



SDS PODCAST

EPISODE 31

WITH

DAVID TANSAKOVIC



Kirill: This is episode number 31, with my good friend David Tanaskovic.

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Welcome to the SuperDataScience podcast. My name is Kirill Eremenko, data science coach and lifestyle entrepreneur. And each week we bring you inspiring people and ideas to help you build your successful career in data science. Thanks for being here today and now let's make the complex simple.

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Hello and welcome to the SuperDataScience podcast. Super excited to have you on board, and today I have invited my good friend David Tanaskovic onto the show. So something you need to know about David is that he's the happiest person I know on this planet. He's always super excited about life, nothing can bring him down, and he's just generally having fun going through life. Like you know sometimes you wish you would enjoy the things you do and your day to day activities, more like sometimes a day passes by and you feel like oh, wow, like I didn't really enjoy this day as much as I could've, or as much as I wish I had. Well I think that David never has that problem. He's always super positive about everything.

And at the same time, David does so many different things. So for example, David is the Director of a media marketing agency. He is also in the import-export business and doing some work in that space, and importing and exporting things from and to Australia and from and to China. Also, he's working in the business development space in



pharmaceuticals, and then just his occupations. At the same time, he's got millions of hobbies, he's one of the best ballroom dancers in Melbourne, like salsa and bachata and all these other crazy dances, and he plays volleyball and other sports, and also he just happened to decide to learn Chinese, and in the past year, he's learned Chinese.

So lots of very interesting things are happening in his life, and we talk about a lot of that. And this podcast is going to be very useful to people who are thinking of getting into the space of marketing specifically. So this is not a heavy data science podcast. So we don't talk about things like R and Python and so on, but at the same time, we do cover off those tools that are used in the marketing space. And we talk about Kissmetrics, we also talk about A/B testing and how David views A/B testing and how he performs A/B testing in his company. Also you will find this podcast useful if you are looking to enhance your productivity and just have a better lifestyle, and enjoy your life more. So David shares some tips about how he goes about learning new things and some tips for people starting new careers, and so on. So if you're looking for any of those two things, then this podcast is for you. And I can't wait for you to get to know my friend David and what he is up to.

So without further ado, I bring to you my friend David Tanaskovic, Director of C2 Media.

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Welcome everybody to the SuperDataScience podcast. Today I've got my good friend David Tanaskovic with me calling in



from Melbourne. David, welcome to the show. How are you going, man?

David: Hi, very good, very good. Thanks for having me.

Kirill: That's awesome. How's the weather in Melbourne?

David: Oh yeah, it's pretty good, but changes very often. Typical Melbourne style.

Kirill: Yeah. Yeah. As always. That's kind of the only reason I don't live in Melbourne, because the weather is just changing like 50 times a day.

David: Yeah, that's right.

Kirill: So, David, how long have you and I been friends for?

David: Wow, that's—yeah, very, very long time. I can't even count the years. I need more than two hands.

Kirill: (Laughs) Yeah, it's crazy. I think we started hanging out when I was six years old. 22 years, man.

David: Exactly. Exactly.

Kirill: Unreal, yeah. Good times.

David: Absolutely.

Kirill: Yeah, man. We grew up in Africa together and then out of our two families you were the first to move to Australia and start your marketing degree here. From there, where did that take you? After moving here and getting into your marketing degree, how did that go and what were your next steps after that?

David: Yeah, absolutely. So, I had a really strong passion for marketing and I really fell in love with it when I studied it. I really wanted to work in things, especially like campaigns and I saw a lot of ads on TV and things like that. I wanted to work in that sort of creative side of the industry. And it really took me in a sort of different direction when I started to work.

I started working in sort of education industry and marketing around there, and then from there I moved on more towards media and now I actually am partnered in a media company called C2 Media in which I work as well. And other than doing that, of course, I have a couple of other businesses. I'm always doing something. I guess one of the passions of working in marketing and working around data and analysis is that there's a lot of things that I can do. I do a little bit of import-export business. I do, of course, the media business. I work in business development in actually the pharmaceutical industry. So I have my hands in a lot of different jars.

Kirill: Yeah, that's something I find so inspiring about you all the time. First of all, you don't sit on your back and do nothing. You're always constantly doing stuff. And the second thing is that you seem to have like 48 hours in a day. I don't know how you do this, but you have managed to have free time, you're married, you have a lovely family, you have a family life, you have all these jobs, you have hobbies. I mean, for crying out loud, in the past year you learned Chinese. How do you do that?

- David: Well, I guess a lot of work/life balance is all about really making time for things. Everyone says that and everyone thinks it's quite easy, but it's actually all about scheduling and keeping yourself busy all the time. And I keep myself busy having fun too. Having fun is obviously the number one goal. And all the hobbies that I do, like I do some sport like volleyball and things like that, or like tennis or golf—I do a lot of sport during the week. And then I find time to do things like dancing and learning Chinese. Just keep yourself busy but do the things you love, have fun and then you don't find it as work. You find it as a passion.
- Kirill: By the way, dancing—guys listening to this, you've got to know that there is like a mini Tim Ferriss in Australia because you've got so many trophies for dancing. You know, 1st place in Melbourne so many times.
- David: Oh, yeah, there's a whole shelf just picking up dust and lots and lots of trophies.
- Kirill: (Laughs) Yeah, yeah. I would say you're not being modest if I hadn't seen it. It's really packed. Like, they're falling off the shelf.
- David: Absolutely. But that's the thing. When you're passionate about something, you'll do your best in it and you'll do whatever it takes to succeed. I'm actually going to be doing a big comp at the end of the year as well for dancing, so I'm preparing for that while I'm learning Chinese, while I'm doing my businesses. So, yeah, 48 hours in a day.
- Kirill: That's crazy. I love it. All right, so tell us a bit more about your businesses or about the roles that you're working on. I'm assuming some of them involve data more heavily, some



of them involve data less heavily. Let's maybe start off the ones that are more data focused and that way you can share the most insights with our listeners.

