



# Expand2Web

by Don Campbell

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## Expand2Web Podcast #11

### PDF Edition

## Don Campbell Interviews John Jantsch of Duct Tape Marketing

Welcome to the [Expand2Web Podcast](#).

My next guest is **John Jantsch**. John is a marketing consultant, award winning social media publisher and best selling author of [Duct Tape Marketing: The World's Most Practical Small Business Marketing Guide](#) and [The Referral Engine: Teaching Your Business to Market Itself](#). John is known for his practical, down to earth advice for small business owners.

In this interview, he's going to share with you some great tips for small business marketing. I think you're really going to like this interview. Here it is.

**Don:** With me today is John Jantsch. John is a marketing consultant and social media publisher. I'm sure you've heard of his blog, Duct Tape Marketing. It's a really privilege to have you here, I'm a big fan. Thanks for being on the show.

**John Jantsch:** You bet, Don. Thanks for having me.

**Don:** Yeah. Absolutely. One of the things that caught my eye when I was reading through some of the stuff online was... bear with me for a minute. It says, "John has been called the most practical small business expert." [laughs] . I knew that would make you uncomfortable. But it's true. I've been reading your blog for quite a while. I do think that you have a knack for just really giving some practical advice for small businesses.

**John:** Yeah, Don. Actually, it doesn't make me uncomfortable at all because I really think that that's something that's needed. And it's really what I've built my entire brand on. I really try to stay very focused on telling people how to do stuff that I found to do. What works and doesn't work. And realize that I think that most small businesses, probably the thing they have the least of is time. So they always want to know, "OK, just tell me how to do it." [laughs] . That's really a lot of my approach. Practical is a good word. I love practical.

**Don:** Yeah, exactly. Most of the listeners for Expand2Web, on my podcast, my blog... They're mostly do-it-yourself small business owners or they're web consultants helping small business owners. So that kind of advice is right up their alley. I've noticed on your

blog you do blog quite a bit about local search. Obviously you talk a lot about business marketing. But local search is one of those areas, I think, that is in the line with being real practical.

**John:** Yeah. Most businesses, even though we can do business around the world... the bottom line is, the majority of businesses do business in their community. And do a lot of it offline. But we, certainly, have come to realize that no matter where we're located, our customers are increasingly turning to finding everything from shoes to legal services by that device in their pocket or the laptop. This idea of marrying online/offline for the local business... I've been talking about it, quite frankly, for about five years. But it seems like, with the onslaught of smart phones, it's become something that not only the search engine's gotten extremely serious about. But small business owners are starting to really listen. Again, I'm not really sure when this is actually publishing...

...But just yesterday had an informal seminar that I do, these free online seminars, on the topic of local search. I had about 1600 people sign up. With very little promotion. Which tells me that people are finally ready to get serious about that topic.

**Don:** It's a hot topic these days, that's for sure. I've noticed, in the businesses that I've talked to... It's moved from, "I'm not sure I'm ready for that yet." To, "Oh gosh, I've got to something." Right?

**John:** Yeah. I think part of it is because the search engines have gotten so serious. You go on Google now and just about anything you do, they're interpreting as a local search. Almost any search you can put in there now, they're at least sprinkling in some local businesses. I think that that's really getting people's attention.

**Don:** Exactly. Their new places search and those results. You're seeing more and more of the local stuff getting moved it. You've seen Marissa Mayer, from Google, get moved over to head up local and mobile. So it's a pretty big emphasis. I heard another stat the other day that Google put out. It was something like, on the smart phone devices, 50% of the searches they're seeing are for local goods and services.

**John:** Yeah. And what's so great about those is they all have GPS devices. It's not like local because that's where your IP address was pinging from your server. They know where you are. [laughs] . So I think that on the mobile phone or the mobile device, quite often people are looking to go buy something at a certain place. It's a pretty hot topic. A lot of people also don't realize that Google mobile search is different from Google desktop search. It's a topic that we probably need to start paying attention to in even the optimization and the creation of our pages.

