

David Meerman Scott: If I were to boil down the ideas of this book into one sentence, five years of research in one sentence, it's basically that fandom is about a true human connection. And yes, I love the Grateful Dead and yes, I love live music. But what it's really about is I'm with my closest friends, and I'm with people who speak the same language. I'm with my tribe, and I know the rituals. I can walk up to anybody at a Grateful Dead concert and start talking to them, and instantly we can share a bond.

Robert Glazer: Welcome to Elevate, a podcast about achievement, personal growth and pushing limits in leadership and life. I'm Robert Glazer and I chat with world-class performers who have committed to elevating their own life, pushing the limits of their capacity and helping others to do the same. Welcome to the Elevate Podcast. Our quote for today is from Jude Law and it is, "I don't want to do anything that I'm not passionate about."

Robert Glazer: Our guest today, David Meerman Scott understands that passion won't just improve your life, but can transform your business as well. He's a leading expert on all facets of marketing, an international bestselling author of over 10 books, and a sought-after keynote speaker who has keynoted for companies such as Microsoft and at large conferences all around the world. David, welcome. I'm excited to have you join us on the Elevate Podcast today.

David Meerman Scott: Thanks, Robert. It's awesome to be here and I love that opening quote.

Robert Glazer: I try to match them up.

David Meerman Scott: Awesome.

Robert Glazer: So particularly for people in marketing I always like to ask, how did you get started in your career?

David Meerman Scott: So I actually started on a bond trading desk in Wall Street, Dean Witter Reynolds, and municipal bonds. I absolutely hated it. It was awful. But I found that I loved the information that the bond traders were using, Dow Jones and Reuters and all that. So I drifted into that industry, initially as a salesperson and then as a marketer, and I worked for a long time at a company called Knight Ridder. I was based in Asia, in Tokyo and Hong Kong as a marketer, and then I worked at Thomson Reuters as the vice president of marketing of one of their divisions. They sacked me in 2002, and so I had to figure out what the heck I was going to do next.

David Meerman Scott: That's when I started writing and speaking about marketing, because I had a head start on the web because I was able to understand real-time electronic information, from having both worked on the bond markets and then delivered information about the bond markets well before the web in 1995. I was like, "This is really cool and I understand this stuff." That's what drove me into

starting my own thing and writing books and speaking around marketing, particularly online marketing.

Robert Glazer: So did you go right from that in starting your own business or was there a transition there?

David Meerman Scott: Well, in 2002 I lost my job. That was a horrible job market because it was right after 9/11.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, terrible.

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, it was right after 9/11. It was like three months after 9/11, and I thought I wanted to be another vice president of marketing of a big technology company and that's what I was looking for, but there were no jobs. And so I was sort of forced into initially consulting, and I found I liked it but then I also very quickly started to create content. So initially, I had a website. I started to do things like write papers. I created an email newsletter and then in 2004 I started to blog and then I started writing books as well. I very quickly realized that I wanted to continue to be on my own and I stopped looking for a new job really quickly. So, I like to say I've been happily unemployed now for 17 years.

Robert Glazer: Someone once told me, offered me a job, and he said ... And it was actually right before I started my company. He said, "If you don't take this job, I think you're going to be pretty much unemployable from here on out." So that was right after the Seth Godin Permission Marketing era, right?

David Meerman Scott: Exactly.

Robert Glazer: Yeah.

David Meerman Scott: That's exactly right, and I remember I read Permission Marketing when I was still employed, so I remember that dated the fact that it would've been like, oh, I forget when that book came out, 2000 or 2001. Seth had a huge influence on me and my writing and my career. I've read every book he's ever written. I've read every blog post he's ever written. Now I've listened to every podcast episode he's ever done. I think he's a genius.

David Meerman Scott: But his ideas influenced me for sure, and I took them in a different direction because of my experience having worked on a bond trading desk. I talked about the idea of marketing but in real time, instant engagement using social networks, and instant engagement using a concept I call newsjacking, which is piggybacking off of what's going on in the news. And was able to identify some ideas for marketing that I was pioneering, that fortunately other people thought were interesting. So, I was able to sell a bunch of books as a result.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, Seth's usually two to three years ahead of a trend. You can kind of label his books around things. That newsjacking thing I think I still see everywhere,

contributed articles, and when I get my reports from Inc. and Forbes about what did well that month, it's someone who takes a current event and jumps on. "Jeff Bezos just said X, and here's what we can learn from it." They're the top-performing ones every month.

