

## THE CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN

### Lena West: Get Your Brand Straight

How to Maximize Social Media: Make Sure Your Message is Part of Your Messaging

Moderator: Whitney Gray Wilkerson

Guest: Lena West

**WHITNEY GRAY WILKERSON:** Thanks, everybody, for joining us today for our teleclass with Lena West, Get Your Brand Straight: How to Maximize Social Media. Make Sure Your Message is Part of Your Messaging.

So a little bit about Lena. She's the leading expert on how women entrepreneurs can monetize social media. She's also the founder of [influenceexpansion.com](http://influenceexpansion.com), home of the Influence Expansion Academy, which is the only social media Mastermind program created especially for women entrepreneurs.

So we did send out a worksheet that you can use to follow along with Lena today on the teleclass. It was sent in a reminder email to you after you signed up. If you are unable to find that link, you can simply go to our home page to the original listing for today's teleclass and you will find a download here, [Get Your Brand Straight worksheet link](#).

So with that said, Lena, please take it away.

**LENA WEST:** Thank you so much Whitney. I so appreciate the intro.

And thank you for being here, all of you. I can't see all who is here because I don't have the controls in front of me, I'm on the phone, but I know what it takes to take time out of your day to come and learn, and I love the fact that you all are investing your time in being here. So to that end, here's what I want to say.

Oh, gosh, most of you who know me, and even some of those of you who are just meeting me for the first time today, you might know that I speak a lot about social media. And good gracious, there's so much to say about social media. There's so much going on. There are so many changes that are happening. It's really quite an interesting time.

So in preparation for today I started to think about how can I serve you best? Do you need more information? Do you need more stats? Do you need data? And I thought, no no no no. Most of the women that I know, most of the women entrepreneurs that I know, they don't need more stuff. What they need is somebody to be their human Google and say look, this is what you need to focus

on and, you know, these are the one, two, three things that you need to really hone in on and so that's what I'm going to do today.

When I was asked to do this presentation I thought, what are the three things that I could say that you could do right now when we end this call? What are the three things that you could check in with yourself about, ask your team to help you with, and actually do? And so I want to talk to you about three things. I'm going to list them for you and then I'll dig in deep, and I think they are going to ask me some questions or something along those lines so we'll go with the flow.

So the first thing I want to talk to you about is how to be marketable. So when we're talking about how to get your brand straight and how to make sure that your message is part of your messaging, the very first thing I'm going to talk to you about is how to be marketable. And I'll explain what I mean by that when I dig into that topic.

The next thing that I'm going to talk to you about is -- it kind of goes hand and hand, so the second thing goes hand in hand with your first thing and that is your brand cornerstone.

Most of you probably have received the worksheet that accompanies this call today. If you don't have it, no worries. You can get it. They're going to be sending it out in the recap. So if you don't have it, it's okay. It's not something that you can work through on this call anyway, but it's something that you will want to work yourself through once this call is over.

And then the third thing that I want to talk to you about is the amount of content that you need to create, because I think there's a little bit of misconceptions going on out there.

So let's dig right in because oh, my gosh, we have a very short amount of time and I want to make sure that you get actionable information.

So the first thing is -- and this is something that my mentor told me years ago and it took me -- you guys will probably get it faster than I did, but it took me a while to get what he was saying. And what he said was, you know what? If you want to be successful at marketing your business -- or anything, a program, a product, doesn't matter what it is -- if you want to be successful at marketing, the first thing that you have to do is be marketable.

And there's a little nuance there. What do you mean, marketable, Lena? What do you mean, I've got to be marketable? Everything is marketable. Yeah, not so much. As I mentioned a moment ago, there's a lot of noise happening. The signal-to-noise ratio with social media is very, very -- the ratio is off. There is a lot of noise and very little signal. So how does your brand stand out? How do you make sure that you're seen and heard?