David: Yeah, absolutely. I guess the most data intensive role that I'm currently doing is being part of the media company. A lot of what we do for clients, and a lot of these clients are actually foreign exchange companies, or forex, or financial brokers or property brokers, so there's a lot of financials to do with it. What we do is we do campaign analysis as well as running of campaigns and launching of campaigns. So there's a lot of data involved in terms of finding out how successful campaigns are, is it reaching the right target market, how you're testing the markets, how you're testing, whether it's going to make a sale, whether your lead generation is actually happening, and a lot of tracking of that data, so it's quite interesting, quite involved. That's one of the things I love about it.

You know, when I think of data, it makes me really, really passionate and really want to actually do more and analyse and sort of paint the picture of what I'm actually going to do with this, how can I explain what just happened. It's a beautiful thing. It tells a story. I guess that's more the media side of things, so I'll get a little bit more into that later. In the other roles that I do, I do a lot of business development and relationship development in both my export business as well as my business development role in the pharmaceutical company, talking to a lot of clients. I've always had a passion for meeting new people, networking, and seeing how we can help each other and how people can grow within a business finding sort of similar goals and things like that.

- Kirill: Yeah, got it. You've definitely been very good at networking all the time. Do you use data or any analytics for your networking to help you understand who to connect with or how to maintain relationships with people?
- David: Yeah, what I tend to see that really works is that once you sort of build a small network of people that you really know well, especially in terms of business, what you need to do to essentially make that grow, you tend to have to do networking events a lot very often. And I tend to stalk people a lot on LinkedIn – that's one of my favourite things – and get to find out a little bit more about them and where they're from, what their background is, and what they're interested in. And you know, it's especially important, and I think what really helped me with networking and building such a strong network of people and businesses, is to be interested in what they're interested in. You know, get involved in what they're involved in and sort of see their point of view of things. Yeah, I guess that's some advice that people can take back.
- Kirill: Yeah, thanks. And I can attest to that. That networking is really important. Like, I've always heard, even when I was working for other companies, I heard that about 80% of recruiting or hiring happens behind the scenes, happens through referrals, through connections and so on. I was always a bit skeptical about it. But now that I have my own business it's exactly like that. Pretty much 80% of the people are always like friends of friends or people who they know.
- David: Exactly.
- Kirill: So, if people who are listening to this podcast are looking for jobs and so on, best way to do that is networking.

- David: Yeah. Basically throughout my whole career, if I hadn't networked I probably wouldn't get any of the roles I got because even though I applied many roles looking for work here and there, looking to upgrade my career, the best roles that I got, and the most enjoyable ones, were people that you work with that you want to work with and you love to work with and you have a good connection with. And those people you get to know through networking.
- Kirill: Yeah, totally. Okay, so let's move on a bit to your current role as a Director of C2 Media. I'm assuming, from what you've told us so far, that's the most heavily data focused role. Can you tell us a bit more? Like, you've mentioned brokerage companies and that you're on marketing campaigns for them. But how exactly do you use data, data analytics, data science in your day-to-day role?
- David: Basically what we do is we tend to launch a lot of digital marketing campaigns. Of course, knowing digital marketing, there's a lot of information that goes into it and you get a lot of information out of it. You get information about the people, where they're from, who's looking at the advertisements, so there's a lot of information that you can get on your actual customer base, especially people who are interested in it. And some of the tools, I guess, and some of the ways that we use the data is – apart from of course finding out whether a campaign is being successful and whether it's getting enough hits or getting enough information based on what the creative says or what the creative does – another thing that we find out is whether that creative, even though it's getting a lot of hits, will convert. So, we use a lot of data to sort of do some

conversion analysis doing A/B testing to find out whether a certain creative is better than another creative. Also, A/B testing in terms of seeing which sort of subject lines work best, what will grab people's attentions the most.

And then after that whole process of getting their information and gathering that, we also work on lead conversion strategies. So, we work out what sort of target market is the best for the client, what sort of target market is going to most likely turn over into a sale. Basically whether they're from a certain income, certain generation, certain background, et cetera, so what's their primary role, what's their work, where they come from, what's their annual salary, all these sorts of things. You can get quite a lot of data from campaigns, especially because a lot of campaigns for lead generation, a lot of it is submitted by users themselves, so you get a lot of information and you definitely tend to use that to paint a better picture of who are interested in investing into financial markets.

Kirill: And what do you mean when you say it's submitted by the users themselves?

David: Well, you get a lot of landing pages. Most digital marketing campaigns will have landing pages of some sort and, of course, you'll give them little questionnaires or things to fill out. One of the greatest strategies that we've used, and I think it's getting used very often now in the financial industry, is content strategy campaigns whereby you provide the users with a lot of information about the product as well as some free information or some gift or some kind of information that will benefit them or educate them.



