

GMSB 224

[00:00:00] **Antony Whitaker:** Welcome to the Grow My Salon Business podcast, where we focus on the business side of hairdressing. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker, and I'll be talking to thought leaders in the hairdressing industry, discussing insightful, provocative, and inspiring ideas that matter. So get ready to learn, get ready to be challenged, get ready to be inspired, and most importantly, get ready to grow your salon business.

[00:00:28] **Antony Whitaker:** Hello and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker, and as always, it's great to have you here with us today. And in case you don't already know, we now have video versions of the podcast available on our YouTube channel. So if you want to put faces to the names, then head on over to YouTube and search Grow My Salon Business and like and subscribe to the channel.

[00:00:52] **Antony Whitaker:** So my guest on today's podcast is my friend and fellow podcaster, Gordon Miller, who also has two podcasts of his own. The first one is Master in Beauty from the Beauty Cast Network. And the second is Social Beauty Makers. So I suggest that you might want to check both of those out if you don't already follow them.

[00:01:12] **Antony Whitaker:** In today's episode, we are gonna discuss a number of things. It's sort of a bit of a wrap up of what's been going on in 2023. I do have, you know, three or four key things that I want to talk about. The first one is to talk about the impact that artificial intelligence has had on the 12 months.

[00:01:31] **Antony Whitaker:** Uh, and secondly, the to get Gordon's overview of The impact that he sees the various social media apps have been having because they're always sort of juggling for position and some of them are coming more or less relevant than others. And finally, the future of salons,

[00:01:50] **Antony Whitaker:** So without further ado, Gordon, welcome back to the Grow My Salon Business podcast.

[00:01:56] **Gordon Miller:** Thank you, Antony. We're towards the end of the year. So number one, happy holidays and thanks for having me back. I enjoy this so much and I always enjoy our conversations, you know, recorded or not.

And so to be able to have it recorded and share with your audience and I'll share it with mine.

[00:02:11] **Gordon Miller:** I'm honored.

[00:02:12] **Antony Whitaker:** Good. Thank you.

[00:02:13] **Antony Whitaker:** Well, no, it's always great to have you here. We always get lots of positive, uh, feedback whenever you're on. and I'd learn a lot from asking you the questions that I want to ask you on behalf of my audience anyway. So, um, there is one thing I mentioned your two podcasts. Um, one of them is beauty cast network.

[00:02:29] **Antony Whitaker:** And it occurred to me that a lot of my listeners, probably about half of my listeners are American. So they probably will know what Beauty Cast Network is outside of the United States. They won't have a clue. So can we just start with that? What exactly is a Beauty Cast Network and what is your role with them?

[00:02:45] **Gordon Miller:** So I, I came into the organization maybe six, seven months ago now as CEO and president and they are a beautycast network. We, you know, are a platform that connects young people who are in school getting ready to go into the job market, um, with potential employers, but it's very specific to larger, um, chain and, and franchise and corporate salon organizations that offer W 2 employment

[00:03:09] **Gordon Miller:** So in the states where independants has taken such a, you know, is so rooted today, and so many young people are moving into independants directly out of school, many of us believe that doesn't serve them well for having a long career. The best place to start is in a job where you can have mentorship and education and benefits and things to kind of get you off to a great start

[00:03:30] **Gordon Miller:** so you don't become a victim. You know, of your own career. And so Beauty Cast is about connecting these big employers with young people. It's not a job board. It basically, uh, through, the acceptance of students to what we do. It, it allows us to provide employers with all their information to contact 'em when they get close to graduation.

[00:03:46] **Gordon Miller:** So it kind of turns employment job boards on their head and says to an employer. You chase, chase them. You need help. Chase them. And as a person who was once young, many, many years ago, and was once graduating college and looking for a job, it was game changing. As I was getting ready to graduate and stressing out about what my life was going to be, it was game changing when an employer reached out to me.

[00:04:08] **Gordon Miller:** You know, by way of my college and said, Hey, would you come in for an interview? I was like, wait, they're going to ask me to come in. I feel so much better about myself already. And so when I learned about this shift in thinking about the job market for beauty cast, I was excited and I'm now part of it.

[00:04:24] **Antony Whitaker:** Good. Okay. All right. Now I mentioned in the intro, you described an interesting article that every salon owner should read.

[00:04:31] **Antony Whitaker:** And it was about the restaurant owner. And I often think, you know, when I'm looking at the hairdressing industry, I often look outside the hairdressing industry and how other business models are evolving and how they're using tech, etc. Because, uh, you know, often the salon industry is not the quickest to jump on.

[00:04:48] **Antony Whitaker:** And looking at other sectors, you can often get some good ideas about how the salon industry might evolve. So, could you give us a little bit of insight into what that article was all about and the sort of links that you drew between the future of salons and the future of restaurants?

[00:05:08] **Gordon Miller:** Well, you know, coming through pandemic, there was a lot of conversations about how the industry would be different in the future. A lot, you know, I think some of the higher-level stuff, you know, had to do with this, shrinking of things that were big, so they could be a little bit more meaningful for.

[00:05:21] **Gordon Miller:** The people who worked in those organizations, as well as for clients. Um, we saw a lot of salons moving from multi locations down to one or fewer locations than they had. We saw salons compressing their space, you know, often in the space they were in or, or moving to a smaller space.

[00:05:37] **Gordon Miller:** And this article in the New York times is called the, Um, the restaurant revolution has begun in New York in the New York Times. It's a easy free read. And it wasn't really well known, progressive, successful restaurant.

[00:05:51] **Gordon Miller:** Pre pandemic that was doing what so many small businesses do was working themselves to death and having a lot of success doing it. But in pandemic realized that they had lost a sense of boundaries. We talked so much about that. And they came to the realization that their life was all about work and they didn't have balance.

[00:06:08] **Gordon Miller:** And so this article is very much about. Their evolution to a smaller, um, yet similarly successful financially, and kind of happier business model for themselves and their staff. So it was really, but it's very much about the power of downsizing. Not as an individual business, but as an industry.

[00:06:28] **Gordon Miller:** And it's, it's really a fascinating article. I recommend it highly.

[00:06:32] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. The power of downsizing. That's interesting. Yeah. So,

[00:06:36] **Gordon Miller:** Mm hmm.

[00:06:37] **Antony Whitaker:** you know, I agree with you through COVID, there were a lot of people that started to. You know, sort of reassess what they wanted. And in many cases, I had coaching clients that went from two or three salons down to, you know, one or two salons and realized that they were generating the same revenue, uh, easy to manage and more profitable.

[00:06:55] **Antony Whitaker:** So, yeah. Okay. All right. Um, another thing I wanted to touch on, and again, we're talking about this before I started recording was the employee benefit situation. And, um, as I've said in the past, you know, I get listeners to the podcast and lots of different countries and in, in some countries, more than others, there is a lot of employee benefits.

[00:07:18] **Antony Whitaker:** Probably Australia would be a country that has more than anywhere else that I've ever come across, but there are certainly countries in Scandinavia, uh, in Europe, Germany, et cetera, where they do

also have employee benefits. And I, I noticed with all the work that I do with the U. S. that by and large. That hairdressers don't receive a lot of benefits, but to offset that they get much higher commission rates.