**Don:** Absolutely. The whole mobile... and I noticed you had a blog post about that very topic recently, too. About how mobile search is different from the regular Google search.

**John:** That's right.

**Don:** That's a good one to read. So what kind of tips, if you had a couple of quick tips for business owners, some practical advice on local search? On how to get started? What would you...

**John:** Again, we're going back to practical. I like to break it down to about five elements. You need to start making your pages more local friendly. It's a little counter-intuitive. When we create a marketing brochure we don't think in terms of putting towns and suburbs and things like that in it. Because the person that we're handing the brochure to knows where they are. But from a search standpoint, I think that you have to make your pages friendly. Put addresses on them. Put maps on them. Put directions on them. Maybe even create entire sections about what's going on in the community. Or maybe even local landing pages for different parts of town. Those types of approaches, I think, are extremely important. We already mentioned Google Places and Yahoo Local and Bing Local.

You need to claim those profiles that the search engines are building, with or without you. And enhance those and really get serious about doing everything they let you do. Upload videos and audios and things to those pages. You've got to get serious about the rating and review game. The search engines are putting a lot of emphasis on what other people are saying about your business.

So from a search engine standpoint, but also just from a business standpoint. How many of your listeners have not stayed in a hotel because it got five bad reviews. It's become a very common thing that our customers and consumers are using. And then lastly, a lot of people looked at social media and first there was this, "That's a whole other wing of marketing."

And there was a, "That's for people that want to do business globally." But I think social media has some real opportunities for the local business and certainly from a local search standpoint. There's all this real estate that you can put lots of local terminology in those profiles and have those all pointing back to your site.

I think there's some tremendous ways to use those tools, even in offline. You go and meet the person at the chamber of commerce event and instead of sending them an email you connect with them on Facebook. Or on LinkedIn. You deepen or maybe make the relationship happen a lot faster by using some of those tools locally as well.

**Don:** Absolutely. Great tips.

**John:** So that was my entire webinar yesterday in two minutes, I think.

**Don:** Condensed. Thank you. [laughter] Another thing I'm intrigued with is, I'm in the middle of reading *The Referral Engine* right now, your latest book. The subtitle there is, "Teaching Your Business to Market Itself." That's something that I've been trying to do for my business. I'm getting a lot of good things out of the book. But also for small businesses, we talked about online reviews a minute ago. *Referral Engine* is bigger than that but that's a particular topic that I find businesses struggling with. One of the things

that I always coach them on is, a lot of times they'll say, "I really don't want to do online reviews because someone might leave me a bad review."

They don't understand that people are leaving those reviews anyways. What I liked about The Referral Engine is, you advocate being pro-active about this kind of thing.

**John:** That's an unfortunate fact of life. I think sometimes when somebody gets a bad deal, they're more willing to complain about it loudly and passionately. When people get what they were expecting or maybe even more than they expected, they're happy to come back and buy more. But they're not necessarily talking. I think that getting pro-active, and I don't mean by sending out bulk emails and saying, "Here, come review us." But certainly when somebody offers an unsolicited testimonial or one of your strategic partner of yours that you love doing business with, that you review each other. I think that they still have to be authentic. All these sites like Yelp, they realize people can go on there and spam the reviews just like they do everything else. So they have lots of filters built in. so I mean we're talking about authentic reviews.

But there's nothing wrong with you priming the pump to show people how to review. To start running some of these reviews on your website or hanging them in your store. So people realize, "Oh, that's something I could be doing to." A lot of times it's not that people don't want to. They just don't even realize it's an option or something they might want to do. I will also tell you one of the things you can do pro-actively...

...Start reviewing other companies yourself. [laughs] . If you have... I love the new tool called Hot Pot from Google. There's an app that you can put on your phone and you can start writing reviews of companies in your community. I will have to tell you, particularly if you're in a B to B world, that can stimulate some reciprocation.

**Don:** It's a great tip. I don't know if you've noticed some of the guys... David Mim and some of the guys at getlisted.org started a neat little thing called Review Wednesday on Twitter. I don't know if you saw that.