- Kirill: Like a lead magnet or something?
- David: Exactly. And from that, they usually put through a lot of their own information in order to attain that lead magnet. And, of course, from that we use the data and analyse it and sort of see what the customer base is going to be like, whether they're the right target market for the product and whether they'll actually convert or they won't.
- Kirill: Okay. That's really cool. And what kind of tools do you use to analyse that data that's coming through?
- David: There's a couple of tools that we use. We do use some e-mail campaign tools for simple A/B testing and things. We tend to use Excel a lot. Excel is fairly easy to use—I say fairly easy to use, but it can be pretty complex sometimes. (Laughs) We tend to use that a lot. It's a simple sorting tool. Then we use Kissmetrics a lot also, and also we do some PixelTools to make sure that we know what's happening with the campaign, how it's being tracked, et cetera. A lot of it will be done through Kissmetrics and they have a lot of tools there that actually help you out.
- Kirill: Okay. I've heard a lot about Kissmetrics and I've actually seen the founder, if I'm not mistaken, Neil Patel, in a conference talking. Very, very interesting stuff. They've got a great blog on marketing and lots of people recommend it, even if you don't use the tool. It's really cool that you're actually using their tool. Can you tell us a bit more about Kissmetrics? Because I've heard it's quite expensive and there are other alternatives, but what are in your view, for those of our listeners out there who are maybe business owners, entrepreneurs or even in marketing in agencies or

in-house marketing teams, what are the main advantages of Kissmetrics that you see?

David: Basically, they make the data really simple to read. It's one of those tools that just makes everything easier. You don't have to know too much about coding, you don't have to know too much about data analytics. It's sort of like a cheat sheet. And it creates all these analyses for you whilst also actually tracking what your campaigns are doing. Whether it's a social media campaign or an e-mail campaign or any kind of digital campaign, they can track it like a banner campaign, et cetera. In terms of its price, it is really expensive. I would only recommend it if you're really going to want to do big campaigns. Our company turns over quite a decent amount, so obviously we can afford it. But there are other tools, obviously, if you don't want to use Kissmetrics. You can use Excel. You can use a lot of benchmarking tools, even simple things like your MailChimps or Benchmark etc. that can sort of do the more basic stuff.

Kirill: Okay, gotcha. So can you walk me through the process? For instance, you want to run a campaign or somebody wants to run a campaign. How do you go about first of all setting up these data points where you collect the data and then feeding it into Kissmetrics and then doing some magic there and getting the output and then analysing it and actioning it? If you could walk us through every step of the way, that would be really appreciated.

David: Sure. Well, I won't go through 100% of it, but I'll tell you sort of the basic part of it because Kissmetrics does a lot of it for you, so you don't have to really worry too much about it.



There's not like a big story to say, but essentially what you do is you have like sort of a pixel or like a little bit of line of code which actually Kissmetrics sort of helps put into your campaign. That's the first thing. So, the first thing after we've talked to the client is we set up the campaign, we set up the coding, we put that in there, then we send out the campaign. We send out the campaign through various sources and suppliers for media such as newspapers etc. Once the campaign is out, usually we give it a week or so to let the data come in, and then from there we feed it through Kissmetrics and it will tell us sort of what the conversion rates are and it will tell us all sorts of things like what the click rate is, what the best demographic is, what the A/B test told us which type of campaign is better. You can feed several different types of campaigns and sort of literally straight away see is one campaign better than the other. So it's a very simple tool to use but an expensive one.

Kirill: (Laughs) So the data is already visualized for you inside Kissmetrics? It's presented as charts and graphs rather than just raw numbers?

David: Exactly.

Kirill: Gotcha. And then how do you go about auctioning that data? Do you then talk to the clients, or do you adjust the audiences that you're serving this ad to? What exactly do you do with those insights?

David: Usually you will actually talk to the client because our job as a media company is really to provide the data and analyse it somewhat for them. But other than that, it's up to them to make the decision of what they want to do with that data



and how they want to action it. We'll give them some suggestions of what's actually happened and whether the campaign was successful or wasn't successful or was it just sort of okay, and what they can do to improve it. Of course, you just send them a huge report, what you call a "thump report", it thumps when you hit the table, and then they basically have to action it and see, based on our suggestions, what they can do.

Kirill: Okay. It thumps when it hits the table?

David: Yeah, that's a very famous saying. Like, if you're going to give a client a report, it should thump. Because it should be so full of information when it hits the table, it thumps.

Kirill: Oh, gotcha. Okay. (Laughs) Okay, cool. Out of all those metrics that happen to be in Kissmetrics and that are available to you and that just serve purposes of marketing and campaigns and so on, which would you say is or are the most important ones or one that people should focus on? Maybe there's some tips and advice you can give to aspiring marketers that want to get into the space of data.

David: Yeah, absolutely. So, basically, I think A/B testing is probably one of my favourite tools because it allows you to sort of just test a little bit of a campaign. And luckily enough, we offer this to our clients a lot, A/B testing, because we find it works better and we do a lot of lead generation campaigns, which means if we don't provide them with the leads, we won't get paid basically. So we do a lot of A/B testing and I think A/B test is one of the greatest tools and it's really taken for granted sometimes. People in the marketing industry, they tend to think they know better

than they actually know, or they haven't tested out the data yet. So I think A/B testing is probably one of the best tools that I've seen out there in terms of reducing your costs and getting you a better return on an investment. You need to test your campaigns. A lot of marketing people, they have these great creatives and these great ideas and we've seen it all before, it just flops because they think "We'll just launch it. It's going to be good. It's going to be our little thing," and sometimes they don't do the research and it tends to be sort of an iffy project. But if you do your testing, at least we can tell them before we send out a full campaign that there's going to be a little bit of a problem, or you should fix this. So, I recommend everyone tests their campaigns before they send them out. That's just like the absolute basic.