[00:07:42] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, whereas in, in Europe, the Australian markets, et cetera, the commission rates are much lower, but there is like guaranteed sick leave and holiday pay and all that sort of stuff. Uh, but what I wanted to ask you about was I've got a couple of coaching clients at the moment, um, in the U S who are both

[00:08:00] **Antony Whitaker:** adding or have already added, uh, employee benefits to their employment model, um, in varying degrees. And I was just wondering, is this a trend that you're starting to see more of? You know, again, we're talking about, you know, quiet quitting and, you know, Gen Z and. Work ethic at different generations, et cetera, et cetera.

[00:08:21] **Antony Whitaker:** And there being in some cases, not so much in the U S but in some cases, a real shortage of people coming into the industry. I was just wondering, is this a trend? Is it something that's starting to happen more of, uh, or not?

[00:08:34] **Gordon Miller:** I don't think we've hit a stage where anybody could consider it a trend. I think there's a perception amongst many that it perhaps is. Um, but I think that's because of social media and the conversations that are happening around it. Um, it's a conversation that's been going on for. A big chunk of my career, at least 20-25 years, and it kind of pops up.

[00:08:54] **Gordon Miller:** And then I think we get a reality check and then it kind of settles back down again. And by reality check, I mean the following, you know, there's been studies done over time. There's been efforts over time by various organizations, especially going back, you know, 10, 20 years associations in particular, um, and, and large groups of salons who've, who first and foremost tackled maybe what's like an obvious benefit health insurance.

[00:09:16] **Gordon Miller:** Um, so first of all, there's this big idea in our own industry that, well, other businesses have it. Why don't we? And there's a, a lot of misconceptions about what that means. You know, I've worked for a lot of larger companies. I've long lived in the corporate side of beauty and, you know, had that all kinds of benefits

[00:09:31] **Gordon Miller:** but most Americans who work for companies today, if they're, if they have health insurance. They're paying for most of it themselves out of their own pocket, you know, the insurer provides a program contributes something to it, but not fully, you know, so it's often 50 percent rarely more than that. So, so that's so we have a misconception about the larger world, I think, and then we try to

[00:09:52] **Gordon Miller:** do what often hairdressers think, Oh, bigger, other companies outside the industry, they just give these benefits. It's not that simple. And the reason it is the way it is healthcare in America has gotten so high and even large corporations can't afford based on their financial models to provide full benefits.

[00:10:07] **Gordon Miller:** So, so some hairdressers and salon owners are chasing something that doesn't exist outside of our industry, but they're confused about it. So that's number one. Number two is when you look at the larger role of corporate benefits, another big benefit, well, two, two things. One is again, that health insurers

[00:10:22] **Gordon Miller:** which you have to opt into. You have to be willing to pay that extra money. A lot of young employees are not willing to. They don't participate. So that's a choice they make. So this idea that all young people want health insurance, you know, it's just not the case in the larger world. Um, the other thing is there's some history in our own industry of, and again, outside the industry of all kinds of benefits that young people don't perceive as important.

[00:10:45] **Gordon Miller:** I'm healthy. Why do I want to pay 200 bucks a month for health care? I, I don't care. So they opt out. That creates its own problems because a lot of companies, especially small companies, if the majority of your employees don't participate in the program, the program can't exist. You can't, your insurance provider needs a certain amount of mass in your business.

[00:11:04] **Gordon Miller:** So that creates its own sort of challenges. But the other thing is that even even big companies that offer like retirement benefits, 401k, again, the average 20, even 30 something, they don't think about retirement. So they opt out and big, um, HR departments and big companies spent a huge effort just trying to convince young people, please participate, please participate.

[00:11:22] **Gordon Miller:** So, there's a big disconnect. We are a very young industry. And what nobody has done, and I would hope that something like the Professional Beauty Association in America would go out and do the research to find out, well, how many young people actually want what is being talked about? And I think there is a big disconnect, and I do think a lot of young people who don't understand it want it because they see a list of benefits, so it just checks the box.

[00:11:45] **Gordon Miller:** It doesn't mean they're going to use it once you give it to them. So there's a lot of confusion. It's very expensive. I'm for. All of it. Like, I, I believe everybody should have health insurance. I believe everybody should have health retirement benefits. But that doesn't mean it works within the current business model in America.

[00:12:02] **Gordon Miller:** And it doesn't necessarily work competitively. So it's a very confusing topic. And I think, um, the most confused of all our owners who are being reactive and thinking that, oh, health insurance is going to actually Yeah make a difference competitively in my hiring, and I I'm not convinced I've not seen signs that it's what young people are necessarily looking for once they kind of dig into what it means for them financially and otherwise.

[00:12:27] **Antony Whitaker:** Hmm. What, what about things like paid vacation and, um, you know, sick leave and stuff like that? Is that, is that sort of on the agenda or not really?

[00:12:36] **Gordon Miller:** Because it's being talked about so much, I'd say it is, but it's not necessarily being driven by things more than that. There's this perception that everybody else has it, which is not true. Uh, but a lot of people do traditional businesses, larger businesses, people's husbands or spouses or boyfriends or neighbors or best friends.

[00:12:53] **Gordon Miller:** Oh, they, they get that. Um, it gets, it does get complicated in the professional beauty industry. Again, I'm all for it. I think we. Have had a lot of that in place for years and we don't talk about it enough, you know, so many of my successful salon owners have always offered vacation compensation of some form.

[00:13:12] **Gordon Miller:** Most of my salon owner friends have offered flexibility and scheduling for decades, flexibility in coming to work, you know, if

something's happening in your life, you know, but it's a matter of having open communication about those things. I don't think the shift there is as big as people think it is, but I also don't think, um

[00:13:29] **Gordon Miller:** especially small salons, uh, who might be doing it, even know how to talk about it.

[00:13:33] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, yeah. Ok. I think it leads perfectly into the next thing I wanted to ask you about, which is fake beauty news. Um, I love, uh, I love both your podcasts, uh, but social beauty makers. Um, you often this year have been talking about fake beauty news and, uh, social media, you know, has, has created fake news period in lots of different areas because everyone's got, uh, everyone's got the megaphone.

[00:14:01] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. And, uh, as soon as you got the megaphone, you're putting whatever content out there. And there's a lot of people that, you know, believe stuff that isn't necessarily true. Um, talk to us about that because it's become quite an issue. Hasn't it? The amount of fake beauty news.

[00:14:18] **Gordon Miller:** yeah. It's tremendous. And it is a function of the larger world we live in. And I, I kind of came up with that term, I guess, I don't think anybody else uses it, but, but I'm like, Hey, you know, the world is filled today with fake news politically. You know, I think that's where it starts. And regardless of what side of politics people are on and what country they're in, they're probably have a feeling that they're fake.

[00:14:38] **Gordon Miller:** Beauty fake news out there. Um, again, it doesn't matter what side they're on. Um, and, and it's, it has bled out into our larger lives, you know, things that people post on social media, whether it's influencers living really big lives, which maybe aren't as big as they appear to be, uh, and in our industry, uh, especially with the evolution of the coaching space and, you know, you're, in my opinion, one of the best coaches in the world.

[00:15:00] **Gordon Miller:** And I think like most things in life, the 80 20 rule applies, you know, 80 percent of hairdressers. Um, I hate to say sorry, audience. I hope it's not you or average, you know, by definition, 80 percent of the salons are average. By definition, it's a 20 percent who excel. I think it's the same of coaching and coaching had such a big spike in the number of people

who are in that space coming through pandemic that I think we have a lot of coaches who are unqualified to coach.