David Meerman Scott: They are, and what was really interesting about newsjacking is I recognized that it was exactly what happened in the bond markets. When I was working in the bond markets there would be a piece of news, and then somebody would trade on that piece of news and they would make money. I was thinking, "We can do that as well as business people." We can see a piece of news that we have an area of expertise around, and then put out a real-time blog post or a tweet with a hashtag or YouTube video or a Facebook Live or whatever it is. But some kind of piece of content which will then be seen in the marketplace of ideas and has the opportunity to get quoted in the press, have an opportunity to get your products and services into the marketplace in an interesting way. And so I pioneered this idea of newsjacking, and now lots and lots of people are talking about. And the fact the word newsjacking is now in the Oxford English Dictionary and it's got my name against it, which is pretty darn cool.

Robert Glazer: Oh, congrats. I got to work on that. I've got the TEDx talk. Now I need to get the Oxford English Dictionary.

David Meerman Scott: I have my personal trifecta, which is a Wikipedia entry, an Oxford English Dictionary entry and an IMDB entry. So, pretty proud of those three things.

Robert Glazer: Well, I'm curious, what's the chicken and egg? You've become an equally prolific author and speaker. Do you tend to speak on things, see what resonates and then write a book, or you tend to write a book, clarify your thoughts and then speak on that, or is it a little bit of, does it depend?

David Meerman Scott: So for me what's proven to be the best is that periodically over the last couple decades, I've seen crystal clear in my mind a pattern in the universe that nobody else sees, or at least nobody else sees and has written about. It's happened to me three times. And I see a pattern in the universe. I'll give you a couple of examples. The first one was, everybody was talking about marketing on the web as advertising. It was banner ads. That's what people were doing in the late 1990s and very early 2000s. It was like a television metaphor, where marketers were doing advertising.

David Meerman Scott: I said, "No. This is a content play. If you create amazing content, then you have an opportunity to reach people through search engine optimization and things like that." So my book, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, was the first book that articulated that idea. The second time I saw a pattern in the universe was, we just talked about it a moment ago, the idea of real-time marketing. About 10 years ago, there was a couple of things that happened that were really important. Number one, Twitter took off, which is a real-time mechanism, of course. And then the second thing is that Google went real time. Not very many

people remember this, but more than a decade ago, if you wrote a blog post, Google would take a month or two to index it.

David Meerman Scott: And then all of a sudden, they changed the way they do their indexing and if you wrote a blog post it would be indexed instantly. That meant that when you created a piece of content it was visible to the world right away. So in my mind, again from the experience on the bond trading desk, this was huge. I said, "I am seeing a pattern in the universe no one else is seeing, that marketing is now real time." So what happens then is I test that kind of pattern in the universe. I tweet about it and I blog about it, and I do a riff and a speech about it. And if it starts to resonate, which it did in both of those cases, then I say to myself, "I've got a really important idea here," and then that's when I start writing the book.

Robert Glazer: So you do, you actually market test it first.

David Meerman Scott: I do.

Robert Glazer: Yeah. As a marketer, that seems like a smart thing to do.

David Meerman Scott: Well, I don't actually think of it as market testing so much as just tossing ideas out there. I actually tossed out an idea around the first thing I mentioned, the idea that marketing is not advertising, but marketing is about creating content on the web. I tossed an idea out there in the form of an eBook that I wrote, and it got a million downloads in the first month. I'm like, "Oh my God. I've got something here," and so I really quickly wrote the book.

Robert Glazer: You also have enough emails to sell a book, so you're no dummy there.

David Meerman Scott: That was a remarkable thing because I thought, "Oh, it'd be really nice if I had a thousand people download this thing." I had nobody on my email list at that point. No one was following me. I was a nobody, and I tossed this thing out into the marketplace and it just got an incredible reaction. So that said to me, "Oh, this pattern in the universe you identified, David, is pretty darn interesting." And then that's what leads to me, like I just sit down and crank out a book, sort of as quickly as possible, because I want me to be the first person that does the book around that topic that I identified.

Robert Glazer: Well interestingly, we talk about speaking. So one of your claims to fame is speaking on seven continents. Even the best speakers I know usually only get to six. So how did you manage to speak in Antarctica and what did that involve?

David Meerman Scott: I'm a complete nerd about lists. I mean, it's kind of ridiculous. My wife laughs at me about it. It's like, I've been to all 50 states. As of last week, I've been to 107 countries. I went to the Seychelles last week, so I've got a new country on my list. And I realized, "Oh my gosh, not only have I been to six continents, I've delivered speeches in six continents. I wonder if I can figure out how to speak in Antarctica?" So what happened then, I sort of was trying to figure out, how can I

make this happen? I ran across an organization called Quark Expeditions. They run expeditions to the Antarctic. I just cold reached out to the CEO of Quark Expeditions and I said, "Hey, I'm a speaker. I'm thinking about booking an expedition with you guys. Would it be possible for me to deliver a speech to the other people in the expedition while we're in Antarctica?" And he came back, he loved the idea and said, "Absolutely. Let's make that happen."