Kirill: Okay, cool. Let's talk a little bit more about that. For instance, how do you go about isolating that factor that you're testing? Obviously, there are many different factors that are influencing the conversion rate or whatever you're testing. How do you go about isolating, and do you actually make sure that in the A/B test, only this one thing is actually different?

David: Yeah. So, what we do for clients, and not a lot of people can do this I guess, is we have databases where we can isolate certain things such as income or we'll have user information such as income or region whereby we can actually target those specific things. And based on certain creative, we can see what the difference is in terms of their clickbacks or their opens or their signups etc. So we do it with a small portion of population, of course, a small sample size, and it's not always easy or possible, but if you have your own target

markets, like if you're doing some internal marketing campaigns with your own user base or your own customer base, this is actually really simple to do and you can use that data and you can use these campaigns to test with your own customer base before sending it out to the wider market. That's one thing that you can sort of do.

Kirill: Alright. Because when I think of A/B testing in terms of marketing, I think of A/B testing the ad itself, but you're saying you're actually testing which audience you want to serve this ad to.

David: Absolutely. I think it's kind of overlooked. I mean, there's only so much you can do to change with creative to sort of test is A going to be better than B, is A going to be more interesting than B. You can always do that, that's no problem and it's fairly easy to set up. But testing the audience, I think a lot of people overlook that. They think "No, this is my target market. This is my target market," but they haven't done the research behind it. So, it's very important, and it's especially important when you're actually choosing which media to go with, which database is going to be more interested in it. Yeah, always test your markets.

Kirill: That's very interesting. It actually gives me ideas myself because usually the way I go about testing the audience is I just look at Google Analytics and I see where the people are from that are visiting my website. Or, for instance, if we run a survey and people are kind enough to share some information with us, we know who they said they are, what age groups and so on. I just kind of look at the people that

utilize the website and where they're from, and I can make the assumption that that is my audience.

But what you're saying is that those are just some people that are visiting your website, which is a good start, but they're there for different purposes. Somebody might be interested in my podcast, somebody might be interested specifically in my courses, somebody might be interested in case studies that we run. So, different people, different audiences will be interested in different things. And even though you know your audiences overall, for your specific products you still need to understand who it serves the best, right?

David:

And not only for your specific products, but for your specific marketing campaign as well because different marketing campaigns appeal to different types of people. So you've really got to find out. If you're going to do an e-mail campaign or a banner campaign, you've got to find out exactly who are the types of people that are actually going to look at that and say, "Oh, okay. That's interesting." For example, banner campaigns, which most people will find pretty annoying and a lot of people have ad blocker so they don't ever work. They won't work with most people that are under 40 or under 50. But plus 50s obviously they won't have an ad blocker and they probably will click it. Yeah, you've got to look at all sorts of things like that, like what's most likely going to reach your target market and which sort of campaign will reach which type of people.

Kirill:

Okay. That's very interesting. And also, I'd like to mention, in these kinds of situations a lot of people perceive



marketers as these evil, evil human beings that are trying to sell everything to everybody and get maximum money out of it. But if you think about it, when you are finding out how to approach the audience the best way, you're also doing your audience a service because then that way you're not going to be bothering people that aren't going to respond to that type of advertising. And also, you're serving the right product or marketing campaign to give the right information to the people that will be interested in this product or advertising campaign and so on.

David: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, everyone looks at people like Google or Facebook and they think, "Wow, they're grabbing a lot of our data. They're getting a lot of our information. Big Brother is watching," etc. But what the good marketers are doing is they're grabbing this information as data and they're trying to make ads, at least the good ones are, that are less invasive and more personalized. Because no one likes popups all the time just happening and marketers are sort of starting to realize that because that's why they have ad blockers and things like that. So we're trying to sort of work out how can we make ads appealing enough or interesting enough or entertaining enough so that people will look at them and be like, "Okay, yeah. I might give this a chance." And data really helps this out. Data will really pull us through.

Kirill: Yeah, okay. So, applying data for good, right? You're like a little Robin Hood of marketing. (Laughs)

David: Well, we get wins wherever we can, so yes.

Kirill: Yeah, that's awesome. And another question I have on A/B testing is how long do you run it for and I ask because in data science, like hard-core data science, especially in the space of medicine and so on, we always test for statistical significance. We always check what is the required sample size for this result to be statistically significant. So I would like to get your take on that. And I also know that marketers sometimes don't do that, don't check for statistical significance per se, but still nevertheless they use their gut feel or they use common industry standards to know how long to run it for, how many people they need to get to participate in the test for their results to be valid to proceed with the actual thing.

David: Yeah, and that's the thing really. It depends on the sort of campaign you're running, of course, but generally because a lot of marketing campaigns are really time sensitive, they don't have the opportunity or the time to really test it over long periods of time. I think the longest I've sort of heard is maybe they'll be testing things out for a month. But generally speaking, for digital campaigns you probably have like a week or a couple of days. So, it really varies between the campaigns.

And that's the thing with statistical significance. A lot of the time you won't hit as great a sample size as you really want, so you won't really find as great information or data. Sometimes what you get might just be incorrect data, incorrect information just because of the fact that the sample size is so small. These are sort of risks. And in the end, you will use a lot of historical information to work out whether it was an anomaly or whether it was correct. So, I

guess using both historical information and what you've seen in the past with past campaigns, as well as running these A/B tests or just tests for the marketing campaigns, you kind of have to use both to sort of figure out has the audience evolved, have they started to do something different, or is this maybe an anomaly and you have to sort of give both opinions to the client and he'll make the decision.