[00:15:25] **Gordon Miller:** And of course, their business people, they're marketing themselves and they're using a lot of, you know, just Buzzy stuff and clickbait, which to me a lot of clickbait is a version of fake news. Um, and and they're spreading misinformation knowingly or not, you know, a lot of them are very inexperienced, very young.

[00:15:41] **Gordon Miller:** Um, they hear things. Um, and and in the larger world, those of us who pay attention, I think, know that there are people who hear things, get excited about it, don't know whether it's true or not, assume it's true. And then that You know, it bubbles out into a larger world. Next thing we know, something that's not true becomes true in the minds of other people.

[00:16:02] **Gordon Miller:** And then we have this weird, bigger, global phenomenon, which is people saying, Oh, there's no such thing as the truth. I'm like, when did that happen?

[00:16:09] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:16:10] **Gordon Miller:** and, and it's true. And it's true in our own industry. You know, that there's, people saying, you know, Oh, it used to be this way. I'm like, I'm old enough to remember how it was.

[00:16:20] **Gordon Miller:** It wasn't that way,

[00:16:21] **Antony Whitaker:** Mm.

[00:16:22] **Gordon Miller:** you know, or, or, um, all salon owners are, you know, the spawn of the devil, you know, born out of Satan. You know, I mean, it's a, it sounds almost that dramatic when you hear some coaches talking about salon owners and dysfunction and, you know, things that exist in small ways that become blown up.

[00:16:39] **Gordon Miller:** So, yeah, there's, there's a lot of fake news. I don't think there's an easy way for people to find the truth today across all categories of information. It concerns me. Um, it's scary and I know of careers

and businesses that have literally been destroyed by listening to the wrong people, uh, over the last 2 years.

[00:16:58] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Okay. All right. And a lot of that is, as you've just said, is with social media. And that was the other thing I wanted to sort of segue into here was, um, I mean, you were one of the first, uh, I know with Nina Kovner right at the beginning of Facebook days. Um, I think Nina called you and said, Gordon, you've got to get onto this thing

[00:17:17] **Antony Whitaker:** it's called Facebook. It's going to change the beauty industry. And, uh, And that was very perceptive of her. And, and you obviously took one look at it and thought, yeah, it is going to change the industry. And it certainly has, uh, and it's evolved a lot. Um, when you, when you talk about Facebook now, it sounds like, you know, the old man of beauty.

[00:17:33] **Antony Whitaker:** I mean, it's old, uh, it's still very powerful and it's very, very big. Uh, it's certainly not dead on the vine. Uh, but I wanted to, you know, every time I've spoken to you about social, you always have made certain predictions and they do. I remember when Clubhouse first started, I just thought Clubhouse was brilliant, and I thought that that was going to completely revolutionize things, and it did during COVID.

[00:17:58] **Antony Whitaker:** It was a perfect beast for COVID because people had downtime. And I remember you saying it's just not going to last. It's, it's, it's not going to, you know, nothing to do with COVID.

[00:18:07] **Antony Whitaker:** It didn't have legs.

[00:18:09] **Gordon Miller:** Right.

[00:18:10] **Antony Whitaker:** and you were dead, right? I mean, I know it still exists. Um, and I haven't been, I don't know anyone who goes on it anymore, but, um, it certainly served a purpose.

[00:18:18] **Antony Whitaker:** and I enjoyed it and spend a fair bit of time on it. There was some great conversations. Um, so just give us a bit of a run through. We've got Twitter, which is now known as X and day by day. You never know what, you know, It's going to be the current update on the status of X. Um, then we've got threads, which is a new Instagram version of let's, um, you know, take over the market that Twitter did have.

[00:18:47] **Antony Whitaker:** Uh, then we've got Clubhouse, as we mentioned, we've got Instagram, we've got Facebook, we've got TikTok, we've got YouTube. Give us a bit of an overview of how you see them evolving, evolving, sorry, uh, specifically for the salon industry, what's working now, what's not working, you know, where do you see the momentum is?

[00:19:07] **Gordon Miller:** We'll start with what's what's the easy kind of push them off to the side parts of the list, you know, which is clubhouse, as you say, it doesn't appear that it's ever going to bounce back in even remotely meaningful way. Um, threads is the newest. Like you say, it's an, it's an alternative to twitter. Um, it doesn't seem to be getting any energy.

[00:19:24] **Gordon Miller:** Um, and, but interestingly in beauty in particular, but even big picture, it does not feel to be having said that it's an alternative to twitter. Beauty's never been big on twitter. It's not a place where our industry has spent much time. I think a lot of heritage are probably on twitter, but it's more personal.

[00:19:39] **Gordon Miller:** It's a place to go get news. It's a place to follow celebrity. Page. Not a place to learn about the industry, you know, follow people in the industry, big picture. So it never has had, never taken hold. Never been meaningful. Um, the wild card on Twitter is Elon Musk. You know, he's seen as a, as a controversial figure, kind of a wild card figure.

[00:19:57] **Gordon Miller:** You don't know what he's going to do from day to day. And who the heck knows where Twitter is going. Um, the only thing we know for sure is it's It's a cesspool of fake news, um, and pornography, by the way, everything you read is like, those are the two things that live on Twitter in a significant way. and it'll probably continue to be that, in my opinion, but, but time will tell, um, there's also talk that

[00:20:16] **Gordon Miller:** you know, it's financially in serious trouble. He's the richest man in the world. He could afford to have a platform in serious trouble. Maybe it'll get sold. Maybe everything will change. Who knows, you know, but at the moment it doesn't appear to be very relevant to the lives that we live in pro beauty.

[00:20:29] **Gordon Miller:** Um, Instagram continues to be the place. I think that's most relevant to most hairdressers. Um, first and foremost, and to develop clientele and to market yourself and to be in front of people who are

looking for services in a salon, I think, you know, that is the 80 percent of the reason to be there. If you want to follow people in the industry and learn things from them, I think there's an opportunity, but to me, even Instagram has become a little bit of a cesspool coming out of pandemic because again, so many big voices came out that didn't necessarily have.

[00:20:58] **Gordon Miller:** Foundation underneath them. They just were loud voices, but not everybody realized that. So that's the frustrating part for me about Instagram. But I think from a marketing perspective, growing your clientele, growing your business, even finding people to work with or for, I think there's a lot of, you know

[00:21:14] **Gordon Miller:** legs for Instagram. And I think that will remain the prominent platform for a while to come. Um, Facebook, like you referenced, I mean, it's not gone away at all. It feels older, but I know a lot of younger salon pros who are making good money marketing to older clientele. And by older, I mean, like. 35 plus,

[00:21:32] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah,

[00:21:36] **Gordon Miller:** sure, the 40 plus, yeah, I wish, I wish, I wish, but you know, Facebook is still extremely valuable to an awful lot of people. And I know some salons who live there more than Instagram, and they're not necessarily, again, older professionals. They have figured out where the audience is. And again, our mutual friend, Nina, you know, in the early days.