David Meerman Scott: And the way we ended up doing it is we were on the expedition ship, and they have a tiny little theater. I think it seats like 50 people. There's only 100 people on this expedition, it's pretty small. So there was about 40 people in the ship's theater and I delivered a talk on social media to a bunch of researchers, who do photographs and study penguins and birds and whatnot. By definition, because we are in Antarctic waters, we were about 400 or 500 yards off the coast of Antarctica, I did deliver a speech in the continent of Antarctica. I love being able to say that I've spoken on all seven continents.

Robert Glazer: Makes people start counting on their fingers.

David Meerman Scott: I know, right? I know, right? And I did go to the continent a number of times during that expedition, and we actually camped one night so I did sleep on the continent of Antarctica. We couldn't figure out a way to do an actual speech speech, because I wanted to do what I normally do is share a couple of PowerPoint slides and I'd have a microphone and all that.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, the AV vendor selection is probably not as comprehensive.

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, it would have been a little more difficult when there's penguins involved.

Robert Glazer: Right. The person who has that company, they could get a premium for AV there, but probably they'd be out of work most of the year.

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, I can't even imagine what that rider would be for your AV requirements.

Robert Glazer: Well, we talked about, you've written a lot of books and we'll talk about your upcoming one after the break. But as you mentioned, I think your most widely known book to date is The New Rules of Marketing and PR, which is definitely a bold claim for a book title. So how did you develop those rules? Was that another pattern you saw?

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, it was. It was, and that was the pattern I mentioned earlier, the first one where I recognized that marketing on the web wasn't advertising, it was content creation. So I identified the old rules of marketing and PR are that number one, you had to buy attention. You know, buying a magazine ad, television ad, newspaper ad, whatever, buying a trade show booth space or a direct mail list in the B2B world. Or, you had to generation attention by reaching out to members of the media and trying to get them to write a broadcast about you, and so I called those the old rules of marketing and PR.

David Meerman Scott: I called the new rules of marketing and PR the idea of generating attention because you create interesting content on the web, whether that's a great website or whether that's a YouTube video or an eBook or whatever it might be, and then that's what helps you to generate attention. And that book first came out in 2007 in the first edition, and when I was writing it Facebook was only for students and Twitter didn't exist and YouTube had just started. So I've had to update it now, I just finished the seventh update, so it's in the sixth edition as we're speaking now and in mid-2020 it will be out in the seventh edition, because there's always new tools, right? There's always something that comes up that's new, that's different.

David Meerman Scott: You know when the first edition came out, I had people reach out because it came out in mid-2007. When I writing Twitter didn't exist, but then when it came out, Twitter had just launched. People were like, "David, have you ever heard of Twitter? It's not in your book." I'm like, "I know. The book's already out." So I realized I had to continually update it.

Robert Glazer: Well, it's interesting and I'm curious how many people you think are still operating in the old rules. When I think about, I mean you and I both know a bunch of people when you're launching a book who have launched books. I think even when you look at that, you talk to people and there are a few things that really work. I think the broad PR and just being in the news, unless it's Oprah's favorite thing, everyone is still running that playbook but they find it doesn't sell books at the end of the day.

David Meerman Scott: I think that's right. I think that's right. The world has gone niche, and the idea that there's a place that you can go where you will be seen in such a way that everybody will want to buy what you have, whoever you are, whatever kind of product or service you're in, I don't think it works that well anymore. And so what I'm doing for this book launch, we'll talk about after the break the new book, but I'm doing podcasts. Like we're doing this one right now because what I've found is that the more I can be associated with people who have interesting audiences, the more I'm able to get the ideas of the book out into the marketplace. And one of the events that I speak at several times a year, between two and four times a year I speak at Tony Robbins' Business Mastery events, and Tony has an enormous audience.

David Meerman Scott: So I did a podcast with Tony Robbins, and I did a guest blog post with Tony. Tony is kindly sharing the ideas of my book through his social media, and Tony wrote the forward to the new book. That kind of thing is what generates attention today, not being on CNN or Fox or the things that used to work in the past. I actually have measured this with some of my previous books. I would get what I thought was a fabulous media opportunity, you know? I'd get five minutes on CNN or something like that.

Robert Glazer: And sold no books, yeah.

