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Social Proof in Business

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to another episode of My Unfair Advantage. Today we're going to talk about Social Proof done right. Social Proof, it's probably one of the most powerful things you can do for selling. I'm sure you've heard it said that your customers can outsell you. That's true. I believe your customers can outsell you 10-1, because people are much more willing to buy a product based on something they've heard from somebody that has the product, than based on anything they've heard from a salesman that's trying to make a commission. If you use Social Proof properly, if you do it right, you can pack a lot of power into your sales page and get a lot of people to jump on board and buy.

Social Proof is one of the most powerful elements that you can put on your sales page. You know what, not just sales page, but bonus pages of other campaigns, anywhere that you can demonstrate that people are buying, is very, very powerful for somebody that's thinking of buying. It's great to get dozens of positive testimonials for your page, and even some celebrity endorsements sites. Other affiliates, or other people in the industry that maybe are saying, "Hey, I know this guy." Your kind of like borrowing other people's authority. We'll talk a little bit about that, the difference between a testimonial and endorsement.

But you must be careful of how you use proof; you got to do it responsibly. You can't make any misleading claims. You have the factor in how a reasonable person would interpret these testimonials, and these claims, and these things that you say on your sales page, and on your bonus page, and whatever type of page you're using to sell your product.

In this video on this episode, we're gonna discuss how to use testimonials, endorsements, and product demos even, because that's another way of showing proof of your product, proof that it works. You'll discover some great resources, and I'm gonna give you some cool things that you can look up, and you're gonna learn about some people that did it wrong, some people that did it and they broke the law, and they've gotten in trouble, and you're gonna look those up as well after you watch this.

Let's jump into testimonials. When you hear people refer to testimonials in general, a lot of people say social proof, what exactly is social proof? Social Proof is not just a testimonial. But in general, when people in the internet marketing space talk about social proof, they more than likely are referring to a testimonial, just proof that people are buying. A testimonial accounts for what happened when a customer began using the product. That's an actual testimonial.

A testimonial shouldn't be a sales pitch, it shouldn't be a call to action, or a guess about future performance. I know they mean well, but when somebody sells and sends me a testimonial that

tries to sell the product, “, you know I made a testimonial for your product because you know, it’s great.” And then in the testimonial they’re like, “I bought My Unfair Advantage because and are just amazing and you need to jump on this right now, just take my word for it, scroll right down to the order button and buy this product now, because it’s the best thing you’ll ever have.” That’s a sales pitch. You know what I mean. It’s harming the page more than it’s doing well.

A testimonial, an actual testimony is just that it’s a testimony of what happened. Think of it like a person on the witness stand in the courtroom giving their testimony to the accounts of something that happened and that’s exactly what you want with the testimonials. Somebody to say, “Hey, look. This is what happened. I bought the product, this is why I bought it, this is why I used it. This is what I found when I used it, this is what’s changed now.” That’s a testimonial.

Now there’s also a review and a lot of people do review site. This is a great thing to do if you’re just starting out, and you want to review products. Just understand that a review is opinionated. Reviewing is critiquing. It’s kind of like going to the movies and being a movie critique. It’s an opinionated review of a product that’s not a full endorsement. It’s not the same exact thing as a testimonial, it’s not even an endorsement, because it could be a negative or positive. But it can be a little complicated if you’re an affiliate for that product, and even illegally tricky, if you’re an affiliate for another product, and you’re giving a negative review on this product.

Here's the thing, a lot of people create review websites, or they do reviews of products on their site, on their blog, for example. They talk bad about a product. They, “Oh, you know what, this is a terrible product, I bought this product, I’ve heard from someone, or I’d looked at the page, and I hated it, this and this. You shouldn’t buy this product. I score it as 0 on a scale of 1-1000, and blah blah blah. And this is just terrible.” If you want a real way to make money, that’s awesome and amazing. “Here, clicks this link.” You’re literally defaming, and you are hurting another business to make money, for compensation for your own gain. That’s no longer a review. That is now an advertisement.