**John:** I'm starting to see that. I didn't realize that that's who was behind that. I love getlisted.org. I think it's a great resource. But I didn't realize that's who was behind that.

**Don:** It's kind of a neat idea. It's like, every Wednesday, just take a minute to review your favorite local business or somebody that you've done business with during the week. And use the RWX hash tag. I have to say... It's only been going on for a month or so. But you can start to see that more and more people are jumping in. I think it's a good thing. It's kind of what you mentioned a minute ago. Just take a minute to review some other business in your ecosystem and help them out.

**John:** Yeah. And I coach a lot of folks that are B to B. And I think that teaching your strategic partners... I think this is true of any skill, in fact, that you pick up as a business. Teaching your strategic partners how to do something you've learned can actually be a great way for you to spread that around and have it come back.

**Don:** Yeah. And I noticed, I think it was in your book, I saw a quote. When I read a book I take a lot of notes in the inside cover and stuff. I noticed, it was something called, it's not a business, it's an ecosystem.

**John:** Yeah. I think that was a post that I wrote this week, I think. To tell you the truth, it's just my thinking. A lot of us think that we go to work and build a product or service and we go out there and try to sell it. I think that one of the things that the whole social web has done is really opened up the world and how we work. I think that a lot of what we now do, or at least the companies that I see really succeeding and the people really talk about is... they're really looking at just that. That they're cultivating an entire ecosystem that may start with their office and it may start with their staff. But that expands out to involving the customers and the prospects. And the strategic partners and the advisors. Everybody that's involved in our business. I think that that whole idea of collaboration has become an extremely important behavior. A lot of people still regard it, in many cases, as a way to get something done cheaper or faster.

Or by an expert that you couldn't afford to bring in. To write something or to design something. But I look at it as more of a behavior than just as a tactic.

**Don:** Right. It has to be part of your philosophy in the business, right? It's got to be the way you approach things, not just...

**John:** I guess I wouldn't go as far as saying it has to be. I personally think that it's a great way to grow a business.

**Don:** OK. I gotcha. Help me summarize the Referral Engine. What's the big idea behind the book?

**John:** It really started because I've been doing this for a long time and referrals are something that have actually been very important to me. But the thing I always struggled with was I had so many people that told me that was the way that they got a lot of their business. The same person would say, "But we don't do anything about it." [laughs] . It just happens accidentally. So I started out to write this book, to try to reconcile that. Why is that? Or what do companies that do generate tons of referrals, what do they do differently? I quite frankly thought I was just going to try to extract the system for how to get more referrals. What I quickly learned was that the businesses that generate the most referrals are, quite frankly, more referable. They do certain things differently. It's not a matter of just asking. The referral is made in the way that you attract a client, in the way that you interact with a client. In the way that you review the results and... it's kind of the book-ends of the first and the last contact.

Filling all those gaps in between are where referrals happen. Half of the book is really about that, how to be more referable. Then the second half gets into... OK, now that you're getting referrals, how do you get more? And it is much more of a systematic approach to setting up the systems and the processes in your business. That are going to make sure that you're actually getting the referrals you deserve.

**Don:** OK. So in the first half, when you're talking about the business being more referable... Do you mean like having a remarkable product or customer service kind of thing?

**John:** Yeah. It may be a product. In many cases it's, quite frankly most cases, it's working on the experience. There are a lot of companies that get some amount of referrals because they have a good product or they have a service that people need and they're able to deliver it. But the ones that really get talked about are the ones that wow people. That exceed their expectations, that have a very systematic process for building know, like and trust. And reviewing and making sure that people actually receive the value. And having a process where they actually go and collect the referrals. It's this idea of making sure that you're filling all the gaps that might exist. That's when you use this map of the highs and lows. You can almost chart any customer experience. There are good times and bad. [laughs] . It's a matter of filling in...

...Where did we not communicate fully? Where did we not go back or was there something on our website that made them think twice? It's filling all those gaps that is a part of this being more referable.