Well, the best thing that you can do is be marketable. What does that mean? That means not saying the same thing that everyone else saying. This is so important. So often we decide well, I'm going to start tweeting or I'm going to start a

Facebook page for my business and we think oh, well, all I've got to do is create this page or create this Twitter account or recommit myself to Twitter if you are already on Twitter. So often we think that's all we have to do is show up and be part of the conversation.

And yes, that's it, but you've got to put some serious thought into it. How can you make yourself marketable? How can you make it so that people hang on your every word? How can you make it so that people want to hear from you and when they don't, they start to say, hey, where have you been? We have missed you.

For those of you who follow me on Facebook, I posted something yesterday about starting again. I write these kind of little mini essays that are really about me and where I am in my business, and hopefully it helps other people that I share with. And people always say well, gosh, you always have the right message at the right time. How is that even possible?

It's possible because I'm tapped into what's going on with me and by virtue of that, I make myself marketable to everyone else because I'm tapped in and I'm willing to do the hard work. I know that the things that are going on with me, yes, they will probably resonate with other people because they are going through the same challenges as well.

But they are not going -- no one else is going to say it how I say it. No one else is going to use the words that I use. No one else is going to put it to them how I put it to them. I have a very kind of no-nonsense New Yorker style about myself, so no one else is going to be that for them and that's how I have become marketable.

Everyone else has their own brand of magic. You don't have to be a tough-talking, no-nonsense New Yorker to get attention. You don't have to be someone you're not. You don't have to fake it until you make it. But you do have to figure out what is it that I can uniquely say that will help me to stand out?

And this is not about a unique selling proposition. I want you to guys to -- I mean, hear me now. Hear me. I don't want you to guys to think that this is anything -- any marketing mumbo-jumbo. I'm coming to you with the real business today.

This is really, truly about sitting down with a cup of tea and saying to yourself, girlfriend, what do you have to say? What do you have to say that is going to impact people? And here's a clue. Here's how you know you are onto it. You know you are onto it because it's something that you are scared to say.

When I first started posting mini essays on Facebook, I thought, good Lord, people are going to think I'm crazy. They are going to think something is wrong with me. People are going to think I'm on some sort of endless rant. And some people probably did, but most people didn't. Most people love it. Most people say it helps them to focus. Most people say it helps them to kind of get themselves back on track or get into alignment or think about things in a different way.

So the things -- when you are thinking about how do I make myself marketable, think about what is the thing that's just kind of on the edge of coming out of your

mouth every single minute but you always hold back because you think, unh-uh, that's a little too much. That's a little over the top. That's your thing. That's your thing. Now you've got to have the courage to say it.

Now I want to move into the second thing I want to talk to you about, the second point I want to make today. What if you still don't know? Because this is confusing. I have created a system that I use with all my clients and all my students. They all have been taught this nine-step system. And the very second step of the system is something that's called creating your brand cornerstone.

Now, this is the worksheet. And again, if you don't have it, it's totally cool. Don't worry about it. They are going to send it to you in the recap and you can work through it at that time after the call. But this is what the worksheet is about because it is going to take you through creating your brand cornerstone.

A very simple way of understanding what your brand cornerstone is is what your statement to the world is, what your thing -- and you guys can't see me but I'm using air quotes -- what your thing that you can share with the world is. The thing that is going to make you marketable, your brand cornerstone is that thing. Typically, it's the thing that you would say if you had 30 seconds on Good Morning America to make the one and only point that you want to make about what's going on in your industry and with the people you serve.

So I'm going to say that again because it's really important that you hear it. Your brand cornerstone is the thing that you would say if you had 30 seconds on Good Morning America. So like those of who you know my friend Tory Johnson, those of you who are up there in the morning with Tory Johnson, you are there and you have got 30 seconds and Tory says you have got 30 seconds to say whatever it is that's on your heart and your soul to say that you know is going wrong in your market or needs to be changed with your market or needs to be changed in your industry, that's your brand's cornerstone.