You gotta be very, very careful when you’re doing product reviews because you could get jammed up with the FTC, with the law, because the moment that you are putting something on that review for your own benefit, it could be an opt-in form, it could be something that says, “Hey, you want to get more reviews from me like this one? Enter your name and email here.” If you’re marketing to that list, if you’re going to possibly gain monetary compensation in any way in the future from that list and you slandered my product, to get that list, guess what, you just profited from talking bad about my thing. An argument could be made that your only purpose for slandering is to compete and hurt my business so that you could build your business. Again, you’ve gotta be very careful with this.

Some marketers create review sites that discuss copyrighted materials. This is another one that’s kind of tricky, because there’s this thing and known as Fair Use. When you are critiquing

something, you can show it. If I bought an item, or I bought a product, and I am critiquing the product, and for the purpose of the critique, I am showing you the product, I'm showing you, I'm like, "Hey, look. See, I own it. I bought it. This is what happened when I did this. See how it broke. I opened it, and I broke right away." That's Fair Use, and you can't get sued for doing a review and demonstrating what happened, like if it's an exhibit in the process of you explaining what happened. Somebody can't sue you and stop you from sharing your review because of copyrighted information. That falls under fair use.

Now, if you heard logging into someone's protected members area, and you're showing protected content, and it's copyrighted, and you're calling it a review, you can't do that. You can't just curate or perpetrate, or propagate someone's materials, especially digital material under the guides of fair use, calling it a review, or something like that. You gotta be very careful about sharing copyrighted material, especially if you are calling it a review, sharing somebody's copyrighted member's area, then hurting their business by telling people not to buy this, just so that you could push your thing instead, this happens all the time. This is not good business, that is not truth in selling and its stuff.

Fair Use allows limited use of copyrighted materials, generally providing that the use is not for commercial purposes. Affiliate reviews aren't covered. You can't say, "Hey, I'm going to review this product and I'm gonna do it under Fair Use, because I want somebody to buy from me." That's not fair. There's nothing fair about you hurting someone else's business, for you to make money, or for you to benefit from it. But that does not mean that you can't give a review or critique of the actual account, a testimony of what happened in the process of you purchasing a product to educate the public. There's nothing wrong with that. Again, it's an important distinction to make, and you want to make sure that you're running your business on the right side of the law. If you're not sure, and you're like, "What's okay to do? What's not okay to do?" It's best to seek guidance. One source is an intellectual property attorney. You can get a lawyer. If you're running a review site, I suggest that you hire a lawyer, an intellectual property attorney that is going to create disclaimers for you, that's going to set your legal part of your business up the way that it needs to be set up. This is important.

Remember, there's a lot you might tell, "You know what, I live in Cambodia." You know what, let me tell you something, there is a lot that can be done to you no matter where you are in the planet. There are things like the Digital Copyright Millennium Act. Somebody can send a cease and desist to your server, to your hosting account, to your domain registrar, and get your site, your entire business, your server, taken off the internet if you're violating their copyrights. There are methods, there are things that can be done. There are ways for people to protect themselves from this kind of thing, from copyright infringement online.

It's totally different than if you're doing a review of the product to sell that product. That's totally different, you're not trying to hurt anybody. You're trying to teach somebody, a prospect, what the

product is about, and you're demonstrating them, "Hey, look. I bought this. Let me give you a tour of it." Usually, if you get the permission from the vendor, they'll have no problem doing that for you because you're an affiliate, and you're trying to sell it, so there's no big deal there. I'm talking about, you gotta be careful when you start doing negative reviews. That's something that you got to consider.

Endorsements let's talk about this because it's different. It's different than a testimonial. Sometimes, it's a good idea to put an endorsement on your sales page in addition to the testimonials. I call this Character Endorsements, because a character endorsement, we see this all the time. I asked one of my students, "Do you have any testimonials?" And he said, "Would you give me a testimonial?", I said, "I can't do that. I can give you a character endorsement. I cannot give you a testimonial, because I didn't buy the product, I'm not using your product." I can say, "Hey, I know you. I know Joe Smith. Joe Smith has been a member of my products for a long time. I've had various discussions with Joe. He's a great guy, he's hard worker, he's trustworthy, he's always answering my emails and my message." I can give you a character endorsement that will help you, but it is not the same thing as a testimonial. It's a good thing to sprinkle your sales page with both of those sorts of things. It's kind like, references. You go to apply for a job, and it's always good to give references. Obviously, you're gonna give good references, you're not going to give a reference of somebody that you stiffed out of \$100 or somebody that you owe money to, or something like that.