[00:21:57] **Gordon Miller:** You know, when she and I were teaching Facebook together out on the road, it shows, you know, she, I remember her saying, and this came, I believe from Gary Vaynerchuk or perhaps Brian Solis, both thought leaders in early social was that, you know, be where your community is, be where your customers are, be where your potential customers are.

[00:22:13] **Gordon Miller:** And that's like step one in figuring out, well, where do I want to be as a business, as a professional? To gain more clientele to grow my business will be where your perspective customers are a little older. Think about Facebook. Good news is you can auto post from 1 to the other so I think both of those platforms for now are going to be highly relevant.

[00:22:31] **Gordon Miller:** Um, there's, there's change coming to social, but we don't exactly know what that looks like. It could be legal stuff that begins to

transition. Um, a lot of people, most of us, I think, who are paying attention of loss. The energy to be there as much as we used to be. And I think, and that's affecting everything, not in a bad way.

[00:22:49] **Gordon Miller:** It's just, I think, you know, we're chilling a little bit. So I think, I think that's kind of fascinating, but I think for the next couple of years, well, let me say this in America, we're about to go through a national election and we know the math, the last national election, national election had a big impact on social media and how we think about it, how we use it, how we perceive it.

[00:23:05] **Gordon Miller:** A lot of people felt the need to take breaks from social, just walk away from it for a while because in many ways it became toxic. Um, we're headed back into that era, you know, a new, a new election era. And so 2024 on social could in America, um, be problematic and drive. People away, drive people towards it.

[00:23:24] **Gordon Miller:** It's hard to know, but I think all of the social platforms are going to suffer there. Moving over to TikTok, which is the platform. I have the most interested in interest in because it's it's newer, but not new. Um, it continues to evolve in ways that remind me of of Instagram and Facebook, you know.

[00:23:41] **Gordon Miller:** 10 years ago, five years ago, um, and, but most importantly, I have to say to everybody, um, we haven't figured it out as an industry yet, you know, uh, people with big followings have, and I know some TikTokers who are killing it, like all their business is coming from TikTok, um, but they're unicorns and we're in kind of the early days of adoption.

[00:24:01] **Gordon Miller:** Um, it is an entertainment platform. Everybody I know who's on that platform, who's good at it, who's growing their clientele, they happen to be entertaining. So they fit on the platform and, you know, you can't be a square peg in a round hole on a social platform. You have to fit the vibe. Um, the good news for all of us, for you and me, Antony, is that TikTok is no longer for kids. TikTok is for all of us, and the demographics are, you know, insanely, you know, kind of across all generations, all cultures, you know, all ethnicities, we're all there. And, but we are there mostly to be entertained, and being successful as a presence on TikTok, um, that's not easy. And, um, that takes a lot of work because it is completely not like Facebook or Instagram.

[00:24:53] **Gordon Miller:** You can't post the same content. You shouldn't post the same content. Um, you shouldn't think of it as the same in terms of how you engage or why you engage the algorithm is completely almost like the opposite. Like it's not about followers. It's not about building a community. It's about content and getting attention

[00:25:12] **Gordon Miller:** we're in this more than ever in an attention-based kind of social economy. Oh, and YouTube. We didn't talk about; I didn't mention YouTube.

[00:25:19] **Antony Whitaker:** You didn't mention YouTube and I didn't mention LinkedIn as well. So can you mention both of those because I'm hearing people more talk about LinkedIn these days as well, which just surprised me. So

[00:25:29] **Gordon Miller:** Well, that's absolutely, and I was listening to one of my least favorite coaches the other day, cause I do pay attention to the people I don't necessarily like to listen to because again, in the fake beauty news and they were, they were talking about, you know, that anybody who spends any time on LinkedIn is wasting their time.

[00:25:44] **Gordon Miller:** And I was like, Oh, well, that's because you don't spend any time on LinkedIn to know what's happening over there. So there's there are a lot of of salons hairdressers salon owners who are on instagram Go back to what I said a moment ago be where your audience is if your audience are professionals Right.

[00:26:00] **Gordon Miller:** You want professionals to come in and pay for services. You want, you know, people who work across all kinds of industries, but who are professional, um, uh, in, in terms of what they do, um, you know, versus we'll say like working class people, you know, versus the professional, the white collar versus the blue collar.

[00:26:18] **Gordon Miller:** They're on LinkedIn in massive numbers. They're looking for different types of content. It's definitely more of an educational platform. It's a networking platform, probably at its core. And there are huge opportunities on LinkedIn that are being proved every single day by salons and professionals. Um, it is very, very different than the other platforms.

[00:26:37] **Gordon Miller:** It's almost like blog meet some social media. It is is deeper content. It is, um, really, really fascinating. It's highly engaging with the

crowd who are there. So I recommend it highly if you're looking to bring in clientele from that professional world. So, you know, I think that's important to say. YouTube, you know, to me is, um.

[00:26:57] **Gordon Miller:** It's the educational platform of the world. It's where we go to learn everything. You know, I say, well, I have to fix a vacuum cleaner when we're done like the I have a Dyson vacuum cleaner. I love Dyson. I'm a huge fan. But my little basket thing that holds the things you vacuum up the bottom of it came off last night.

[00:27:15] **Gordon Miller:** I'm like, I got to fix it. I will go to YouTube. I will go to YouTube and it will tell me how to fix it. And it's the third time I've had little things to play with on the dice. And the first time anything has gone a little sideways, but YouTube tells me how to fix it. You tell, tells me how to cook YouTube.

[00:27:30] **Gordon Miller:** I mean, YouTube is amazing and there's a lot of action on there by hairdressers. I don't think we've found our way to what it really is going to look like longterm, but I think from a. Deeper content perspective, because everything else is short form 3 minutes. Max. Most of the content on tiktok is a minute or less.

[00:27:46] **Gordon Miller:** Um, instagram is all about reels now, but that's not deep content is more inspirational or fun or or funny. And I think YouTube is the place where the industry. In time, we'll park our serious content. And I think there's a whole kind of beauty community that exists there. And we've just not tapped into them yet.

[00:28:03] **Gordon Miller:** So I I'm very, very big on, on the future of YouTube in the professional beauty industry, when it comes to educating ourselves and educating clients,

[00:28:11] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, yeah. Shorts, YouTube shorts. Are you, are you hearing anything about that? Like, does that have a lot of traction or not?

[00:28:20] **Gordon Miller:** You know, to me, YouTube shorts are a little bit more marketing, you know, kind of fodder, you know, if you will. so I think we've talked about this before, but for your audience, so in my personal life, I'm a K pop fan. I love K pop. I've loved K pop for 10 years. I, I just have a, I go to K pop concerts.

[00:28:35] **Gordon Miller:** I'm the old guy at the K pop concert. I have such a good time. So, so, so the K pop crowd, they use shorts. So my experience with shorts and a lot of the music videos that I enjoy putting on, you know, they're, they're on YouTube. So I definitely experienced shorts almost every day, which are kind of a little fun, little bits of information that relate to these K pop people.

[00:28:57] **Gordon Miller:** And, you know, so I think, and to me, they are like, uh, a gateway to deeper content people who are on YouTube who are good at what they do. They're effectively putting out shorts. They're grabbing attention because we like that short form content. We've been trained by the other platforms. So I think it's really effective in drawing us in.

