. There's a lot. It's a huge number. So I guess your busy guy. What I'm saying is that when I send a text message or an email doesn't really matter these days, it's the same, but I have to assume that you may have missed it. I have to assume that you read it, but you were in a meeting and you were thinking about getting back to me, but you didn't.

So sometimes I see these cold emails sequences coming by and people saying, "Oh, don't mind me being persistent or whatever," I pretty much would say, "Hey, checking in on this," or it could be one sentence follow-up, or, "Hey, maybe you've missed this, or let me know if this is no longer relevant," you keep it personal as you would do in real life, and don't try to be too witty, just be yourself and keep it professional, keep relevant.

Sometimes you share a little bit of content, and say, "Hey, I was this thinking about you, it might be useful to you," but then it has to really be useful, it just shouldn't be some sort of action points to tick a box. Is that helpful? I would need it for you.

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WS: Yes, don't overcomplicate it. Don't ever complicate your email or your correspondence with that person, I think it's very wise. Tell me, Pieter, some of the most important metrics that you track.

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PL: Speed, really, if you don't get to respond within an hour, people, you've already lost, I think, an 80% chance of getting a response back. So when things are top of mind, you have to jump in. And I know it's stressful and I know it's painful if you have a lot of balls in the air to keep up with everybody. But that's again, where technology comes in and helps to kind of take distress out of it, because at the end of the day if you check all your box and you said I've done all my tasks, you're really done, so you can go out and spend time with or your friends and family.

But if people respond, you don't think, "Oh wait, maybe I'll respond tomorrow because that all looks like I'm less hungry." No, go for it. It's like five minutes away and you go, I saw you this

morning. We have a daily call with the whole team because we have some different locations and we try to get involved, and one of my colleagues told us that they were walking on the street, one of my (inaudible) was on the phone, and he heard somebody with a friend not business-related, and he heard somebody else talk about business card, he said, "I'm gonna call you back in an hour." I'm on the phone, I walked over that said, "Hey, I heard you talk about business cards, here's a Mobilo card, look at this, boom tap." And you just wait to see what happened, and they had a quick conversation about it, but being relevant at the time when people are talking about it, about your product. That's the best thing you can do.

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WS: What are some daily habits that you are disciplined about that have helped you achieve success?

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PL: So the first 30 years of my life, I'd like to see them. I think I was always, 30 seconds before the meeting started, I came into the office, I really made a change because I had prioritized doing multiple things better. So I became a dad recently, so while building this company, I now have a two-year-old baler and my company is two and a half years old. So it was very much of an overlap, my tour company is drawing a grey fast last December, we did more revenue than the whole year before that. So it is possible to balance a personal life, to balance a great work, but you have to become an incredibly diligent person.

So I get up at 6, go to the gym, and then have breakfast with my wife and daughter, we spend time together, I may have answered some emails already in between, and I don't care if people see that I'm up at 6 o'clock or 6 30, but then it must have been urgent. And then I go to work and then I make sure to be back on time to put my daughter to bed and to cook dinner for my wife. And then sure, after dinner, I may do some work, or I may choose to watch a video or have a good chat with a glass of wine. But that's how you get you done, but by really being diligent and saying, "Okay, this is gonna be my life from Monday to Friday and the weekend, I'll let a little bit more random things, then when things come in to play, but you have to get stuff done."

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WS: It sounds like you are very purposeful with your time, and at some point around 30, you took action on that as well, and it's paid off, to say the least. There are common things that successful people do, and there are common things that other people do as well that don't make them as successful, right? And so, success leaves clues. Grateful for you sharing that. How do you like to give back?

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PL: I am making an effort to give back in as many ways as I can because I've had so many great mentors and people along the way that have supported me. I have to say, one of the beautiful things about the States and particularly America, within the rest of the world is that everybody is so incredibly open with sharing what was driving their decisions, how they were thinking about things, mistakes they made, things that were a foundation for great, great work and effort, and that's just not the case in Europe. People are much more like, "This is my little secret, and I'm not gonna tell you about it." I hear that in podcasts, I hear that in interviews, and it's such a shame, and I really believe that that's a wasted opportunity.

But there's like 14 Nobel Prize winners in one picture of all about 70 or 80 years ago, and it shows that if you're working together on things but also separate on other things, but if you share your information, that greatness comes from that, and I'm still reading the book, I haven't finished it yet, but it's called The Founders and the book is about how many good things came from all the people that work there, including of course, most very, very on top to get the moment. But this guy just didn't start with Tesla, he had an incredibly rich history way before that.

So I believe that giving back is really important, and whoever wants to reach out to talk about something, I'm happy to open up my calendar, I have a quick chat or a long chat, whatever I can do, I'm not afraid to answer any questions. Just reach out, and I'll see what I can do for you.

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WS: Pieter, it's been a pleasure to meet you and have you on the show, and you just walk to the powerfulness, I'm networking and just the tool that can be, and even how tech that you've

created can help us do that seamlessly, more accurately and continue the conversation to close more leads or to find more investors or whatever that business model is, it's so important, right? And you can be that connection, that your tech can be that connection and help do that. Tell the listeners how they get in touch with you and learn more about you.

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PL: Sure, you can just send an email, it's Pieter, but it's spelled a little differently, so it's P-I-E-T-E-R at mobile dot com. Go to our website, mobilocard.com, and look around. Use the chat or leave a demo request on the contact form. But happy to help if you didn't find my email address by typing in the right way, just Google Mobilo card and founder or CEO. I think my email address is everywhere. It must be because I get a lot of these called the email outreach which is fine. I'm able to pick through all of them. So I do respond quickly, but don't hesitate to also send a reminder if I didn't. So, yeah, I'll get in touch and see what I can do for you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[OUTRO]

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