Endorsements are intended to borrow status till I borrow some credibility. It generally come from celebrities of the niche, people that are well known. In internet marketing, Mike Filsaime, Frank Kern, see what I did out there? The endorsing party doesn't necessarily use the products themselves to speaking about the vendor and his credibility, his trustworthiness. Endorsements can cross the line if the endorsing party stands to benefit from the endorsement. Were they paid? No. Again, this is another gray area, and I'm gonna tell you, you're gonna want to go to the ftc.gov site. You could literally type in "endorsements" into the search bar, and there's lots of stuff that you could read about what's okay, and what's not okay. It is not illegal to pay for an endorsement. It isn't even illegal to pay for a testimonial. What's illegal is to lie.

Lying about a product, or to pay someone to lie about your thing. To say, "Hey, look. I'm gonna give you a copy of my product. I will pay you to review it, to shoot a video about it, to try it out, and to tell everybody what you found, to give a testimonial." There's nothing wrong with that. What's wrong is that "Hey, listen. I'll give you 100 bucks if you get on the camera and tell everybody that you bought the product, and it made you rich." That's illegal. Again, I don't want to get into this debate about whether it's okay to compensate people or not. I personally, I'm going to recommend to you that you don't get into the habit of paying anyone for a testimonial, or an endorsement. If you're doing things right, you are creating your products in advance of selling them, so you're not finishing it the night before you're launching it, you're creating your products

with plenty of time, and you're inviting some people to be beta testers. Whether it's a membership side, or an eBook. Go into one of the Facebook groups, to somewhere that you belong to and say, "Guys, I'm looking for 10 people that are willing to give me some opinions on my book. I'm willing to give you a free copy of it if you're willing to invest an hour of time into looking it over and letting me know what you think." That's called, beta testers, that's a focus group. Technically, you've compensated them with the free copy of your product. If you end up selling your product for a \$100, and technically, it could be said like, "Well, they were compensated a \$100,000 of value item." Again, I'm not saying it's wrong to do that, but there are guidelines for what's okay, and what's not okay. You can find those guidelines at ftc.gov. I, recommend that you become familiar with the ftc.gov site. Look, there's thousands of pages in there, you're not going read the whole thing. There are articles, there are case studies, there are documented lawsuit preceding paperwork, and reports, and things that you could see how things were decided, and who was ruled, what was ruled illegal. You, should, when you have a question about what law, "Am I doing this right?", look it up at the ftc.gov site. For this thing, go over to ftc.gov, and just type "endorsement guides," I think it's "endorsement guidelines." Try "endorsement guides" or "endorsement guidelines" into the search bar.

Let's talk about Product Demos. This is another one that I've seen people pushed the envelope on this one, especially in the digital marketing space. And the digital marketing space, it gets a lot of people how to be selling stuff, or selling plug-in, and stuff like that, and they'll do a demo. They'll do a product demo to showcase the features of the software, and what it does, or even if it's not a software, doing a demonstration of the member's area.

Look, product demos are freaking awesome. Product Demos, help you, because it substantiates the claims that you made in your sales copy, or in your videos. If you said, "Hey, my product has 300 videos in it. I'm gonna give you a membership site that has 300 videos." You know what, there's no better proof, and saying, "Here, let me show you right on my screen, I'm gonna open it up, and I'm gonna go to the archives page, let me show you all the videos. You have here Archives 2017, here's 2016, here's 2014, here's 2015, whatever." Look, you click on here, and look, you play. That would be impossible to go through all of them, but anyway, you're showing so I'm sure you can understand how this would help boost trust and credibility as opposed to just making a promise of saying, "Hey, there's 300 videos in there." You know there's gonna be somebody like, "Yeah, right. 300. Get out of here." You can relieve or eliminate that apprehension by just giving a demonstration, it increases trust, it shows them that you're delivering what you promised.