So in this worksheet that you will get, if you don't already have it, in this worksheet, work through it. Don't rush this process. This process takes time. And you will say, well, how much time? I want to tell you that sometimes this brand cornerstone can take weeks. Don't be scared of the process. It's worth it. It's worth it because you will start to stand out. You will be saying the stuff that everybody else thinks but everybody else is too scared to say. They don't have the courage to say it like you will. They don't have the words. They won't even use the same words that you will use because they are not you. You are you. So that's what your brand cornerstone is about.

The other thing that I want to share with you, and I know, oh, my gosh we're running out of time, but I want to share this with you. The third thing is the amount of content that we think we have to share.

So how do you make sure that your message always winds up in your messaging, in all of your tweets and all of your Facebook updates and all of your blog posts? Stop thinking you have to have create so much daggone content. Stop creating so much content. Focus on quality and not quantity.

I know that a lot of you have been taught -- and this was the case when social media first became very popular. It was all about being a content mill, just getting that content out there as fast as you could get it out there and being on the radar as often as you can, as quickly as you can.

I get that that's what we were taught, but let's rewrite history a little bit today. On this half hour phone call, let's rewind and think about, okay, let's take our time, right? We're women. The world revolves around us, right? So let's take our time and figure out what are we saying, and let's make sure that instead of trying to get out five messages every week, let's try to focus on one or two quality messages.

If you will notice, if you go to my Facebook timeline, I don't post something every single day. Sometimes I get busy. Sometimes I have things going on. And this is on my personal timeline. I don't post things every day. And sometimes it's not that I'm busy, it's just that I don't have anything that I feel is of real change-agent value to say, and that's okay. It doesn't mean I'm not a thought leader. It doesn't mean I'm not good at what I do. It doesn't mean that -- it doesn't mean anything negative.

When you don't have anything to say -- so a lot of people have learned, when they were younger, if you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all. I say this: If you don't have anything to say, don't say anything. Stop feeling the need to justify and fill the space. Only speak and use your voice, use the voice that you have with your business and social media and even your actual physical voice when you really, truly have something to say.

I'm part of a metaphysical group and it's kind of a group study program. We're talking a lot about the power of our words and the power of sound. That's the thing that we're studying in this group right now, and one of the things that we're talking about is you know what? Let's start observing the power of silence. Let's start figuring out, I am going to create an impact both by what I say and what I don't say.

I was just on Facebook a moment ago before we started this call and there's a woman name Sally who I love. She's a stylist, and she was asked to comment on some red carpet commentary for some publication, some local publication where she lives. And she told them, she said listen, I'm happy to be a participant in this red carpet story that you are planning on but I'm not going to be snarky. I'm not going to put women down. I'm not going to do this worst-dressed thing. I'm not going to get involved in that. I really want to focus on the positive.

So here is someone who is making her message of women being empowered about their bodies and how they look, here is someone who is making her message a part of her messaging not by what she's saying but by what she refuses to say. Huge deal.

So focus less on the quantity and focus more on the quality. Sometimes there's going to be weeks where you only have two blog posts in you and that's all you've got. And what I'm saying is that's okay. Doesn't mean you don't know what you

are doing. Doesn't mean you are falling off. Doesn't mean that you're not good at what you do. It just means that that's all that you have to say in this time and this space, and that's enough.

Focus on being enough and then market the hell out of what you do have to say. If you've only got two blog posts, great. I shouldn't say only. If you have got two blog posts, great. That's awesome. Market those two blog posts for your life. Like Rue Paul says lip sync for your life, market those two blog posts for your life.

So I want to recap today and then I want to get back to Whitney so that we can open it up for questions.

The first thing is, I'm showing you just three things today. The first thing is be marketable. Be marketable. In order to be successful in marketing, you have to be marketable. You have to have something that's worth saying. You have to have something that's worth repeating, that's worth retweeting, that's worth sharing, that's worth the like, and it can't be what everybody else is saying. Have the courage to say what other people won't. Have the courage and you will be surprised.