David Meerman Scott: Right. I would look on my Amazon rank. I'd look on my Amazon rank and it would be whatever it is, call it 3,000, and then the needle wouldn't move. I'm like, "I just had five minutes on CNN and the needle didn't move." And then meanwhile, I'm on a niche podcast and we're having a great conversation. The thing comes out and all of a sudden my Amazon rank goes from, I don't know, say 4,000 to 200. It's like, "I just sold 500 books because I was on a podcast." And so I'm totally focused these days when I launch a book with figuring out, "What are the ways that I can be part of someone else's tribe, and be exposed to their fans?" And we'll talk about fans more after the break, but how can the fans of someone else somehow rub off on me?

David Meerman Scott: And then for that reason, I'm always open when other people have books or other things that they're trying to launch, I always take a look to see, is this something that my group of followers, that my fans should know about? It's sort of a two-way street. You know, if there's something that I think my people should know about I'm happy to push it out as well.

Robert Glazer: Interesting. Well, we'll warm this up a little bit. You talk a lot about passion. You've written books tying marketing to two of your passions, lunar space and rock music, which aren't the normal topics. Which is interesting, right, because that's what you wanted to write about. Could you talk about why those topics are especially important to you, and how you've tied them into your professional life?

David Meerman Scott: Absolutely, so I have a couple of things that I'm really, really passionate about, I'm a geek about, I'm a fan of. One is live music. Again, I talked earlier about my spreadsheet for the countries I've been to. I have a spreadsheet that lists every concert I've been to starting when I was 15 years old. My first concert was Aerosmith. My second concert was the Ramones at my high school, and I've been to 75 Grateful Dead concerts. Brian Halligan, who's the CEO of HubSpot, and I are both Grateful Dead fans. We have been to a number of Grateful Dead shows together, and we're both marketing geeks.

David Meerman Scott: And so we had been constantly talking about how the Grateful Dead were really pioneers around the kind of marketing that works in today's world. They were creating a social network before Mark Zuckerberg was even born, of people who traded tapes, of people who were really geeky about the Grateful Dead. And so we said, "Well hey, we should do a book together," so we did. We co-wrote Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead. It was a passion project. It was a labor of love, but at the same time it resonated with a lot of people, and it resonated interestingly with a lot of people who are not even Grateful Dead fans. For example, the Japanese edition of Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead was the number four business book in the year that it came out for the whole year in the country of Japan, and the Grateful Dead never even toured in Japan, which is kind of remarkable.

David Meerman Scott: And my other geekdom is the Apollo lunar program, and I just love the fact that in using 1960s technology, humans landed 12 people on the surface of the

moon. I have a collection of artifacts from the Apollo lunar program. I keep a website, [apolloartifacts.com](http://apolloartifacts.com), where I talk about it. So I combined that love with my marketing geekdom and I wrote this book called *Marketing the Moon*. It's the marketing aspects of the Apollo lunar program, and essentially if NASA had not marketed the idea that we should go to the moon to the American people we never would have done that project, because it was a massive outlay of time and money. It was 4% of the national workforce and 2% of the national budget for an entire decade.

David Meerman Scott: A particularly cool aspect about that book was that it was turned into a film. It was turned into a three-part PBS American Experience miniseries called *Chasing the Moon*, that premiered in July of 2019 on the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission, the first mission to land humans on the surface of the moon. And so I find it kind of remarkable that a marketing book can be turned into a three-part PBS miniseries, but there you go, right? Because other people obviously have the same passion.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, I mean there is a group out there for everyone. In fact, Tim Ferriss has highlighted this a bunch. Now I'm forgetting the name of the woman whose work it is, but about the sort of, the 10,000 raving fans, I think.

David Meerman Scott: Yes.

Robert Glazer: Focusing on [inaudible 00:22:37] and focusing on really those niches rather than trying to reach everyone.

David Meerman Scott: Right, and Seth Godin calls it the smallest viable market.

Robert Glazer: Right.

David Meerman Scott: That's his concept and he's like, "You know, you can do really, really well just by serving 1,000 people, so why do you even try to reach more?" That's me paraphrasing. Those aren't his words, but it's true, you know? It's like, who would have thought that there would be enough people who are interested in how the Grateful Dead did their marketing, or how NASA did their marketing, to sell a bunch of books and actually turn one of those into a movie? It's amazing.

Robert Glazer: All right, we'll take a quick break for a word from our sponsors and we'll be right back with David.

Robert Glazer: In 2004, Mike Zani and his partner started a search fund. A search fund is where you raise money with a leadership team already in place, and then look for a company to buy. Well, here's what Mike learned the first time he bought a company.