Here's a cool thing that a lot of people don't realize about demos. It's gonna reduce your support tickets, it's gonna reduce your refund request. Here's why: When you did a demonstration on the sales page, you demonstrated the product before the person even committed to buy, you have a much better educated customer, they have a much better understanding of what they're getting themselves into. This is why I am not a big fan, I'm not gonna say I've never done blind offers, but

I'm not a big fan of them, because a blind offer is one that is 100% sold on impulse. It's 100% sold based on me getting you excited and promising you something that you haven't seen and getting you to pull the trigger on that purchase to then later found out what you got. Here's the thing, those kinds of products can burn a lot. They sell, well because you're billing impulse, you're billing suspense, and people are like, "Oh, I gotta have it, I gotta have it. What's he talking about? Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!" And then they get it, but then what happens is those products also have a very high refund rate, because a big percentage of those people, they're gonna get buyer's remorse, and they gotta, "Okay. I know what it is, yeah. Whatever, I'm just gotta get rid of it, I'm gonna refund it."

When you have a demo on your sales page, you can, argue your case when somebody puts through a PayPal dispute. When somebody puts through a PayPal dispute like, "Oh my God, this item was not as described, I want my money back." You can say, "Whoa, hold on a second. There's a demo on the sales page." You're gonna win most PayPal disputes that are for item not described just because you had a demo, and write in the PayPal claim, you just post a link to that demo, and that sales page and say, "Hey, notice that there's a demo on the page. The person obviously bought the product on that page. I saw the demo, it was there, and you can't say, it wasn't this described. You can't say that I didn't describe this product, if you didn't look at the description, or read the description, or watch the demo, how is that my problem?" Again, if somebody is disputing, you're gonna win that dispute.

Demos need to show what the product can do unassisted. This is a big one. Meaning, it needs to work without extra plugins, unrecorded set-up, or any kind of other special acts of God, or benefits, or something like that. I think this is the part where a lot of vendors push the envelope, and they shouldn't. I'll give you an example. This is a trend, do you see a lot of people do this, they make claims like, "Create a website in 60 seconds." And something like that.

And then what happens is they start a timer, and then right on your screen, you see them build this website in 60 seconds. But in the process of doing that, they already had all their links, on a little document, they add all their text, all their stuff that they're gonna add. It's not accurate, it's not what it will take you to do, can someone achieve that? Yeah. It is achievable. But that's not a demonstration, it's not an accurate demonstration.

It comes down to what would a reasonable person think when they watch that? They're gonna think that you're saying that 60 seconds from the time I get your product, I'll be able to have a website up. But then if in the process of doing that, once I get in there you reveal to me, "Oh, well no, you're gonna must go create a JVZoo account and generate an affiliate ID, and then you're gonna must go on to like the product, and then you're gonna must go and watch this video to learn how to build list, and how to get traffic. Then you're gonna must go and get this thing, then you gonna must go and write the product description, then you're gonna must go on become an affiliate at Amazon, and copy your Amazon affiliate ID. Oh, you don't have a secret key? You're

gonna must go and generate that over an Amazon S3.” That is not 60 seconds. Can it be done in 60 seconds after you’ve gone through 3 hours of prep work? Oh, that’s a totally different demo. That’s a totally different thing. It must work without extra special unrecorded set-up time. This is big.

Right inside of the ftc.gov, you can find out about this lawsuit that happened. There was recently a Nissan, Nissan, the car company. There’s a Nissan commercial for the Frontier. The Frontier is the pick-up truck that they made. They got into big trouble with the demo that they shot in this commercial. And the demo was the truck was pushing a dune buggy up a hill, as to imply that the dune buggy can’t make it up the hill, but the Nissan Frontier wasn’t able to push this dune buggy up the hill. But to shoot that video, the company attached cables to the truck and to the dune buggy and pulled them up with wedge. They filmed it with the camera on an angle, so that the hill looks a lot steeper than it was. That’s not okay. That is lying. That is flat out lying. Obviously, that’s a physical product that’s a little bit different, but you can’t do that.