Kirill: Okay, gotcha. So, when you say "historical information," it's when you run A/B test for the same client or a similar product or a variation and then you look at the results of that and then compare it to what you see now, right?

David: Exactly. Because we run a lot of campaigns with very similar clients, so we tend to see very similar trends in the industry, in sort of what's happening. Usually there'll be one widely different campaign and then everyone will try and do the same thing. So usually after running so many campaigns, you will sort of get an idea of what clients want. Because we do such a niche and specialized market, we tend to know our market pretty well. So just using historical data and historical information, whilst there is a lot of updating happening all the time with the data and what's happening with different analytics, using historic data is still very, very important, going back to basics and seeing what happened last year or the year before.

Kirill: Okay. And I guess that's kind of the advantage of a more established company, a company that has already done this many times like yours because you guys already have access to this historic data and therefore you can make these tests



more agile. And you don't only base your decision on the results of the A/B test but also on your prior experience on the data that you had previously.

David: Exactly. We're in a lucky position because we've been doing this for probably more than 5 years. I mean, our company has been developed only about a year now, it's a year old. So it's a very young company but in the industry, myself and my partner have been doing this for more than 5 years. Ever since we started, this is why we've been getting quite a lot of customers from this industry. It finds that there's a lot of interest in this sort of analysis, and giving this sort of treatment to the customer and the client and how actual data will affect their marketing campaign, how it will affect their conversion rates and their sales.

Kirill: Yeah, gotcha. Just out of curiosity, is there a minimum requirement for turnover, something for you to take on board a new client?

David: Generally there is. Usually we will try and work with mostly larger clients just because there's more money in it, of course, businesswise, but also they tend to have a lot more creative and have a lot more preparation already done, so they can put in place changes that they need to once the analysis has been done fairly quickly. It is a very time sensitive marketing style, digital marketing, so if changes need to be made, it needs to be done quick. So generally we deal with mostly larger clients.

Kirill: Alright, gotcha. Okay, thanks a lot for running us through the A/B tests and ROI, which you mentioned a bit. I'm going to move on to the next question that I had for you. What's

your biggest challenge that you've had to face in the sense of using data? In the sense of dealing with data or analytics and applying it in your work and life?

David: Personally, I find the biggest challenge with data analytics is education and finding out more about it, learning more about it. Even though it's been around for a long time – it used to be called statistics, I guess, in a way – but now that it's sort of data science and analytics, it's constantly evolving, constantly being developed. And whilst a lot of statistical analysis is still being used in a lot of things that they do, it's just changed in terms of what they use it for in business all the time. And because of that, the tools are changing all the time, and the industry is changing all the time, and just getting educated in that industry and how to react and how to interpret data, I think the education part of it, it's really hard to find the right sources. I try my best doing research and things like that, but I find that was always a big challenge for me and it took me a long time to get a bit more experience. My initial passion for marketing when I did this, especially digital marketing, was the fact that you could play around with data and I love mathematics. But yeah, it's not that easy, unless you're working in the specific industry. It's not that easy to find out how to use it or about it or how to implement it.

Kirill: Gotcha. So where do you find most of your education in such areas? Are there any sources that you can recommend or websites you can point people to?

David: Well, other than you, obviously—(Laughs)

Kirill: (Laughs) Thanks.



- David: Apart from you, a lot of data science stuff that I look at is—I look through a lot of networking science in LinkedIn, a lot of articles through that from a lot of reputable sources and people that I know. I find it's really good to do some courses, especially in things like Excel statistics, and just doing courses online is probably the best way to go about it. I think this next generation is so lucky that they have a lot of these resources, they have such a much better developed Internet that they can get lots of education online unlike how we used to 7 or 8 years ago, prior to YouTube even existing.
- Kirill: Yeah. Do you remember the good old days when we used to play “Diablo” or “Starcraft” and you’d have the dial-up modem and then you’d play and then your mom picks up the phone and you’re like, “Damn it!” (Laughs)
- David: Exactly. So, this generation is really, really lucky that they can see things on YouTube, they can educate themselves about science, about statistics, about mathematics, about everything that they need to know and it’s really at the touch of their fingertips. So, even if you can do things—like, every morning when I get up I’ll watch a couple of YouTube videos, and I know kids watch a lot of YouTube these days, so I try and watch at least one or two things, 10-15 minutes educational. Just as little as that can get you a long way.
- Kirill: And not just the new generation, right? Everybody has it. Like, the new generation is lucky because growing up—
- David: Meaning everyone now? Yeah.
- Kirill: Yeah, but everyone now is so lucky that we can all do it. And speaking of education, less than a year ago you and I

launched a course together on data-driven marketing, and I say “you and I” very liberally because you did most of the work on that course and I just did one section to get people really up to speed with the data techniques. Tell us a bit more about that. What inspired you to share your knowledge with people and what do you discuss in the course, what do you cover? Give us a quick overview of the course.

David:

Yeah, absolutely. So, basically what I wanted to do the course for was sort of similar to something I never had when I was getting into the industry, especially in marketing. I find that I had to research a lot about digital marketing and how to launch campaigns and things like that. So what I wanted to teach people was sort of from basics all the way up to launching a campaign, how to prepare yourself and how to use data to actually be able to analyse what you’re doing, to actually be able to run things and launch things, and afterwards how do you actually see the results and what can you do with those results.