Mike Zani: Bob, we were really pretty good at the strategy stuff and we were good at the financial side of things, knowing what to pay for a company. But when we finally



bought a company, figuring out how to get the right people in the right roles and managing them was really hard, surprisingly hard, and we sucked at it.

Robert Glazer: So Mike and his team used The Predictive Index to help them fix their people problems. Then when they bought and ran two more companies, they used The Predictive Index again. In fact, they became so enamored with The Predictive Index that, you guessed it, they bought the company.

Mike Zani: Yeah, we bought a 60-year-old technology company. I have to pinch myself. You know, I get to run a company that helps people solve their people problems, designing teams, hiring, inspiring managers. And when it comes down to it, almost all business problems come out of people problems.

Robert Glazer: So if you're trying to figure out how to get more out of your people, I'd recommend you go to [predictiveindex.com/elevate](http://predictiveindex.com/elevate) and request a demo of their product. That's [predictiveindex.com/elevate](http://predictiveindex.com/elevate).

Robert Glazer: Whenever I'm doing an interview and someone asks me about the best productivity tool I use, my answer is SaneBox. I've been using SaneBox for four years, and cannot manage my email without it. SaneBox artificial intelligence monitors your inbox and moves email you don't need to read right away to your SaneLater folder. All that's left in your inbox is the important stuff. You can also snooze emails and have them come back to you in your inbox at the right time. If you know how email folders work, then you know how SaneBox works. Find an email in the wrong folder, just move it. There's nothing to learn, nothing to install. SaneBox works directly with every single email server or service that's ever been created. Get a free two-week trial and a \$25 credit by visiting [SaneBox.com/elevate](http://SaneBox.com/elevate). That's S-A-N-E-B-O-X.com/elevate.

Robert Glazer: And we're back with David Meerman Scott. So we were just talking about passion, and you talk about how passionate fan bases are the most important thing in marketing. So what made you decide to make that the focus of your latest book, Fanocracy?

David Meerman Scott: So we were talking earlier before the break about this idea that every once in a while I see patterns in the universe that nobody else sees. I saw a pattern about five years ago that was just really important to me at the time, and the idea is that I felt like the whole online world was becoming polarized, and the whole online world was becoming digital chaos. The social media companies were optimized for selling stuff and for putting things into your newsfeed that you didn't necessarily want to see, but based on algorithms and AI, and you didn't even know if you were talking to a robot sometimes. And then the rise of political polarization on the web, and of course the 2016 election being emblematic of that.

David Meerman Scott: And so I thought, "You know, the pendulum has swung too far in the direction of superficial online communications when we're hungry for a true human

connection." And I realized that in my life, the biggest and most important connections I've made have been around what I'm a fan of. I've mentioned a few of them, the Grateful Dead and live music in general, the Apollo program. I was talking to my daughter Reiko, who she's 26 now, she was 21 at the time, about this. I said, "You know, it's ridiculous that I've seen 75 Grateful Dead concerts, but I love going to these shows because I'm with my best friends, and we're a part of a tribe. We share the same lingo." She says, "Yeah, I'm really into Harry Potter," and I knew that. She's read every book multiple times, seen every movie multiple times, gone to the Wizarding World of Harry Potter in Orlando a few times, even went to London to do the studio tour.

David Meerman Scott: She said, "I wrote a 90,000 word alternative ending to the Harry Potter series where Draco Malfoy is a spy for the Order of the Phoenix, and I put that on a fan fiction site. It's been downloaded thousands of times and has hundreds of comments. I am dug into this Harry Potter thing." And so right then and there we realized that we were seeing something, that on one hand the social networks didn't feel like they were cracked up to be what the promise was but at the same time we have these things that we're really passionate about. So we cooperated and became co-authors in this book that ultimately became *Fanocracy: Turning Customers into Fans and Fans into Customers*, where we looked at how and why do people become fans and passionate about something, and then how can companies tap into that?

Robert Glazer: So give us a preview into both of those, since those were going to be my next questions. What are some of the core secrets, without giving the whole book away, and what can businesses do, particularly when they don't have the flashiest products or services in the world?

David Meerman Scott: So the first thing we wanted to test was, is this viable for all kinds of businesses? Because people recognized that something like Air Jordans, yeah, they have tons of fans but, "You know, I'm a dentist," or, "I run an enterprise software company" or whatever. "I can't build fans." It turns out, we found examples and we found how these companies were able to create fans in every single type of marketplace, and I'll give you an example. So this is how I'm opening my speeches these days. I walk onto the stage. I don't say, "Thank you." I don't say, "Good morning." I say, "Who loves to buy auto insurance?" And there's a few people who will laugh, but most people are dead silent. It's like, "No one likes to buy auto insurance. It's terrible," you know? It's a product that you would hate to spend money on, and furthermore you would hate to use it because it means you crashed your car.