[00:29:14] **Gordon Miller:** I think for a salon for a hairdresser when YouTube 1 day gets to really be a a solid platform to, to engage with your clients. I think shorts is a great marketing tool within the platform to create engagement, to drive them ultimately to your longer form content. And I think you have to have a strategy that connects the dots to be successful in the YouTube space.

[00:29:33] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, when you were talking about TikTok, you very consciously used the word, uh, that it was about getting attention and you said it's entertainment.

[00:29:42] **Gordon Miller:** Mm hmm. Yeah,

[00:29:43] **Antony Whitaker:** entertainment, meaning it's not education

[00:29:48] **Gordon Miller:** there is plenty of education

[00:29:49] **Antony Whitaker:** entertaining education.

[00:29:51] **Gordon Miller:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, TikTok says it's an entertainment platform. Now they will say there's tons of education and the depth of the education and the kinds of education are certainly growing and morphing and something like, you know, I love going on to TikTok and finding recipes like I can cook a meal, you know, watching a 3 minute TikTok video.

[00:30:11] **Gordon Miller:** I got from like, you know, that YouTube video might be, you know, 15 minutes. And so there are certain folks, personalities from the culinary world who live on TikTok. Great content that you can really learn

from. They tend to have, typically, a little bit, again, more entertaining vibe to them, and they often link to a longer form piece of content elsewhere, but at its core, TikTok says it's an entertainment platform, and most people I know who really love it, you know, um, the algorithm, whatever you like, again, I'll go back to my K pop thing, I have to be careful, because if I click on too much K pop, that's all I see, so I love K pop, I love dancing cats, I love corgis, So I see a lot of corgis, dancing cats, and K pop, and then you have to kind of find your way to other content.

[00:30:57] **Gordon Miller:** So, again, I think it's the entertaining, you know, aspect of so much of the content that pulls us in. And then a lot of us are finding our way to educational content, and I think, you know, it'll be interesting to see long haul, whether it becomes more that. There's a lot of news. There's a lot of controversy right now about fake news

[00:31:16] **Gordon Miller:** um, So, you know, it has the same challenges other platforms have, but I would say 80 percent we're living in an entertaining platform more than anything else, and that just brings a whole host of other challenges to it. And all my favorite, you know, folks on TikTok They're they are entertaining. You know, Teresa Van Dam, Siri Parks.

[00:31:37] **Gordon Miller:** Those are a couple of great names. Mermaid. Um, those are three hairdressers and they're all entertaining and how they position themselves. They have millions of followers because of it. Um, uh, Guy Tang, um, who's a New York based hairdresser who's on a reality show right now, but he blew up on TikTok going back a year ago.

[00:31:53] **Gordon Miller:** Really young, smart kid, salon owner. I shouldn't call him a kid. He's probably 30, 33, 34, um, which means, which means he's actually too young to be my kid. So, but, but yeah, I think entertainment is the secret sauce in the moment. It's going to change.

[00:32:11] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Okay. Now, um, I know the last 12 months you have been obsessing. It's probably not too strong a word over artificial intelligence. And, um, you know, as we were talking about before we started recording, you know, AI is not new. It's been sort of quietly permeating every area of our lives for the last 10,20,30,40 years plus even in some way, but, yeah.

[00:32:39] **Antony Whitaker:** Chat GPT was the sort of turning point, I think, as for one of a better word. And that is just over a year old now. It was at some point, October, November last year that it sort of, you know, hit the mainstream. Um, and then you jumped on it, you know, in a big way at the very beginning of this year, and you've really focused on it with your podcasts, et cetera.

[00:33:02] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, talk to us about the impact that you've seen AI having in the industry over the last 12 months because it's just been an absolute avalanche of, of a, I mean, we're both subscribed to some of the same things and it's just like every day I'm getting these emails on new ways to use AI and it's the speed at which

[00:33:28] **Antony Whitaker:** this is changing. I mean, it makes a speed that social media is evolved. Look like a bloody dinosaur. Um, so let me just sort of open that door to you and tell us how you know the impact you've seen AI having in the industry of the last 12 months. And then obviously where you see it going.

[00:33:47] **Gordon Miller:** Yeah. Well, let's start with what you said has been around for a bit, right? And so much of the impact, you know, I think we're becoming more aware of how it has been impacting us for years, because it actually did start in the late 1950s. And we had machine learning. You really take hold in the 1960s and, and continue.

[00:34:03] **Gordon Miller:** And then you have the, the advent of the smartphone, you know, which artificial intelligence has had a lot to do with in terms of its growth and apps and all those things, social media, you know, all the out when people say algorithm, you know, thinks, think artificial intelligence, you know, because that is what those algorithms are, they're a form of artificial intelligence.

[00:34:21] **Gordon Miller:** It's a very. Complex topic in terms of what is artificial intelligence. That's like a two hour YouTube video of somebody who's really smart because there's so many categories. There's so many types of A. I. And you know, we've moved into this generative A. I. Which is the new thing. I was watching a video by a professor from Stanford.

[00:34:42] **Gordon Miller:** His name is Andrew Ng and Ng is spelled N. G. Andrew N. G. And genius. He's head of the division of Google called Google

Brain. I so aspire to have the title, the head of Google brain. My mother would, my mother, my mother would be so proud. She wouldn't know what it means, but like, Bob, guess what? So, you know, he's gotta be a genius.

[00:35:05] **Gordon Miller:** um, and as he said in the video, I was just watching on, on a plane. He said that, um. We're talking about generative AI and he shows a chart and he shows, you know, kind of what came before generative AI, which is a, which is really closer to a more traditional machine learning. And he said, you know, 90 percent of everything is happening there and, and generative AI, which we're all excited about is actually small from a use case perspective, back to what you and I've talked about, most people we talk to.

[00:35:32] **Gordon Miller:** Our industry are not using it. I speak in front of audiences. I was just in New York with two 50, um, spa owners and, and, and directors and, you know, 10% of the audience had even tried ai. Um, and then of course I said to them all, well have you, do you use TikTok? Everybody was like, yes. I said, well, you're using ai whether you, you know it or not.

[00:35:51] **Gordon Miller:** Sam Altman, who's the head of open AI and just went through a lot of controversy himself, you know, he says, when he explained this explosion was we've been waiting for the computing power to allow a platform like open AI and chat GPT to actually happen because the speed of calculations wasn't high enough for anybody to care.

[00:36:10] **Gordon Miller:** And all of a sudden, you know, this. Uh, NVIDIA developed chips and supercomputers. There's only, I think, 50 or 60 in the entire world. But they allow for this massive, massive amount of processing. There's a hundred billion people a day using chat GPT and we're all processing at the same time. So the, the, the kind of exponential computing power that evolved in the last, you know, couple of years has allowed this new type of AI to exist.

[00:36:35] **Gordon Miller:** Um, but like most things, uh, you know, we're in early adoption mode. And so I, it's a small number of us who are using it on a regular basis. I use it every day as, as to you. Um, I think that the type of things we do, um, are unique because we kind of live in our little research heads and we're doing a lot of things that maybe others do not do.