I take it from start to finish in terms of launching a campaign and then reading the data. Of course, little tools and tips and especially – and this is really important for marketers – a lot of it also has to do also with a return on an investment. I find a lot of people who are just starting out in marketing, and there is a lot of marketing managers who still make these mistakes, they don’t take data into account and they just tend to invest their money and their marketing budget into all sorts of different media that doesn’t actually do anything for them. So I cover quite a bit of that in the course, and how you can actually work out, based on the different campaigns, which will probably be the most

effective for you and how you can sort of find that out and what's the return on investment for a campaign. And also how to reverse engineer and sort of work out, "Okay, I have this much budget. Is it enough to reach this sort of a goal based on what I've done before?"

It talks a lot about testing as well, testing the markets, doing A/B testing, testing your campaigns, and based on those tests obviously afterwards you would decide which marketing will be the most worthwhile and where you can put your budget towards. That's sort of the idea behind this course. And of course, you helped me a lot with the advanced analytics and obviously finding out more about after your campaign or after you've gathered data from all sorts of people or your business, what you're going to do with that data, how are you going to use that to find out more how you can promote and how you can actually find anomalies in your statistics, etc.

Kirill: Yeah, gotcha. Yeah, it's quite a successful course. I had a friend who funnily enough runs a forex broker agent in Sydney. He contacted me asking me about your course. So it has driven some interest and I think people are learning quite a bit from it.

David: Yeah, absolutely. The forex market here in Australia, I guess everyone knows everybody, so I was bound to meet up with your friend as well. It's all about really making sure you don't make those mistakes when you're first starting out in marketing. Especially if you're a small business, and you have maybe a marketing budget of a few thousand dollars, or maybe even like \$10,000 dollars, it can disappear very



quickly and you can get a lot of salespeople from the media agencies calling you and pushing you to do campaigns that don't actually do anything for you. So, it's about avoiding those mistakes and I want people in marketing to think before they act so they don't get ripped off, essentially.

Kirill: Yeah, gotcha. Very important to educate yourself on these things.

David: Exactly.

Kirill: All right. So, interesting question for you. Next one is, what is a recent win that you can share with us? We've talked a lot about data and we've actually talked about productivity and towards the end of this podcast, I want to steer us into the space of productivity as well. You can choose either space. What is a recent win that you can share with us that you're very proud of, something that you did?

David: I've got quite a few because I'm a winner. (Laughs)

Kirill: (Laughs) Oh, there we go. I love it.

David: Yeah, but basically I'm a guy who's really passionate and who loves to have fun. I'm a very, very happy individual and I think being happy is probably the most important thing in your life. But I guess the biggest win right now is the fact that I'm the director of three different brands and companies, which is really, really exciting, obviously. Three different companies that I'm working on.

I've got one that's for import and export where we're now working with wine and marble and all sorts of things. I've got one that's for the media company, of course, and one that's—actually, we're developing our own brand. This is

really exciting thing in, I guess, the face, and soaps – sort of the cosmetic industry where we’re actually creating and developing our own brand. That’s another thing that I’m really excited about. I’m all about just succeeding, doing everything you can do and just doing the best you can do. That’s what I’m all about. And everything I aim to do, I aim to finish, and I think that’s an important way to live your life.

Kirill: Yeah, man, I love it. I love it. It reminds me of the movie—what is it called? About marketers where they say, “Closing...”

David: “Closing is for winners?”

Kirill: Yeah, yeah, yeah. “Winners close” or something like that. What’s the movie called?

David: “Glengarry Glen Ross.”

Kirill: Yeah, “Glengarry Glen Ross.” I hated that movie so much. (Laughs) It’s like I had such high expectations. But that phrase, “Closing is for winners...”

David: It’s “Coffee is for closers.”

Kirill: “Coffee is for closers.” Yeah, something like that. So, it really, really reminds me of that. And you’re kind of translating this whole attitude that you got from your competitor in marketing.

David: I love that movie. (Laughs) Marketing people and salespeople love that movie.

Kirill: Yeah. All right, I guess it’s an industry one. Yeah, I can totally attest to it. Dave is a very happy individual, always

super happy about everything. So, talk to us more about that. I would love to learn how on earth you're always smiling and always happy and nothing can knock you off your feet. What's your secret?

David: Yeah, there's a lot of different things about it. I guess it's just really state of mind thing. And this is something people can practice, too. Other than obviously being always an optimist, which can have its advantages and disadvantages, I think having the state of mind that you're always looking towards something in the future, that keeps you happy, that keeps you sane, that keeps you working towards a goal. This is a big problem with a lot of people. They get sort of stuck thinking about, "Okay, this happened in the past," regrets, etc. It's really important not to think about the past as something that you could have done differently. Rather, learn from the past. And from that, don't make the same mistake again.

So that's sort of like the best way that I can explain why I'm always optimistic, why I'm looking ahead, why I'm always trying to challenge myself and do something else, do something different and so on and so forth. It's because I don't get bogged down in the past and whatever has happened before. I instead look towards what am I going to do next, how am I going to improve.

Kirill: Yeah. Kind of like another movie, "Interview with the Vampire," right? He's like, "Never regret. Never regret anything."

David: Okay, I'll try to remember that.