David Meerman Scott: So then I say, "I had someone tell me that insurance sucks. Nobody likes to buy insurance, and that was McKeel Hagerty, and he's the CEO of an auto insurance company." So Hagerty Insurance is the largest provider in the world now of classic car insurance. He told me, McKeel Hagerty told me that, "David, everyone hates my product category. Nobody wants to buy it. No one wants to use the product, so I couldn't market the way everybody else did. You know, I

can't make a gecko and put on TV commercials. It's not going to work." So he said, "I needed to develop fans of my business."

David Meerman Scott: So what he did was he recognized, because he's in the classic car world, that he didn't need to invent the passion that already existed for classic cars. All he needed to do was tap into it. So he ended up, he and his team now go to over 100 classic car events a year and they're on site. They give seminars. They provide valuation reports, "How much is my car worth?" They have a YouTube channel with about a million subscribers. Can you imagine, an auto insurance company with a million subscribers? They have a Hagerty Drivers Club with 650,000 members, and from a standing start they've had double-digit compounded growth every single year, and they will do 200,000 new customers this year, all based on tapping into fandom. McKeel and his company are incredibly successful in a category everybody hates.

Robert Glazer: You know, USAA is one that I think of that people sort of rave about that company in the insurance world too, and it's interesting. I feel like I want to do like a fan speed round with you, like I name a thing and you tell me who has the biggest fans. So sports?

David Meerman Scott: Sports, well, we didn't look at it from the perspective who's sort of the biggest, but we did dig deep into the Boston Red Sox.

Robert Glazer: Interesting, close to home.

David Meerman Scott: Well yeah, both Reiko my co-author and I live in the Boston area, but what was interesting with the Red Sox and the reason we looked at the Red Sox was because, you remember the marathon bombing about four years ago?

Robert Glazer: Yeah.

David Meerman Scott: The Boston Marathon bombing, and the mayor locked down the city. It was a really weird time for a few days, because one of the bombers was on the loose. No one knew where he or potentially she was, and it was a really, really weird moment for Boston. The Red Sox had games scheduled. They had to cancel them, and then they found the bomber and they lifted the lockdown but the city was in an incredible funk. There was a Red Sox game, the first game back after the bombing, and it was-

Robert Glazer: David Ortiz gave his famous speech, yeah.

David Meerman Scott: Exactly. That's exactly right. It was a moment where it was spontaneous, that the fans of the Boston Red Sox, and the Boston Red Sox themselves and David Ortiz in particular, were able to rally an entire city, and Ortiz gave a speech that was amazing. It was very short. It was like three sentences and it says basically, "Thank you very much." I'm paraphrasing here but, "Thank you very much,

Boston. This is our city. No one's going to take it away from us. We love you," or something like that.

Robert Glazer: Our bleeping city, yes.

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, yeah. Well, he said that too, yeah. And it was a crazy, amazing moment, and the fandom that people had for the Red Sox is what lifted the entire city out of its funk. And in fact, over the next year Boston was resilient and grew incredibly quickly in terms of its financial, the companies and the city, and so it did really, really well. And that kind of thing, how can fans create a movement, is something that we looked at. I think if I were to boil down the ideas of this book into one sentence, you know, five years of research in one sentence, it's basically that fandom is about a true human connection. Yes, I love the Grateful Dead and yes, I love live music. But what it's really about is I'm with my closest friends, and I'm with people who speak the same language. I'm with my tribe. I know the rituals. I can walk up to anybody at a Grateful Dead concert and start talking to them, and instantly we can share a bond. That's sort of what this idea is about, and it's something that businesses can do as well.

Robert Glazer: So do, now that I think about this and how closely that ties to cultural elements of rituals and otherwise, do people have to make fans of their employees before they'll ever make fans of their customer base?

David Meerman Scott: Well, that's actually interesting. We studied that in particular, and what was interesting about that is that companies that have a strong culture are companies that people love to work at, are much more likely to create fans of their organization. And so we spoke with a number of CEOs who have developed organizations that have fans, and we sort of wanted to look at, what was the pattern? And one of the patterns that emerged was those companies have people in them who work in them who are passionate. I won't take credit for this. The credit goes to my daughter, but she coined the phrase, "Passion is infectious." And the idea that passion is infectious is that if you have people who work at your company who are passionate, then that rubs off into your customers and potential customers.