Here’s an example of something like that, this is terrible, and I know people do it. On webinars and even on stage, I’ve heard just terrible horror stories about vendors that are trying to make it look like their product generates sales, but they have someone in the back of the room making purchases. While they’re demonstrating their platform or their tool to make it look like these purchases are coming in life, the whole thing is set up! That is illegal. You cannot do that. Don’t do anything like that. It can’t show results. That’s another thing, we’re gonna talk a little bit about results in a minute.

The demo must be faithful to the results that are claimed. It’s not enough to just disclose exceptions and fine print. Here’s what I mean by this, two parts of this. The demo must be faithful to the results claim. For example, in that truck example, obviously, the Frontier couldn’t make it up the hill without the cable. If you’re gonna show income proof, based on your software, but your software uses 3,000 Facebook friends that you have, and it’s showing a tool to those 3,000 friends, then that must be part of the process. You can’t tell somebody, “Hey, look. This Facebook tool makes a \$1,000 a day.” And then you’re just selling the tool, but you failed to disclose that the way that it works is in your group that has 10,000 members that you’ve been building for 3 years. Because the average buyer isn’t gonna have a group that has 10,000 members to monetize. The results must be faithful to the demo. You can’t just say in the fine print, “By the way, we did this in a group that has 10,000 members.” That’s not okay, because again, it’s deception.

This was proven, there was a precedent made, I believe it was Covergirl, or Maybelline, again, you can find this information at ftc.gov. They did a commercial about eyelashes, eyelash is a mascara product, and the mascara was making these models’ eyelashes look huge, and like Betty Boop kind of eyelashes. It turns out that those models had implants, they had fake eyelashes to begin with. They put this commercial together and women were thinking, “Oh my

goodness, I'm gonna buy this mascara, it's gonna make my eyelashes look beautiful." And there was fine print at the end of the commercial that said, "These models had already pre-enhanced eyelashes." That's not okay, because the average person is not gonna freeze that video on that last frame and blow it up 500 times to see the disclaimer. Again, the demo must match.

Let's talk about Proof of Results, Income Claims. This gets gray, especially at ftc.gov, screenshots from your JVZoo account or your PayPal should support your headline and your claims. A lot of people do this because, honestly, it's powerful, it is powerful, I do this in all my sales pages because I am literally in the business of teaching people how to make money with their online businesses. Obviously, establishing that credibility by saying, "Hey guys, look at my JVZoo account. Look at how much money is in there. Look at my PayPal. Look at my bank account and taking a screenshot." If I said in the headline, "This system makes \$316 a day." And then down beneath my video or somewhere on my page, I have an income shot, or a screenshot of my JVZoo account. "And guess what, it has \$316 for that day." Well, that is an excellent way of building trust and credibility and getting the prospect excited. What's important though is that you're doing it accurately, ethically, and that you're not getting yourself in trouble or on hot water with the FTC. Screenshots are very powerful forms of proof.

The downside is that it can lead to false hope because the buyers are gonna believe that they will achieve those same results. It's just natural for someone to be like, "Okay, 's selling this software. There's a picture of the amount of money that makes. If I buy the software, I'll get these results." The factor that the average person is going and eliminate from the equation in their mind is. was able to get those results with that software. The thing is that it's impossible for to predict that you're gonna get the same results because doesn't know your work ethic, what you're bringing to the table, what preexisting knowledge of the subject matter did you have. It's very, very difficult for anyone to predict earnings. That needs to be disclosed, because if not, you're being deceptive.

