Stephen W.: This is Onward Nation, episode 764.

Announcer: Get ready to find your recipe for success from America's top business owners, here at Onward Nation, with your host Stephen Woessner.

Stephen W.: Good morning. I'm Stephen Woessner and welcome to episode 764 of onward Nation where five days a week I interview one of today's top business owners so we can learn their recipe for success, how they built and scaled their business. In fact, our 12 Success Strategies ebook is a compilation of the best business building advice shared by our guests. Just go to PredictiveROI.com/resources to get yours. That's PredictiveROI.com/resources and we will send it right to your inbox.

Now let's welcome today's very special guest, Stacy Jones. Stacy is the CEO and founder of Hollywood Branded, a Los Angeles-based influencer and entertainment marketing and strategy agency. She has over 20 years of leadership experience, building global influencer ane entertainment branding campaigns for top Fortune 500 companies and hundreds of brands. She's acknowledged as an expert in the field. She's appeared on CNN and MSNBC. She's spoken at conferences around the globe, from Germany to Beijing, and she's been featured in Forbes, the "Wall Street Journal, Advertising Age and other media outlets.

Welcome to Onward Nation, Stacey.

Stacy Jones: Hi, Onward Nation, thank you so much, Stephen and I'm happy to be here today. It was a wonderful introduction.

Stephen W.: You've done all that work. It is super, super impressive. In fact, your bio, as impressive as it is, it really only tells a portion of your story. Take us behind the curtain. Tell us more about you and your past and then we'll dive in with the questions.

Stacy Jones: With Hollywood Branded, I founded it to be a source for brands to create partnerships between entrainment content providers as well as celebrities and influencers. What that means is our team, on a daily basis, works with directors and producers and plot masters and set decorators on TV shows and feature films and music videos, looking for opportunities for brands to be interwoven within that content so that they're able to shine in that storyline.

We also work with influencers and celebrities in order to have them use their own content and social media to highlight and showcase the brand, as well as hiring celebrities to attend brand events or to walk the red carpet for them. Also to [inaudible 00:02:51] brand campaigns, whether that's at a retail store and point of sale types of advertising material or a on TV, print or digital advertising that the brand's making that they want to actually have a little bit more star power using a celebrity's image.

Stephen W.: That is awesome. Let's actually slice that piece apart and make it even more granular. As you and I have talked when we were together in Orlando, then again in Austin and you know I've been watching this pretty closely. Not because I'm an expert by any stretch of the imagination but I've been really trying to pick your brain at each of those interactions, because I know that this is your thing. This is your area of deep expertise, influencer marketing. Why do you think that that has become so significant today, for brands as well as for influencers?

Stacy Jones: Sure, well, across the board, there's so much clutter out there. There's so much content out there and it's really hard for a brand to get the attention of their core consumer. Whether that is through television advertising or print advertising or even their own social networks quite frankly. The power of the influencer, whether that is content that serves as an influencer or individuals who are social celebrities or actual real celebrities.

By being able to jump onto their bandwagon and have them shout from the rooftops about the brand, it's a warm introduction to their audiences and it's a lot more likely to have someone take notice, because they're already absorbed in the content. They already follow the celebrity. They already watch what the social influencer's doing. It's just a warm introduction and easy way of building a fan base and building a partnership that consumers are able to see.

Stephen W.: You mentioned a couple of terms there and I want to make sure that we get those foundationally for or create a foundation for Onward Nation business owners. You mentioned social celebrity and then, I think you said, real celebrity. What's the difference between those? For me, I just all lump them together but, when you said that, that was an aha moment for me. I'm like, oh, okay, so there is a distinction there. What is the difference?

Stacy Jones: Sure, so a lot of times, brands will come to us and say, "We want to have a celebrity integrate us into their Instagram." That's great except that's not usually what the brand really means. What they usually mean is we don't have necessarily hundreds to millions of dollars ... Hundreds of thousands, sorry. Up to millions of dollars, they have thousands of dollars potentially, where they want to work with a social influencer. There's different types of social influencers.