**Don:** I gotcha. So you go to work on that and get that solid. Then the next part is about, how do I amplify those referrals? How do I put a system in place where...

**John:** Yeah. Exactly. And I spend at least two chapters talking about this... One of the great untapped sources of referrals, for a lot of businesses, are what I call a strategic partner network. So many people focus on their customers, which makes a ton of sense. They experienced your brilliance, your product. So that makes a ton of sense. But there's a whole, I think, universe out there of other businesses that are, obviously, non-competitive, non-competition... That actually has your same ideal customer in mind. I think that companies that really get that idea of formally building out a network of those strategic resources and then bringing those to their customers... not just as a way to get referrals but as a way to have a team of resources that you can bring to your customers. And then creating opportunities to generate business for those partners. People that get that idea, I think, are the ones that never really have to worry about generating leads.

**Don:** Yeah. That's a great concept because... Imagine a group of these businesses providing a complete... A good business, I think, focuses on what they do best, right? And then they complement that with partners. I think, that way you can deliver the whole experience to a customer through...

**John:** Yeah. From a practical standpoint, no question. But I think you also make yourself more valuable. You're a lot harder to fire if you're the go-to person that any time they need something they know they can ask you. And you'll get them what they need. I think we make ourselves more valuable to our customers.

**Don:** From a customer point of view, I see what you're saying. They come to you, they know, even if you're not going to do it, or can't do it, you can find someone who will help them.

**John:** I know a handful of real estate agents, over the years that have been the leaders in their particular offices. And their number one secret is they know every great plumber and handyman and garage door person in town. If you work with them, you're going to get their list of those sources.

**Don:** A huge value-add to working with them.

**John:** Absolutely.

**Don:** That's perfect. Yeah so that's great. So many, including my business, and people I talk to... It's all about taking it from these random, "Oh, boy, that's really nice. Somebody gave me a referral." To figuring out how to fill in the gaps on the business. For any kind of business. In my case a lot of stuff is on my website. I find out something that maybe didn't flow right. Somebody finally tells me about it. But probably 100 other people saw that and didn't say anything. It's sort of finding those things and fixing them up.

**John:** Yeah. And I'm as guilty as anyone. Generally speaking, by the time you hear about it, it's been going on for a while. [laughs]

**Don:** Yeah. Exactly. That's a problem. Another thing I wanted to talk to you about is... one of my philosophies I'm trying to do... I watched this video from the 37 Signals guys. It was called "Marketing by Sharing." I don't know if you saw this but they talked about how their philosophy... they don't spend dollars on marketing, per se. They spend their effort online, just sharing what they know. Sharing everything they can. That builds credibility with their customers. That's what I try to do on my blog. Obviously I see you doing a lot of that on yours, providing tons of great... I don't know how you get all those blog posts out.

**John:** [laughs] Me either, sometimes.

**Don:** So what are your thoughts on that? Is that working for you? Have you seen that work really well for businesses, in terms of taking that approach versus buying a bunch of display ads or something like that?

**John:** I absolutely do. My definition of marketing is getting someone who has a need to know, like and trust you. I think that while that may feel like a long term approach. And certainly this idea of putting out content, for many people, feels like a long term approach. I hear from bloggers all the time. They're like, "God, I've been working on this for six months. I don't know if anybody's even reading it." That can be frustrating. But I do think that, in terms of the building trust, no question that that level of putting out educational information has been valuable. But I'd suggest probably a step further than that. It's just become an expectation. Your own case, if you go to a website nowadays and all there are are four pages that talk about their products. In some cases, that's what you're looking for, for a certain thing.

But in most businesses, you look at a website these days and that's all you're going to find, you move on to the next one. Or certainly that website's not going to come up in the

search engines, anyway. So you're probably not going to find it. So I think it's become a bit of a necessity in almost every industry.

**Don:** What's amazing to me is... I live in Silicon Valley. I love software. It's the thing I like to do. So many start-ups here. A lot of them are doing great things. A lot of them, though, are still taking the traditional approach. They put up a website. It has a few pages about their partners and their products. It's amazing to me, the difference. When you see a company that's just doing that versus one that's got a very active blog and they're sharing that information. They've got a YouTube channel. They're on Facebook. They're sharing lots of information without any direct expectation of you buying their product.