David Meerman Scott: And we had one CEO, his name is Pete Cipollone. He runs a company called InstaViser, and Pete is an Olympian. He won an Olympic gold medal in rowing in 2004 in the Athens games, and what he found is that he specifically hires elite athletes, either former Olympians or world champions, or even some athletes who are training who only work part-time for him. So he realized that if you're passionate enough about your sport that you go to the highest level, that passion is infectious and it rubs off, and you're much more likely to create passion in the company that you work for.

David Meerman Scott: Another person we spoke with told us that when she interviews people for jobs at her company, she goes through the interview process but the most important question that she asks is this. "If you were in a room with 2,000 people, what could you confidently say you were the best at?" And that one question, she

says, is the one she uses to gauge passion. She says that when people respond to that and they light up and they smile and they're so excited to talk about the thing that they love to do, that they're good at, those are the people that she tends to hire. Because those are the ones who are most likely to be passionate about the company they work for, and are much more likely to have that passion rub off and create fans among the customer base, because of this idea that passion is infectious.

Robert Glazer: Well it's interesting, and another implication, I heard you speak recently, you've been looking at politics through this lens and you attended some rallies. So is fanocracy, is it a good political predictor for who's going to be elected? Have you sort of back-tested this to the last election and looking forward?

David Meerman Scott: I've gone to campaign events over the last five cycles, I believe. I'm a massive ... This is another one of my geekdoms. I live in the Boston area, so I'm only 20 miles from the New Hampshire border, and New Hampshire of course being the first primary state. And so in 2016, I went to three Hillary Clinton events, two Donald Trump events, and a bunch of the primary events before that too, of the people who didn't make the nominee. And I really started to write about how Donald Trump had a much bigger fan base than anybody else, and I actually wrote in my blog post 18 months before the election, "This guy could win." And in this cycle, I've gone to so far 22 of the candidate events. There's so many people in the Democratic party, it's ridiculous.

Robert Glazer: I was going to say, you're showing the problem in itself, yes.

David Meerman Scott: And I did go to a Trump rally in New Hampshire this cycle, and he's still got a massive fan base. But I've been to see Elizabeth Warren and Pete Buttigieg and Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and a whole bunch of them. What's interesting is that they all have fans. They all have people who are passionate about them, but there's so many candidates right now that it's spread out. And so it'll be interesting to see when it narrows down and there's one candidate, to see how the passion for that candidate is displayed compared to Donald Trump's fans.

David Meerman Scott: And I found in the '16 cycle that I went to a New Hampshire event with Donald Trump, there was like 10,000 people there. I went to an event with Hillary Clinton and I don't know that she got 400 people into a junior high school gymnasium. And so it was really telling, and that doesn't necessarily predict where people will vote but it certainly predicted who would come out, who would be willing to leave their home to go and cast a ballot, and so it was something that was really interesting.

Robert Glazer: Well, I'll be looking for an odds-making from you once the field narrows down. I'll loop back for a patch.

David Meerman Scott: Well, if I were to tell you right now simply based on all of the events I went to, the two that showed the most passion of the 22 I've been to were Pete Buttigieg and Elizabeth Warren. And I will make a prediction right now today that that will be the ticket. I don't know who will be on top, but that will be the ticket.

Robert Glazer: That's bold. I like that. We can hold you to that. So you mentioned a few times actually about writing this book with your daughter, Reiko. I'd love to hear about what that experience was like, and is this something you're going to do again, or did you like doing that? What was different about writing yourself versus, or particularly with a family member?

David Meerman Scott: I had done a couple of books with other people. I wrote the Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead with Brian Haligan, so I'd had that experience before but never with a family member, and especially a father/daughter thing. Because we realized very, very early that the father/daughter dynamic needed to not be a hierarchical one, you know, "I'm the dad, I'm the boss" kind of thing. It wouldn't have worked, so we figured that out pretty quickly. Then we figured out reasonably quickly that the only way that this process was going to work is if we had complete and utter trust in one another, trust in such a way that I was able to say to her, "This particular passage isn't working," or, "This chapter isn't working," and she was also, probably even more importantly, able to say the same thing to me. And we figured that out pretty quickly, and she wasn't shy. She said-

Robert Glazer: "Dad, this sucks"?

David Meerman Scott: No, she still calls me daddy, which I love, even though she's 26 years old. But she's like, "Daddy, this kind of stinks. I think you need to like throw it away and start again," and her instincts are right. And another thing that was really, really fascinating was we originally starting writing. We wrote half the book in one voice, so it was essentially a smoothed-out version of her voice combined with my voice so that you didn't really know. It was a single, unified voice, in other words. It was kind of like an orchestra, you know? Hearing the music, you don't really know which player it is, and it wasn't working. We couldn't figure out why. "Why isn't this working? This book stinks. I don't know what's going on here."

