

Indie Beauty Delivers

I don't recall a time when the importance of community has ever been highlighted as starkly as now. Just a few weeks ago the retail landscape changed overnight. Within hours and with little notice, beauty businesses saw the collapse of their bricks and mortar revenue streams, online retailer sales drop and own website sales stall, as our industry and consumers pause to work out how to navigate this unimaginable new world.

What has become apparent in the weeks since Lock Down Day is the brands that will trade their way through this economic crisis, are those who have consistently invested time, energy and love into building their community. Think ByBi Beauty, Pai Skincare and Osmia Organics.

Let's dive into why community is the number one key to survival.

Without the legacy, heritage, reputation and marketing budgets of the large brands, the heart of every indie beauty sale is the intentional choice of an informed consumer. Customers who love and completely trust the brand and founder are willing to hand over their hard earned cash.

This kind of intense and personal relationship doesn't develop from endless bland product posts and sales rhetoric on Instagram. It grows and matures best inside the nurturing bubble of the brand community. Community is the condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common. Community brings people together; it forms relationships and encourages trust.

When you hang out with great community focused brands on their social channels you feel energy and a vibe that captivates you. You are compelled to devour their content. As you read their posts you smile, laugh and cry because it feels like they know you so well. Before long you realise you're checking in with them daily, tuning into their Stories like a soap opera, consuming their emails as soon as they land in your inbox and avidly waiting for their next podcast episode.

And that's the truth at the heart of why these community brands will win through this crisis: They understand and put their customer at the centre of everything they do. They become part of their customer's daily life. So, when times are hard their customers remain loyal and as committed as ever to support their favourite brand.

Community building is not something that comes easily to everyone; it can feel overwhelming and a bit of a dark art. My mission as a visibility coach is to remove this roadblock and ensure founders have the clarity and understanding to move forward. So, let me ask you this: Would you rather rack your brains every day to come up with something new to say about one of your products OR share your passions with an engaged and excited group of likeminded people?

With that reframe, community building is simple: It's marketing and selling that aligns with you and your values and brings you joy. As an indie founder you have to market and sell. So building your community isn't additional work, it's just changing things up. It's replacing the stale, same old content with energy and value that makes your brand feel alive, real and relevant.

I'm not going to leave you there though, before I go I want to share two simple, effective strategies you can implement in your business today to kick start your community growth:

First up, know your customer like you do your best friend and identify the topics that matter to them, those topics become the pillars of your marketing content. The more you talk about them the stronger the message at the heart of your community becomes. Your content pillars act like a powerful magnet. They send their vibes out into the universe and attract back everyone who aligns with your view. If you want to see this in action and at its absolute best, I challenge you to the Osmia Quiz - Grab a coffee spend 10 minutes browsing Osmia Organics Insta feed and identify as many of their themes as possible (I can name five off the top of my head!).

Secondly, turn up every day for your community. Community building is not something that you can turn on and off. Consistency is paramount. I know this can feel heavy and daunting, but let me take a second to lighten the load. The dream of every brand founder is to make a difference in the world through selling products. Therefore selling is your top priority, it's how you achieve your dream. With this new thought process in place, selling becomes exciting and every day you want to ring-fence and protect time to do the activities that drive the sales.

And here's a little added bonus for you. While we're mentioning the S word (sales) it's also important you recognise community building removes the hustle and uncomfortableness many founders experience when it comes to getting people to part with their money. The brand topics I mentioned earlier provide you with interesting and varied content. Followers start to engage and over time the bond of trust develops and it simply becomes a no brainer for them to become a customer when the time is right. No pushy sales required.

To conclude, a community based brand is a joyous place, overflowing with energy and passion. It has a purpose and adds value to the consumer and founder alike. Community brands are built to last and weather the storms of our ever more unpredictable world. If your dream is to build an iconic brand of the future then community must and should be its beating heart.

If you'd like to join my community then you find me hanging out on Instagram @indiebeautydelivers