[00:36:55] **Gordon Miller:** So we're, we're excited about those tools. Uh, most people are going to wait and, and experience all the things that we

experienced today by way of other tools. Meaning, um, Microsoft Word, the most, Microsoft Office, the most used of all software platforms on the entire planet, and, and, and, and apps as well, um, it has now brought AI in, and they're just releasing something called Copilot, where um, Fairly deep, um, A.I

[00:37:21] **Gordon Miller:** Based on what's happening in open a I and ChatGPT. It's being put into Excel into word into PowerPoint into teams into each and every product they have. Well, even in salons, most people at some point use word or perhaps management uses Excel and now they will have. Kind of a supercharged version of those things because of AI.

[00:37:43] **Gordon Miller:** So unlike us, you know, who are out there playing and having a ball with it and, and reaping, I would say, the benefits of being early adopters, most will use these other platforms and they will reap the same benefits we get today, but maybe perhaps not realizing the impact it's having. And the last thing I'll say there before I let you jump in is that Andrew Ng has used this, um, you know, metaphor of electricity. And again, I was just talking to a big audience about this. It was an interesting conversation because I said, you know, that this is what this man is saying. He's super smart. And what he's saying is that. Electricity is ubiquitous. It's everywhere. Like, we don't even think about it. We don't think about electricity in our lives today.

[00:38:23] **Gordon Miller:** We don't, you know, um, 150 years ago, there wasn't any. And could you imagine living in that dark world? But that was normal. It was normal. Like, you know, when it got dark, you know, we had gas lighting and we had candlelight, but, but the world didn't work the 24 7, um, Life that it lives today because there was no electricity when those lights came on.

[00:38:47] **Gordon Miller:** I'm sure there was shock throughout the entire world of what the F is this and what it's going to mean for our lives. And I'm I, we think back ago, it almost all been positive, but I'm sure for a lot of people was like. What do you mean there's going to be a factory shift that starts at midnight and goes till eight in the morning?

[00:39:03] **Gordon Miller:** Like we don't necessarily like that, you know, so i'm sure there was good and bad in it But but over time we've lost sight didn't even exist Like we we know we know not to stick our finger in the plug in the wall, you know And when the light bulb goes out, we know to walk up to the drugstore or the hardware store and get a light bulb You know, but our lives

don't go dark and I think ai is going to be very similar We're just not going to think about it because we weren't thinking about it pre Open AI and GPT, even though it was all around us.

[00:39:32] **Gordon Miller:** And now we're going through this kind of bumpy time, a lot of fear, a lot of assumptions and take people's jobs. You know, I love the quote. Um, you know, I, it's not going to take your job. Someone who knows how to use is going to take the job. So, um. It's interesting.

[00:39:46] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, it's interesting that what you said at the beginning, how with audiences, you say, how many of you are using, you know, AI and 10 percent put the hand up. But the reality is that they're all using it just like electricity, you know, that they're already using it, whether it's in the on their iPhone for social media or Google Maps or a dating app or whatever.

[00:40:07] **Antony Whitaker:** They're sort of using it just like we're all using electricity, but we're just not thinking about it. So it just is going to become even more permeating every area of our lives. That's just the reality of it, isn't it? Yeah.

[00:40:18] **Gordon Miller:** spell, spell check, spell check. Something as simple as spell check. We take it for granted. Oh, it's checking. I'm writing and it's going to fix my, whether it's a text, whether it's a word document, whether it's a Google document, that's AI, you know, so. Yep

[00:40:32] **Antony Whitaker:** I mean, I'm using, I'm just using ChatGPT and I use it pretty much every day. Uh, but I know, I know that ChatGPT now has evolved dramatically and I'm still on the free version. I know you're on the paid version and said everyone should get on and it's like fantastic. What it does is just light years ahead of the free version.

[00:40:49] **Antony Whitaker:** I, I find the free version like, oh my God, this is incredible. Do you know what I mean? Like, um,

[00:40:55] **Gordon Miller:** I'm gonna have to pay i'm gonna have to pay your first month

[00:40:57] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah,

[00:40:58] **Gordon Miller:** into that pay pressure so you can so you can see how insanely, um, it's evolving. It's growing My latest podcast actually I uh that just came out today. I do a walkthrough um personal AI and professional AI and I literally just go to the platforms

[00:41:14] **Gordon Miller:** I talk through them. So on open, I was talking about and chat GPT. They now when you go into what's called the explore tab and you see all the things that it can do. There's a whole lot more there than it was there even a month ago. And as examples, you know, you have You know, image generation, which we've had for some time, DALL -E, but it's gotten to be extremely sophisticated.

[00:41:34] **Gordon Miller:** But now there's all these other things that you could do. Um, my favorite of the recent stuff, it's a long list of things that are there, um, is, um, there's tech support.

[00:41:44] **Gordon Miller:** There is actually a tech support piece that you go into and just ask it anything about devices. It's like Dolly, you talk to about images, the tech support, you ask it, how do I do my phone? Like, how do I hook up my printer? But you can also have software. So I was working on a PowerPoint over the weekend.

[00:42:01] **Gordon Miller:** So I, I got stuck and I said, and I usually go to YouTube. You know, and I spent a half hour finding the best YouTube video. I spent 15 minutes watching the YouTube to find 30 seconds of how to do what I need to do, and then I get a fix. And that was okay until ChatGPT launched tech support. I went and asked the same kind of question I would normally ask YouTube.

[00:42:22] **Gordon Miller:** And within three or four minutes. Not only do I have an answer, I, I had solved my problem and moved on because of tech support. So you go in tech support and say, how do I add this to PowerPoint? How do I add this to Excel? How do I create a spreadsheet this way? You can ask it anything and everything about technically how to do something.

[00:42:40] **Gordon Miller:** So there is a lot more tools that are just coming out. And I think the relevance to everybody's life who might be thinking about or not thinking about, you know, is going to just grow. And I always tell audiences, you know. I get the nervousness. You know, I get it. You know, um,

in our industry, things like Excel, it took a long time for Excel to catch up, you know, or us to catch up with Excel.

[00:43:04] **Gordon Miller:** I think it's and a lot of it's fear. I don't know how to use it. I'm not I'm not a techie person. Good news is about about tech is it's It's becoming less and less, um, about being techie, you know, to use it. And so, but I always recommend people go personally use it. What do you like in, what do you like in the nonprofessional parts of your life?

[00:43:22] **Gordon Miller:** You like to cook? Use chat GPT to see if you can find things that will make you a better cook, whether it's finding information. Um, you and I, I think I've talked about this. Google is a terrible experience. We're just so used, we're so used to it. You know, it's like going too many restaurants and having bad service.

[00:43:39] **Gordon Miller:** We just kind of accept it. Like most restaurants don't have great service. Um, Google, which used to be really cool and interesting because it was so new. I find it horrible to find things. So many sponsored ads. If you don't ask the question quite right, you get the wrong stuff and we get kind of lazy. I, I am not a fan of Google search.

[00:43:58] **Gordon Miller:** Um, chat GPT does a different version of the same thing. And to me, it's 10 times a better experience. It's 10 times getting, getting me to the right answer more quickly. And now the fact that it does online searches, all that stuff, it's, it's just crazy powerful, but yeah, go, go play with it personally and use that as your training wheels, you know, no harm, no foul, you know, and if you can see your way to pro then do it.

[00:44:21] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Are you using the app on your phone or just on your desktop, laptop, whatever?

[00:44:27] **Gordon Miller:** Both. Both. I use both. What I love about the phone is, and I think this could be powerful for everybody, but it's in, I believe it's only in the paid version, is I can speak to it. I don't know if you could, I don't know if you could have conversations with ChatGPT.