David Meerman Scott: And then we realized that we have such different writing skills, and by the way, she's a way better writer than me. Much different writing styles, that we needed to let our own voices shine through. So we completely ripped apart what we had written and wrote the chapters with bylines on them so it says, "Chapter four by David, chapter five by Reiko." We let our own unique voices come through, and her writing is beautiful. It's lyrical. She's just a wonderful writer. She blows me away in terms of her ability to write, and I have a more sort of spartan kind of style to my writing.

David Meerman Scott: But the people who have read the book have told us that the fact that our voices come through in that way is sort of endearing, and makes the book much

better than had we tried to smooth it out and had one voice. But the only way we could come up with that is if we did what we did, which was make that false start in the beginning and then realize that this book isn't going to take six months to write. It took a year and a half to write, because we wanted to get it to work perfect, get it to work as best as we could.

Robert Glazer: That's an interesting way to do it, and yeah, I think that is probably the authenticity shines through and that the styles have a good yin and a yang to them.

David Meerman Scott: It does, and furthermore I'm a 50-something white guy and my daughter, she's a millennial woman who's mixed race who's a neuroscientist. She did her neuroscience degree at Columbia and is now in her final year of medical school, so not only ... Yes, it's a father/daughter dynamic, but we're so utterly different as people. You know, a mixed-race millennial woman and a middle-aged white guy, that that works so well. And getting an understanding of ... And I'll give you a concrete example. I wrote a section in one of my chapters where it was important for me to introduce the concept of how you can build fans within an LGBTQ+ community. My daughter read it and she was like, "Daddy, this is embarrassing. This is ridiculous. Let me rewrite this for you."

David Meerman Scott: A whole bunch of her friends are LGBTQ and she said, "You've not done this well. This is not good," and she was able to, through her dynamic of having had friends who are in those communities for her whole life, was able to write it in such a way that it was beautiful as opposed to being ham-handed, which was the way I wrote it. And so having the two of us ... Oh, and then another example is, she didn't know very much about the business world and I've been writing about the business world now for 25 years, so she wouldn't know what enterprise software was, but I was able to write some examples from enterprise software companies. So we're able to have a really cool dynamic by the different strengths that we bring to it.

Robert Glazer: So David, last question. What is a personal or professional mistake that you've made and learned the most from? And it can be singular, or for a lot of people it's been repeated.

David Meerman Scott: Gosh, I've gotten fired three times.

Robert Glazer: That's a good number, yeah.

David Meerman Scott: And every time I was really bummed about it, and every time I look back and say, "Why did that happen?" And every single time I ended up with something that was way better. And so I don't know that I would ... So I'm not really answering your question the way you asked it, because I don't know that I necessarily learned from it. But in each case, it was a great career move. Getting fired for me each time was a great career move.

Robert Glazer: Well, the learning is not wallowing in it, right?

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, and realizing that it's a gift. I mean, if someone listening in on this lost their job last week they're going to shoot me between the eyes if I tell them that getting fired is a gift. But over time it really is, because for many people you end up with something that's better. You end up with something that's more suited to your personality. You end up starting a business, or if you were working for a big company, maybe working for a smaller company, or maybe you end up going into the nonprofit world or doing something that's more suited to you, that you would never make that decision unless you were forced into that decision.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, a lot of people just stay with what they're doing in inertia. If you asked them that question within a 60-day look-back period of the event, they would be a very different answer than a year or two and say, "You know what? I needed that."

David Meerman Scott: Yeah, that's right. That's exactly right.

Robert Glazer: All right, where can people learn more about you and your work and all your writing?

David Meerman Scott: So about me is David Meerman Scott. Just Google me. I'm the only David Meerman Scott on the planet, which is exactly why I use my middle name. And then more about the new book Fanocracy can be found at [www.fanocracy.com](http://www.fanocracy.com), and I've got a bunch of content on there that you download, and some videos and other cool stuff. And on the social networks, I am DMScott, D-M-S-C-O-T-T.

Robert Glazer: Great. Well David, thanks for sharing your story with us today.

David Meerman Scott: I appreciate it, Robert. I loved having a conversation with you. Thank you so much.

Robert Glazer: All right, to our listeners, thanks for tuning into the Elevate Podcast today. We'll include links to David and his books and information on the detailed episode page at [robertglazer.com](http://robertglazer.com). If you enjoyed today's episode, I'd really appreciate it if you could leave us a review as it helps new users discover this content and learn from it as well. If you're listening in Apple podcasts, you can just select the library icon, click on Elevate, scroll down to the bottom and leave a review. It only takes a few seconds. Thanks again for your continued support, and until next time, keep elevated.