**John:** And I think that that goes a long way towards building trust, doesn't it?

**Don:** Yeah. Makes a huge difference. It's amazing to me that some companies still aren't doing that. But a lot of them are, more and more. So that's a good thing for everybody. Right?

**John:** Yep.

**Don:** So John I've got a membership... we've got some, at Expand2Web, a bunch we call the Expand2Web experts. Consultants that do consulting for small business owners. We do courses and things like that. A lot of my members are big fans of yours. They post articles sometimes, from your thing. So I asked them, I said, "Hey, I'm going to be interviewing John. Do you have any questions for him?" So I hope you don't mind if I ask you a couple questions from them.

**John:** No, not at all.

**Don:** Eileen wanted to know, do you have a preferred platform for connecting with people? Like for example, Facebook or your newsletter or LinkedIn. Or is it a combination of those? How do you look at that?

**John:** Yeah. The way I look at it is, I definitely have my preferences. I'll be the first to admit. It's hard to get me on the phone. [laughs] .

**Don:** I'm the same way.

**John:** I even have in my voicemail message, "Hey, you're better off sending me an email." But one of the views that I really do take is that I enjoy interacting with people in all of those various environments. And I think that a lot of businesses do need to realize that you want to meet people. Or find a way to meet people where and how they want to communicate. As far as best way, I don't know that there is one. I would tend to say that I do a lot of interaction with folks, certainly on my blog, through comments. And I do a fair amount, a huge amount, probably, on Twitter, as well. The thing about each of those is... They all have their own place. I think that's why they've all been coexisting. I remember when I first started blogging. Prior to that, because I've been around so darn long, I had already been doing an email newsletter for year. At that point. I remember thinking in

terms of when I would promote something on my blog or I would promote the same thing through my email newsletter. The vastly different response I would get.

There was very little crossover from people that were avid readers of my blog. Through those who were avid readers of my email newsletter. I think that has changed or continued to change. There are people that prefer to use DMs and Twitter, almost like an IM. I'm not saying you need to sit here on this computer and let that run your life. But I think that if you have the capacity to do so I think you do need to meet people where they are.

**Don:** It's a good point. I play this game, to make it fun. I always think that... I try to figure out, when I meet somebody new, what their preferred mode is. Some people, they just have to call you on the phone. Other people... I'm more of an email person. A lot of people, like you said, are more chat or IM. Or Skype or whatever. It's kind of fun for me, to figure out when I meet somebody new, a new partner or friend or somebody that I meet online. It's like, what is their mode? Are they just sending me stuff on Facebook or do they want...

**John:** And then to take it a step farther... I'm going to SXSW in a couple weeks. Of course that's my annual geek blogger event. To get to hang out with a bunch of folks that I only see their avatars, most of the time.

**Don:** Yeah, that's cool, isn't it?

**John:** Yeah. It's awesome.

**Don:** That's my favorite thing about conferences. Getting to meet people that, for eight months or a year, you've been talking to them online. It's like, "Oh, meet them in person." It's great. Another question that came up was your find a consultant, your consultant network. How does that work for you?

**John:** It works as part of my overall vision. My real purpose in life... I love small business owners. I love helping them and I love seeing how their whole reality changes about their business when they realize that they can install a marketing system. But I also realize there's only one of me and there's only so many people I could work with hands-on doing that. So once I created this systematic approach that I believed generated results. I always had the vision to go out and try to find like-minded, independent minded professionals. Maybe they had the smarts and the experience to do all of this themselves but here was a systematic approach already developed with a brand. And they wanted to join a network of like-minded professionals. So the Duct Tape Marketing consultant network is about three years old. We have 50 or so consultants around the world, looking to add more. What our consultants get is certainly the ability to use our brand and tap that. And the leads that that generates for them. We have an entire methodology that we work with small businesses in a somewhat unique way. It is very programmed in nature.