[00:44:39] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, I, I can't or put it this way. I haven't tried to,

[00:44:43] **Gordon Miller:** okay.

[00:44:44] **Antony Whitaker:** um, but that was the next thing I was going to ask you about because. You know, all I do is type in. Okay. And I've got the app on my phone, but all I'm doing is typing in questions and I get amazing, amazing responses that, you know, just brilliant. Um, but yeah, being able to talk to it and it talks back to you.

[00:45:02] **Antony Whitaker:** Does it or it gives

[00:45:03] **Gordon Miller:** Yes, it does.

[00:45:03] **Antony Whitaker:** It talks back.

[00:45:05] **Gordon Miller:** So when I walk Cody, my rescue, you know, I often now have conversations with it that are kind of. Allowing me to do what I shouldn't do, which is work while I walk the dog, I got the dog, so I wouldn't work. And I would walk that. I'm still walking, but I'm now I'm working. Thanks for chatting, but I'm having fun doing it.

[00:45:24] **Gordon Miller:** Um, and so you literally, so if you get the app, which is free. Um, but if you have the paid platform, it links it to so I have access to more on my phone app because I am paying 20 a month and the way you know, if it will talk to you is by the little bar where you type in things, you'll see a little headset off to the side and when I click on the headset now, I can talk to it and it will talk to me so I can go down the street and say, hey, I'm going to be presenting to a bunch of spa professionals in New York next week, and I want to talk about X, Y, and Z, and I want to brainstorm a little with you, um, chat about what might be of interest to spa professionals and their prospective use of AI.

[00:46:06] **Gordon Miller:** I'll say that out loud, and then when I'm done, it will say, and I happen, by the way, you'll be interested, my chat GPT by choice has an Australian accent. I don't know if that's because of you or what, but I, I happen to like the Australian version of ChatGPT talking me. It is, it is, it is a woman, by the way, I'm sorry, a woman speaking to me, and she'll say back to me.

[00:46:30] **Gordon Miller:** Um, oh, and by the way, all of this audio is typed into the chat bar, so it's, it's, it's saved. So when I go back to my desktop, anything I said to it, or it said to me, it's captured, so I don't have to remember

it. So that's really, that's really important, but it will, it will, it will have a conversation with me.

[00:46:47] **Gordon Miller:** It'll say, oh, you know, um, I think spa professionals would like the following. Here's a bulleted answer, or it might ask me a question so I'm finding that conversational piece to be really interesting and you and I know we're in an industry that, that is creative and, and loves visual, and I think you and I've learned that a lot of folks like audio too.

[00:47:08] **Gordon Miller:** And so that audio version of chat, I think it's really powerful.

[00:47:10] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, definitely. That'll be the next thing I, uh, investigate them without a

[00:47:15] **Gordon Miller:** Yep. Yep.

[00:47:16] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, we got to wrap up in about 10 minutes. I've got a few sort of quick fire things I want to ask you about. Um, you're out and about, uh, this year. You've really hopped on planes a lot and you've been flying around the country going to different shows and different events.

[00:47:29] **Antony Whitaker:** You've been speaking at most of them and speaking about AI. Um, what I wanted to ask you about is how have you seen the event space? And show space settling down in the industry in this post COVID world, because it was sort of, you know, it was sort of what's the word? I think a lot of people have been questioning events and shows and are they good value?

[00:47:53] **Antony Whitaker:** What is, what is, what purpose is this serving? What direction is this going? And no one really had an answer And so it was sort of the question you didn't bother to answer, but you kept asking it to yourself. And then, of course, COVID happened and bang, there are no events, there are no shows. And then it was gradually, let's just put a toe in the water and see where this is going.

[00:48:16] **Antony Whitaker:** You've been to God knows how many this year.

[00:48:18] **Gordon Miller:** Yep. A lot.

[00:48:19] **Antony Whitaker:** where is it going? What are you seeing happening? What's the upside? What's the downside? What do you predict is what that's going to look like in 2024?

[00:48:28] **Gordon Miller:** Yeah. Um, all right. So events have always kind of been nichey, you know, if we think about it, because we talk about events, like we talk about the industry. Like one of the things that always frustrates me is we talk about salons and I'm like, Oh, I wish we would. Get into categories because salons are not all salons are not created equal and all categories, you know, the, the value price salons, the chain salons, the independent on and off same with shows.

[00:48:50] **Gordon Miller:** It means we have brand shows, which are very, very different than the big national in America, beauty shows or the international like salon international in London. So then we have distributor shows in America. So we have, you know, we have independent of it. We have these categories within the larger, you know

[00:49:05] **Gordon Miller:** big picture category of all events, and they've all evolved a little bit differently. So I would say starting in America with the big beauty shows, um, interestingly, and I was a person who didn't think they would, you know, bounce back as strongly as they have, but they haven't bounced back to be the same as they were.

[00:49:22] **Gordon Miller:** So that's interesting. So people are showing up, brands are showing up. I would say it's not necessarily the same brands. The big legacy brands have not gone back in a significant way to shows. They were absent before. They're still absent. the, um, um, cash and carry, you know, the idea that in America, you go on the beauty show, you spend your money, you know, that's what always drove the exhibit for and interestingly over time, just because I think a lot of us went to shows out of habit and there was a long history of those habits and shows were shows and people were people and we just kind of went until COVID stopped everything coming out of COVID, I think, yeah.

[00:49:59] **Gordon Miller:** Across again, categories of professionals, but a lot of rethinking what I see from an audience perspective and shows got younger. I've never seen so many students as I've seen at beauty shows that I see today, like, significantly more students at pretty much every show that I've been to. And I think that's a good thing.

[00:50:16] **Gordon Miller:** It's a good thing for the shows. It's a good thing for the exhibitors. And I will also say, pre pandemic, if you went. As I often do, walk around a show floor and talk to big exhibitors and small exhibitors and say, Hey, what do you think? How's the show? I would typically, if there was a lot of young people, I would hear, yeah, it's a good show, but there's so many students and it would be negative.

[00:50:35] **Antony Whitaker:** Mm.

[00:50:36] **Gordon Miller:** This year it would be, you know, how's the show? What do you think? You know? Oh my gosh, you know, it's busy and there's so many students and they're spending money.

[00:50:45] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay.

[00:50:45] **Gordon Miller:** So it's a change. And as a lot of people have said to me, you know, on the pro side, it's like, yeah, that's a good thing because everything's new to young people, you know, everything's new and I think young people are more savvy than ever and thinking about tools and thinking about products and it's just a generational thing.

[00:51:02] **Gordon Miller:** I think they have a little bit more interest in all the stuff that's online and seeing and learning and checking and googling while they're at a show, probably to see where they should buy things. So I think you have a new and highly engaged audience. It's actually exciting to see it shows. Um, they're excited to be in the classroom and of course, the older generation is there too, but I think in smaller numbers, but shows have bounced back pretty darn strong.

[00:51:24] **Gordon Miller:** I would say, you know, from an exhibit perspective, they're about 20 percent smaller than they used to be. Some are even, even less than that. Um, um, some are, some are better, you know, so it's a little bit all over the board, but I think shows are moving in a very positive direction. And I think we're going to see more of that.