Have the courage to say what's on your heart because I guarantee you it's on the heart of other people. It's on the heart of other people in your industry. It's on the heart of other people in your market. And you will win because of this, I promise you. So the very first thing is be marketable.

What if you still don't know how to do that? Get to this brand cornerstone worksheet, because the brand cornerstone is the thing. It is the thing. Ever since I created my own brand cornerstone -- and people laughed at me. They poked fun at me. I even got, you know, a bunch of people on a blog post that said you don't know what you are talking about.

This was some years ago when I said women entrepreneurs need to use social media differently and we need to build our businesses differently. I was derided for that. I was made fun of because of that. But you know what? My market loved it and so I kept saying it. And that's why I'm talking to you now.

That's why I'm talking to hundreds of women on this call now because I wouldn't give up. Because I had the courage to say I'm a woman in business and I know that how men are teaching marketing, I don't get it. It doesn't work for me. It feels off. It feels wrong. I don't want to teach this and I'm not going to teach this. How men are teaching how to build businesses, it doesn't work for me. I built that into my brand and I made sure that my message was part of my messaging.

So that brand cornerstone worksheet and distilling your brand, that is the thing that is going to help you. So please, please, please, work through that worksheet.

And the third thing, again, to recap, is hey, focus on the quality, not the quantity. You do not have to be a machine. You do not have to crank out content as if you were HuffPo or any other online publication. You are you and it's cool. If you have got two blog posts and that's what on your heart to share with your audience and

your market this week, then that's cool. Market the heck out of those blog posts. Market the heck out of those Facebook posts and you will be fine, I promise you.

So those are my three things. I hope this has been helpful. Whitney, take it away. Ask me whatever you want to ask.

**WGW:** Well, you opened the door to some great conversations, some big picture and then also some touching on execution. So let's take a step back to big picture.

Some of the listeners on this call, they have already built a brand or are in the process of building a brand. So how can they tell if their message is already a part of their messaging or if they have some work to do?

**LW:** Really good question. Here's how you can tell if you're on or if you got some work to do: You tell by the reaction that you get. Now, remember -- and hear me and hear me good -- I'm not talking about the number of likes you get. Is that an indicator? Absolutely. I'm talking about what people say when they comment about what you shared.

Are they saying things like wow, this touched me, or I needed to hear this today, or oh, my gosh, you must have been in my head, or are you reading my journal, or I was just trying to figure this out. This is how you know that you are tapped in. This is how you know that you have made your message a part of your messaging.

When you get comments like that, you are on. And if you are not getting those comments, that's okay. It doesn't mean you stink, it just means you've got work to do. It just means you've got to sit down with that cup of tea and put some jazz on or put some new-age music on and really tap into what is it that you are trying to say? What do you really want to say? That's how you know.

Really good barometer, look at the comments that you get on what you post and what do people say. If people say great post, or interesting, or I like this, that's good and that's a start. But you want to affect people on a visceral level. And once you know that you are affecting them on a visceral level, you've got it. That's the magic, baby.

**WGW:** Before I go on to the next question, I just want to remind everybody, we're going over a lot of content, a lot of great advice from Lena on this call. We will be posting a recording of today's teleclass as well as a written recap. Also contact information if you are interested in following up with Lena. And, of course, that's a great chance for you to share today's recording and what you have learned with friends and on social media.

Which brings me to the next question which is you spoke about how much content you suggest people creating and why. Have it come from the heart, have it be authentic.

What about sharing other people's content? How does that play into building your brand online?

**LW:** I love it. I call it the reciprocity rule, and it's kind of like the golden rule. I think that sharing other people's content is one of the best things that you can do. Because sometimes they say it better or they say it in a way that you would have never thought, or a way that is not really kind of your style but you want to echo what they are saying. So sharing the content of other people is an awesome way to make sure that your message is part of your messaging.