Income Proof is something that we put on sales pages for shock value. That's great, because people are like, "Wow! Look at all that." That's awesome from a sales point of view. But it could be tricky, legally. The reason this is a little bit gray and muddy at the ftc.gov, and you'll read one article at FTC's site, and it's kind of saying one thing and then you'll read another one, or you'll read one of the cases, and you're like, "Wait a second, that doesn't jive." It's because most of the income claim lawsuits and things that they see, revolve around MLMs, Multi-Level Marketing schemes. I'm not a fan because of what they've become. A lot of these income claim lawsuits and things have come from problems with MLMs, just misrepresenting their Ponzi scheme, or whatever the hell it is there, their pyramid scheme, or whatever it is.

The FTC requires MLMs to use an average of what every distributor in the company makes. But the thing is, where it becomes money is, that number of how many distributors are in the company changes every day. People join, people quit. It becomes difficult to come up with an

average, or you're gonna do an average over a specific time range. If so, how often does that time range need to be updated. It's tough, it's very, very difficult to hammer down exactly what it is, so the rules are kind of vague. It comes down to individual interpretation. If you ever get sued, that's what it's going to come down to, is what was reasonably done, was this being deceptive? You're gonna want to contribute what the average amount of money is. But again, I'm going back to the prior bullet there, with the MLM. It's a little different, because that's a company that has distributors.

If your product is an information product, and you're selling a book, and eBook that teaches people how to make YouTube videos for affiliate marketing. You don't even keep records of what each one of your students make, so you can't even come up with that average, you can't provide that. You're teaching information. This is where it becomes very tricky. You're like a school, you're a professor. Imagine if a college, where they try to get the people to sign up by showing paychecks of prior graduates. That's what you're doing on your sales page, you're saying, "Hey, look. You can make this money while reading this eBook." Imagine a college saying, "Hey, look. You can make this money with this degree. Look at the amount of money this guy made." They would do that properly, the FTC would force a college to get the average amount that every single graduate has made, and obviously, that would not be a very favorable number, especially nowadays, since like 65% of college graduates are just unemployable.

You're also gonna want to disclose any contributing factors that help create the income. For example, the total amount of time spent to generate the income. There was an article at [ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov), I just read this the other day. I'm not just saying this, I've literally read the article. The kid, he's in an MLM, some sort of supplement, vitamins, or something. He was selling these things, and he works for six months to try the sale he made. He made a website, he was going business to business with his vitamins, trying to sell it. After six months, he finally closed a deal, and he sold \$4,500 worth of this product. But he was trying to recruit people under him for the MLM to sell the product as well, you know how that works right, the MLM kind of thing. What he did was he took a picture of his check for \$4,500 and he put it on his website with the video of him saying, "Look at how I made big one deal. I made \$4,500." But what he didn't disclose is that he was eating ramen noodles and trying to freak get by for 6 months to get that \$4,500.

What the FTC is saying is in these situations, that's a contributing factor, and you've got to say, "Hey, look. This \$4,500 was made over this amount of time." Therefore, the average amount of money if we divide it by 180 days or whatever the number of days it is that you invested to generate that \$4,500. That's a more accurate type of number. MLM distributors are frequently in conflict with the FTC due to their structure. But in many regards, internet marketing, a lot of people misclassify internet marketing because you can have affiliates promoting your products. They misclassify affiliate marketing in many circumstances as an MLM, even though it is very easy to prove that it isn't. But when you consider training and software products directly from the

creator, being sold to a student, or somebody that's gonna absorb the information to then setup to make money. It is more like a college course. And there's a reason why colleges don't do income claims.

Now, it comes out the Truth in Selling. That's where I'm gonna wrap this up with Truth in Selling. You've gotta focus on being true to yourself, when you're selling a product. You've got to be true to your product, or your company, and you've gotta be true to your customers. If someone would reasonably be misled by what you're doing, then you shouldn't be doing it. Remember, social proof, and testimonials are very powerful elements of your sales page but, you must use them properly. The consequences from mistakes here are angry customers at best and potentially could land you in court. Be mindful of how you're using your social proofs and if in doubt, consult an attorney, it's cheaper to get it right, than it is to must go and try to defend yourself in court.

I hope that you've gotten a lot from this. And remember it only takes one bad apple to ruin the bunch, so make sure that you're doing things the right way. I look forward to seeing you on the next MUA episode. Take care.



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