- Kirill: (Laughs) You showed me that movie! You were the one who showed me that movie.
- David: That was a long time ago.
- Kirill: That was 2006. That was ages ago. All right, cool. That's really cool advice. Always just look forward. But doesn't that stop you from – when you're looking forward to the future, don't you feel that you're kind of not living in the moment, you're not present in the present if you're looking to the future all the time?
- David: Well, that's the thing. Just because you're looking towards the future doesn't mean you can't think about the present that's happening. Obviously, you need to adapt to situations. If something horrible is happening to you in the present time, obviously you need to deal with that. But it's a lot of people getting stuck over regrets of what's happened and it really slows you down. It makes you inefficient. It's what I like to call – and this will probably sound a little bit crazy – but it's what I like to call “energy wasted,” “calories used for nothing.” Because you're using these calories thinking or worrying or stressing about some things that happened before and those calories are being wasted. Well, it's good if you're trying to lose weight, but it's basically energy being wasted on something that you cannot change because none of us have a time machine. And because of that, as long as you think of these things as “This is going to waste my energy and this is not going to have a positive spin on what I actually need to do next,” then you can sort of move on to it. Obviously, there is something traumatic that happened right then and there. That's a different thing. But

you have to deal with that as it is. But if something is more worrying you and you're regretting, that's where you shouldn't waste your energy on.

Kirill: Yeah, I totally agree with that. A lot of the time we just worry about worrying and worry about being worried about something. It just spirals down.

David: Yeah. Like, one of the things a lot of people will ask themselves is, "What should I do now? What am I doing now?" Sort of not knowing what they're doing. And that's fine. A lot of people don't know what they're doing. But you should ask yourself—instead of "What should I do now?" you should be like, "What am I going to do next?" and that'll get you sort of started to think "I have something to do. I have some goal that I want to achieve. I just need to put it down, and I just need to do it."

Kirill: All right. And speaking of achieving goals and things like that, you already mentioned a really cool tip which I'm going to try applying. Like, tomorrow morning when I wake up, I'm going to watch something for 10 minutes, like educational, and I think that's really cool. Do you have any other productivity tips or advice for people to learn faster and get to where they want to go?

David: Absolutely. This is the tip I give to all new salespeople and all new people in marketing. And a lot of people in the new jobs, this will probably help them too. It's "Be comfortable with being uncomfortable." That's my tip. The thing is, whenever you start a new role or whenever you start a new sale or something like that, you never feel quite comfortable, and you're always delaying yourself and stopping yourself

and trying to prepare, trying to prepare, rather than actually just doing it. Similar to that viral video with Shia LaBeouf saying “Do it,” it’s basically like that. You just literally need to sometimes do it. You need to go half-prepared and learn from your mistakes.

A lot of the time people will overprepare and they’ll waste a lot of time or they’ll miss an opportunity. A lot of the time you just need to be comfortable with being uncomfortable and don’t be worried about failing, don’t be worried about making a mistake. That’s how you’re going to learn. If you look at a salesperson, and like a normal person or like a marketing person, very different mentality. Salespeople are always trying to get the sale, pushing for it. So you’ll never see them ever be uncomfortable with being an absolute fool or making mistakes. They just go for it because that’s their mentality. So, if I could give any advice to anyone, it’s honestly start thinking like a salesperson because you’ll become more of a go-getter. You’ll be much happier with yourself and you will go and try and achieve what you’re trying to achieve.

Kirill: Great advice. I love it. And is that something that you apply in your business and your marketing company?

David: Absolutely. I mean, we come from a half-marketing/half-sales side of the business, so we have to on a daily basis just embarrass ourselves and go out there and do whatever we can, whether we’re trying to get new clients, or whether we are trying to report to a client who thinks they’re wrong, or whether we’re not sure what actually happened. You just have to be comfortable and not be afraid to look like a fool



and to just ask. That's another sales thing, I guess, "If you don't ask, you'll never get." Same thing.

Kirill: I know which movie that's from. (Laughs)

David: Yeah. All the movies!

Kirill: It's like, you have to ask for discounts or whatever you get from them.

David: Not just – yeah, exactly. Discount, anything. Whether it's a networking event and you're shy to go to a CEO and introduce yourself, or things like that, you've got to get out of your comfort zone. You know, own it. Be uncomfortable, but own that feeling of "I can't do it", this and that. Own that feeling and just go and just try and look like a fool. But, you know what? You achieved your goal, you looked like a fool, but next time you'll look a little bit better.

Kirill: Yeah, gotcha. Fantastic advice, especially for people in the space of data science, where not just the nature of the work and the education that goes into it where a lot of the time you're introverted, you're by yourself and therefore you develop these — not complexes, but shyness, you don't go up to people confidently, you don't take things on confidently, but also the fact that with data science you have to make sure that everything is perfect, everything is calculated, statistical significance is checked, the data is prepared well. That, in itself, the nature of the work forces people to think about life in that way as well. But in reality, I totally agree with you. If you've never run a presentation – a data science presentation – to 200 people or 20,000 people, unless you try, you're never going to actually run one. So sometimes you have to get out of your comfort zone.

David: Yeah, absolutely. If you've ever seen TED talks—you'd probably know about it, it's very famous. It's essentially the same thing. A lot of those people may seem confident but it's all about just getting out there and doing it all of the time. You just have to go out there, speak your mind, be confident with who you are, and don't be worried about failing. It's part of the process.

Kirill: Okay. I've got another question too, to start wrapping this up. From your experience in marketing, and from what you see based on all the work you've done, and the clients you've worked with, and where you see this industry going, where do you think the future of data in marketing lies in the next 3, 5 or 10 years down the track?