[00:51:38] **Gordon Miller:** The brand side, the big brand events are pretty much gone in America. Um, they've either divided themselves into smaller, maybe still significantly large event instead of a 10, 000 person event. Now they have a 32, 000 persons event. So fewer people split up into smaller groups to allow local folks, perhaps to go in larger numbers.

[00:52:00] **Gordon Miller:** So I think brand events are the jury is still out as to where it's going to land. Distributors across the country have certainly seem to have cut back on their educational events in a pretty significant way. So I think that's a big shift. Um, independents who have had events now for quite a few years, independent educators, independent collectives of educators, I think they're doing as much, if not more than pre pandemic.

[00:52:25] **Gordon Miller:** I'm not sure about the attendance. I think it's kind of all over the board. So lots of shifts, but we always think about big, big national events in America as a kind of a sign of where things are going. I don't know if that's true, but I think they're a sign of where they're going, and I think they're going in an okay direction.

[00:52:43] **Antony Whitaker:** Mm. Is it going online? More of this stuff? Is it like disappearing from the show floor and turning up online? Or is it just disappearing.

[00:52:52] **Gordon Miller:** I think, um, I think, I think it's just disappearing because the things that are disappearing, I think folks realize themselves that relevance wasn't there for them to be there. And so I, I think, you know, it's, it really is, you know, for an exhibitor, it's like. Can I show up and justify my expenses, which are significant to be at a show, either by way of, you know, an immediate return on investment, which is a shopping experience, education is used to market the shopping as it always has been, although for individual attendee education is education, but big pictures strategy wise, brands come in, they teach to market, um, and they hope you go buy something on the floor.

[00:53:29] **Gordon Miller:** They hope you go sign up as a customer. They hope you do go online, but I don't see. Great. The online space having much impact on what we've seen with events. In fact, I will forever be disappointed that the hybrid event really has not taken off or been a success in our industry. The idea that an event could live online and in real time at the same time, in our industry, it really hasn't happened.

[00:53:53] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. All right. Last thing I want to ask you then is 2024. What are your predictions? What do you think we'll see?

[00:54:00] **Gordon Miller:** for our industry, we may not, you know, think that the larger world chaos is going to be maybe relevant, but, but if it has the

impact on economics that it likely will as. Past chaos. Um, then I think there's a lot of unknowns. I spend a lot of time working with brands or at least talking with brands and sometime working with brands, um, consulting work and other work that I do.

[00:54:22] **Gordon Miller:** But I also spend a lot of time just chit chatting because they have so much information. I know what's happening. The brand seems very much in chaos. Um, I've never seen budgets being done this late. Budget used to be done by the end of September. Years before that, they were done by the end of August.

[00:54:38] **Gordon Miller:** Most brands I talked to, they have yet to complete their budgets for next year, and we're pretty much coming up on the end of December. So that speaks to chaos. You know, there's a reason that things are moving so slow. I think there's a lot of concern about where the economy might be headed. Uh, inflation is still a, is, is still kind of a, wild card for many.

[00:54:56] **Gordon Miller:** I will say, I think, um, the larger world, I think, in, in so many categories, like in America in food, um, has taken advantage of the inflation conversation. I think Kind of gouging people and I think there's some gouging going on in the beauty industry knowingly or unknowingly, you know, I think, um, uh, big companies have to consider price increases when times are tough, they have shareholders to report to, they have to grow.

[00:55:18] **Gordon Miller:** I mean, not growing is no longer an option for big companies. So, you know, that chaos is going to be interesting to see what it means for the larger world and things like inflation. What does that mean for pricing? Again, you live in the coaching space. I think, you know, the industry is tremendously confused about what inflation means at the salon level and how they should be adjusting their prices to offset inflation.

[00:55:39] **Gordon Miller:** That's a very, that's a calculation that depends on a lot of things. And when your 7 tube of color goes up 20%, that doesn't mean your 150 service should go up 20%. And one of the, one of the biggest issues in our industry today, I would say is that, um, there's a lot of stuff that. Makes it look like we've overcorrected in pricing in 2023.

[00:56:01] **Gordon Miller:** And a lot of salons are suffering because of it right now. They have priced themselves out of a lot of their own clientele because

they listened to some of the wrong people and trying to figure out how to price.

[00:56:11] **Antony Whitaker:** Hmm. Interesting. Well, listen, on that note, we need to, uh, start wrapping up. Whereabouts can people connect with you on Instagram or any other social channels or your podcasts that we referenced at the top of the show? Um, do you want to just, uh, let us know

[00:56:26] **Gordon Miller:** Yeah, absolutely. So on Instagram, I go by Gordon M, but only with the first O. So it's G O R D N, as in Nancy, M as in Mary. That's me on Instagram and on Facebook. I sometimes go by Nancy or Mary, you know. And I will say, because I haven't said it, but I'm gay as F, you know, so I can say that. But, uh, but anyway, uh, so yes, Gordon on Instagram and I answer all my DMS.

[00:56:56] **Gordon Miller:** It's a great place to connect with me there. You'll find links to both my podcasts, uh, social beauty makers, um, or mastering beauty can search for them on any of the podcast platforms. Um, social beauty makers, um, is a website as well. I have a weekly newsletter as Antony mentioned, that's free. It's just little things that I find that I think are interesting for people to look at.

[00:57:13] **Gordon Miller:** And then beauty cast network, you know, that's my day job and, um, CEO and president, um, Um, beautycastnetwork.com. You can find information there as well. Thank you.

[00:57:23] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. Well, I'll put those links, in the show notes for today's podcast. So if you're listening to this podcast with Gordon and have enjoyed it and learned stuff, I've learned lots of stuff, then do me a favor, take a screenshot on your phone, share it to your Instagram stories.

[00:57:37] **Antony Whitaker:** And don't forget to subscribe and leave us a rating and review on the app. So, uh, to wrap up Gordon, this is the end of, uh, another year. I can't believe how fast they go. It's 2023, uh, end of 2023. Uh, I want to say, you know, I hope you've had a great year. Another great year. Thank you for your uh, friendship and and professional, you know, relationship that we have.

[00:58:02] **Antony Whitaker:** Um, it's, it's always great having this opportunity to talk to you. And I know that my audience, uh, likewise would have enjoyed

it. So, uh, yeah, I hope you have a great 2024. So, um, yeah, I hope you had a good one.

[00:58:16] **Gordon Miller:** Thank you. And the same, and same to you and to your audience and knowing that it might come out there. I hope that everybody had a happy Christmas or Kwanzaa or Hanukkah or any holiday that you're celebrating this year and best wishes to everybody and have a wonderful next year. And especially to you, Antony and to Melinda, have yourself a great holiday season and a wonderful 2024

[00:58:37] **Gordon Miller:** without the chaos. Uh

[00:58:38] **Gordon Miller:** huh.

[00:58:39] **Antony Whitaker:** Exactly. All right. Thanks, Gordon.

[00:58:41] **Antony Whitaker:** Thank you for listening to today's podcast If you'd like to connect with us you'll find us at [Grow My Salon business.com](https://www.growmysalonbusiness.com) or on Facebook and Instagram at [Grow My Salon business](https://www.facebook.com/growmysalonbusiness) And if you enjoy tuning into our podcast make sure that you subscribe like and share it with your friends Until next time this is Antony Whitaker wishing you continued success