In other words, they don't hire my consultants because they need a website or because they need a brochure. They hire our consultants to install the Duct Tape Marketing

system. So we have a very step by step, guided approach. You're able to walk in and say, "Here's what we do. Here's the results you can expect and here's what it costs." That's a somewhat revolutionary idea in marketing consulting, certainly. Now we do also have programs like a Local Search Program and a social media program and a referral program that are run typically in group sessions and whatnot.

But the core product is installing the Duct Tape Marketing system. It's really a licensing program. The consultants pay us a first year fee. It's actually a three year, tiered program. Because we do a tremendous amount of training upfront. We have a three day intensive in Kansas City and then six months of a one on one. They have their own consultant, out of our network. And then we consistently, about three times a month, meet over online. So there's a tremendous amount of... we really, I think, in fact I know we have, created a business for folks. And we give them a tremendous amount of value.

I know there are some other programs out there where people get certified by going to a weekend seminar and get a three ring binder. But what we're doing is building a network that we can then take into the very large folks. Like Microsoft and American Express. That we work with as a brand. But we're able to bring our entire network to bear. Maybe for their reseller network. A wonderful way for me to expand this idea of bringing a systematic approach to thousands of small businesses.

**Don:** Reach more people, that's for sure.

**John:** Yeah. So any of your listeners that want to check that out, it's just [ducttapemarketingconsultant.com](http://ducttapemarketingconsultant.com). There's lots of resources there and a process for really discovering, if it makes sense for you.

**Don:** OK. Good deal. Well, yeah, I really appreciate your time today. Is there any other projects you're working on right now that you want to wrap up with and let us know about? Other than what we've talked about. The book, obviously, *The Referral Engine*, is highly recommended. [Ducttapemarketing.com](http://Ducttapemarketing.com) is the blog. What else you got going on?

**John:** As part of the training and program approach, I've started something called Duct Tape U, as well. That people might want to look at. There are three self-guided courses there. They're, as I started to mention, the Local Search Pro. The way we deliver that is it's a... I call it a course but it starts the day you sign up. It's all self-guided but it involves tutorials and videos. So it might be, I'd teach you, like we talked about, say the Local Search Pro is one of the courses. I teach a lesson. But then there are all the supplemental videos for that lesson, actually are there. So if I tell you to embed a Google map as part of your local strategy there's a video there that shows you exactly how to do that. People really find that pretty helpful because it's something that they can... I don't know. I think, all told, Local Search Pro has about 50 videos. And really gives you the very practical but self-paced, you can go back and look at it time and time again, approach. And pretty darn affordable.

**Don:** Good deal. That sounds great. So that one's at [ducttapeu.com](http://ducttapeu.com), you said?

**John:** Duct Tape U. I have Social Media Pro, Local Search Pro and Referral Engine Pro, are three self-guided courses kind of gone that approach as opposed to just the eBook approach. I think it's a little more hands-on. In some cases I'm doing videos of me actually implementing and doing things. You get a chance, it's like looking over my shoulder.

**Don:** I definitely agree. The videos pack a little more punch than just reading the screenshots, for sure. Well great. John, it's been a real privilege to have you on the podcast. Thank you so much for being here.

**John:** I appreciate it. It was fun.

**Don:** Great. Thanks so much. And have a great day. OK.

**John:** All right, thanks Don.

**Don:** Bye.

**John:** Bye.

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**John Jantsch** has been called the World's Most Practical Small Business Expert for consistently delivering real-world, proven small business marketing ideas and strategies. His Blog - [Duct Tape Marketing](#) - was chosen as a Forbes favorite for marketing and small business and his podcast was called a "must listen" by Fast Company magazine. You can [follow John on Twitter here](#).

**Don Campbell** is President of Expand2Web where he helps business owners create [WordPress Websites](#) that get top rankings in Google search results. He provides videos and tutorials on his Blog at <http://www.expand2web.com/blog/>. You can [follow Don on Twitter here](#).

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