David: Good question. Well, data is now really being used more and more in marketing. Actually, now it's very rare to find campaigns where they don't use some kind of data analysis or case studies on how the market actually reacted to it. From things as simple as ads on TV, where it's very hard to sort of determine what the market thought, to things which are more digital and you can definitely see what's happening. So what I tend to see is that we're going to see a lot more data science in all sorts of aspects of marketing and it's going to be the norm. I think it's going to be huge industry opener and eye-opener into how campaigns are run. And we're going to see a lot more jobs in data marketing in marketing specifically. It's becoming such a huge industry.

And I think that also another thing we're going to see very soon is how big data is going to play a part in marketing in a

lot of ways, especially with Google Analytics as well as the Google algorithms, and how they actually get consumer information, how they can use that to make things more personalized. I think the next step that we're going to see in the next 5-10 years is more and more personalization in advertising that's becoming more and more specific to the case where it might even mention your name. Things like that that might have seem like science fiction when we watched "Minority Report," but it's going to become the norm. It's sort of where it's actually heading.

And a lot of places, especially Facebook, which has a lot of users' data, will start using campaigns that are more and more personalized and specifically speak to the person. Back in my day, they would just do things like just mention your name. That would be enough. But now it's getting to the point where they know exactly what you're doing, and what your hobbies are, and what your information is, and what products you like, and what music you listen to. And based on that, they're going to make an ad that's perfect for you.

Kirill: Yeah. Sometimes I feel like they know what I had for breakfast that day.

David: Yeah, because sometimes you literally open the computer and before you even browse for something, or maybe you might be watching something on Netflix, and then all of a sudden you open your Google, and the first suggestion is exactly what you were watching on Netflix. It's like they know. It's very interesting how they're using data to sort of not just help you in terms of getting information, but they're



going to start using it to sell things to you. And hopefully things that you actually want to buy!

Kirill: And you mentioned that there's going to be more and more jobs in this space. You don't think that with the advances of machine learning and artificial intelligence — because a lot of people are afraid of jobs being cut because of machines, because of robotization, automatization and so on. You don't think that marketing is one of those industries where machines will take over and start doing, for instance, your work and start doing all of that instead of humans doing it?

David: To some point, yes, they will. You already have big tools like Kissmetrics and there's so many other tools that you have for analysis and data analysis that you don't really need a specialist to do it. But I still think, in terms of creative information and emotional information and emotional data that's sort of not very obvious, you will still have a lot of jobs in that space.

Kirill: Gotcha. All right, cool. Well, thanks a lot for coming on the show and sharing all these insights. Amazing, especially both marketing and productivity, I think a lot of people take away from that. How can our listeners contact you or follow you if they want to find out more about your career, or even if there's people listening that would like to engage you as a consultant or kind of understand how they can get in touch with your company about their marketing needs?

David: Yeah, absolutely. So, I guess you can basically find me on LinkedIn. LinkedIn will have all my information and details and you can contact me through there. I'm more than happy to grab any questions or things like that. You can also of

course take my course on Udemy if you're on Udemy, and shoot me any messages. I'm always interested in meeting people, talking to them, giving them some ideas for the marketing strategies. And a lot of the time, I'll give you a lot of the information for free. So feel free to give me a message or something like that if you need any help.

Kirill: Yeah. Fantastic! Thank you so much. And one final question for you, David, today: What is your one favourite book that you would like to recommend to our listeners?

David: Yeah, this is a fantastic book and I think I've recommended this before. It's called "The Big Data-Driven Business." It really talks about especially data science, data analytics, and it uses a lot of great case studies, even some including from Nate Silver. He's pretty famous for his political data science. It's a fantastic book about how to use data in your business, whether it's a small business or a big business, and how you can use it to beat competition to evolve your market etc. So, if you can get it, "The Big Data-Driven Business." You can probably find it on Amazon very easily. A great read!

Kirill: Fantastic. Thank you for that recommendation - "The Big Data-Driven Business." I think somebody else on the podcast already recommended that. Once again, thank you for coming on the show. It was a great pleasure to catch up and to have you on.

David: Awesome. Thank you very much for having me.

Kirill: So there you have it. That was David Tanaskovic. I hope you enjoyed this podcast. And probably my favourite takeaway from today was when David mentioned how he does A/B



testing not only on the actual advertising, or on the artwork, or on the ad itself, or on the buttons, or on the website, or on all these creative aspects, but he actually does A/B testing on the audience, on the customer base to understand who to serve the ad to and who that product or campaign will serve the best. So that's something that probably people don't think about as much or it's not the first thing that pops to mind. When you think of A/B testing, you think of testing the ad itself or, if it's in pharmaceuticals, the drug itself that you're running or you want to find the results of and so on. But this approach is a bit different. You're actually testing the audience to segment it better and serve the ad only to those people that will benefit from it the most and therefore your company will benefit from it the most as well.

And of course, I also really enjoyed the tips David shared about productivity, like just limiting yourself, but also motivating yourself to watch 10 minutes of education in the morning. So I'll test that out, I'll watch a TED talk tomorrow morning. They're usually around the 8 minute mark so that'll fit in nicely. Every day, watching something educational in the morning, I think that's a pretty cool idea.

So if you enjoyed this podcast, you can find the show notes at www.superdatascience.com/31. There you will see the transcript for this episode. Also, you will be able to get all the links to the materials mentioned inside this podcast as well as a link to David's LinkedIn, where you can connect with him, chat with him and ask him lots of questions about marketing. And on that note, thank you very much for listening to the podcast, for being part of this movement of



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