You might say well, if I'm sharing someone else's content, how is that my message? Because you are sharing it. There's a term in social media that we call curating content, and that's what that means. It means finding the content that you feel your audience and your market needs to hear on a particular day or at a particular time and sharing that with them. This takes courage, too, because sometimes that content comes from someone else who's working in your industry. I don't believe in competition, but sometimes that content comes from other people working in your industry.

I've shared Amy Porterfield's content because I know Amy Porterfield is brilliant. I like what she has to say, and I'm not going to shortchange my audience because I may feel insecure about what are people going to think if I share Amy's content? They're going to think, wow, thank you so much for sharing this. Thank you so much for introducing me to a smart woman, right?

So I think it's brilliant when we share other content, and it's courageous because we have the courage to say, you know what? It's not all about me. I'm going to put somebody else front and center. I'm going to let this other person shine for a minute. And whenever we do that -- in anything, but particularly with marketing -- whenever we can do that, we shine. It's uncanny how that happens. Whenever we decide to put someone else first in terms of our marketing, wow, we start to shine.

So I think it's a brilliant idea and really -- as long as what they are saying dovetails with what you want to say, let me just say that. As long as what they are saying supports your brand cornerstone, absolutely. Rock on. Do it.

**WGW:** So Lena, you had a really powerful statement that you mentioned before which was don't be scared of the process as you're determining what your brand cornerstone is.

So what if somebody does get scared of the process? Where do they go from there?

**LW:** Oh, gosh, I am so tempted to get on my soapbox with this, Whitney. Okay. I'm going to try to contain myself.

Here's the thing: As women, we are taught to be nice and to be kind and to say things in a nice way and to tamp down our feelings and our passion and our energy. And it is absolutely okay if you get scared during the process.



As you are going through the worksheet, as you are going through that brand cornerstone, that brand distillation worksheet, it is okay if you get nervous. And in fact, I don't really like using the word should, but it's something that you need to be feeling if you are doing it right. It needs to bring up a feeling of I don't know if I can say this. I don't know if I can do this. This is over the top.

You know, there's a book that's written by Gavin de Becker and it's called The Gift of Fear. I love that book for so many reasons, but in that book he talks to us about how instead of being scared of the fear, use the fear as a barometer. Start using fear as a way of -- a guidepost, a way to show you, uh-oh, I'm on to something here. There's something going on here. There's something going on in the visceral level.

And often we feel fear in our gut, right? That's our first brain. That's where we first see things. When something's going on in our homes, with our children or with our family, we feel it in our gut first. Even if in our mind we say oh, that's not rational, you are ridiculous, even if that's what you are thinking, there's something that's going on in our belly that says unh-uh, something is not right here. Or uh-oh, watch out. There's something here.

When it happens in your business, sometimes it says uh-oh, watch out, danger, danger, but many times it's opportunity is knocking. Knock-knock. Knock-knock. And it's that feeling of fear. It's that feeling of what if I step out and say this?

And I've got to tell you this before we end this call, please hear this: You will alienate people. One of my mentors says the risk of insult is the price of clarity. And that means that every time you get clear and more clear and more clear, each time you refine your brand messaging you are going to run the risk of insulting someone. And it's all good. Because if they are insulted by your message, they were not your ideal client anyway, and it's okay.

**WGW:** Thank you, Lena, and for everybody listening. You can find Lena at [influenceexpansion.com](http://influenceexpansion.com) and, of course, keep an eye out on social media or on our website for a recap of today's teleclass, both the audio recording as well as a written recap and, of course, the link to the worksheet that Lena referred to a few times in today's call.

So Lena, thank you so much for joining The Conferences Women.

**LW:** Thank you so much for having me. And thank you to everyone for listening. I love all of you. Thank you so much. I appreciate you.

**WGW:** Fantastic. Thank you.