There is a micro influencer and those are typically people who are going to have upwards of 50,000 fans as followers on whatever platforms, even combined. Then you have your macro influencer and that's going to be your 50,000 to 150,000. Then, above that, you're starting to get ... Once you get much, much higher, into a hyper influencer and then even a celebrity social influencer. Your celebrity social influencer, those are people that are going to have a million plus followers and they are not real celebrities. It's not something that your mom, your dad would ever say, "Ah, they're a celebrity." These are individuals who have actually created their own fan bases through their content and how they engage with their follower base to create massive following numbers.

Your real celebrities out there, they don't actually all the time have really good fan bases and followers. We'll work with brands who have a male demo and they're looking at trying to go after 40-50 year old male actor wanting to have them post about their eyewear or their luggage or their clothing or their car, but, in reality, they don't have a following. This how we defer the type of influencer a brand's looking for.

Stephen W.: Let me give that back to you and make sure I'm tracking. A celebrity influencer is somebody with a million or more followers. That might be like a Casey Neistat maybe, right?

Stacy Jones: Sure.

Stephen W.: Okay, so Casey Neistat might be in the celebrity influencer category and then a real celebrity, who also has maybe some social cred, that might be like a Dwayne Johnson, "The Rock." It might be maybe like a Kevin Hart or Ryan Reynolds or ... Am I tracking with you?

Stacy Jones: You're absolutely and those three names that you called out are some of the top in the industry for having harnessed social media and their fan bases. Most celebrities still are not up to that par or that level. There's very few and those three have actually created their own businesses and built their own brands through that social influencer base, and it's allowed them to really, I think, get to know what their fans are looking for and help them develop their projects.

Stephen W.: Do you think that's why we're seeing actors like Will Smith, who for years had no social presence at all, and then all of a sudden getting shot out of a cannon. He got an award from YouTube as being one of the fastest to a million subscribers. Do you think he has from the sidelines watched what these others have done and said, "What in the world am I doing? I'm a bigtime actor and I have some really great films under my belt. Why am I not relevant in social and then using that to launch my next film?"

Do you think that's why he's really gone so gung-ho with building out his YouTube channel?

Stacy Jones: 100%. If you're a movie director or more so if you're a studio and you're casting individuals into key roles, don't you want to cast someone that actually has a built in audience base that they can advertise to. Not just a fan base, not just, "Oh, we love Will Smith," but people where, if he did a shout out about the film, they're going to flock to it because he's his own advertising vehicle now.

Most celebrities, all celebrities, really should be getting on this bandwagon and figuring out how to be social influencers, but it's not something that's natural to everyone.

Stephen W.: It's so fascinating that you mention that, because back maybe 10/15 years ago, if you wanted your movie to be successful, you'd cast John Travolta or Tom Cruise, because they could get you onto Oprah as part of the launch or the release of the film. Now, it's like every time I turn around and every time there's a new movie, it's like, "Dwayne Johnson's cast in that movie too?," but he's got 105 Instagram followers. It's unbelievable and it seems like everything now it turns into a blockbuster. I'm not trying to take anything away from The Rock's talent. I think he's fantastic but, like you said, the fact that he has turned himself into a media channel, do you think it's fair to say that? That he has done that?

Stacy Jones: If you have 105 million followers, you are a media channel. There's no ifs, ands, or buts about it. Your Kardashians are their own media channels as well so, if you're able to command that many people to tune in, watch your every move, you're able to have a lot of control over publicizing whatever you're interacting with, whether that be a movie or a brand.

Stephen W.: Give us some advice here for Onward Nation business owners who are hearing this thinking, "Okay, I know that I don't have millions of dollars to invest. I love the idea of somehow participating with a social influencer. Maybe at some point, as part of my business plan, participating with a real celebrity but I have absolutely no idea how to get that started. I don't even know what step I should take first." Can you give us some advice for business owners who are thinking that this could be important for their business? How do they even start going down this path?

Stacy Jones: Sure, so there are agencies out there to help business owners but they can also, when they're really just starting out ... You can have someone on your team who's doing reach out, typically by doing some research on Instagram or on YouTube and then direct messaging the direct influencers. In this approach, you're going to really be hitting that first level, that micro influencer. Most likely, you're going to be hitting influencers at the 10,000/5,000 reach level. Those are great. Micro influencers actually have more power than any other type of influencer out there.

Stephen W.: Really?

Stacy Jones: Micro influencers have the highest engagement so they're still ... Their circles are smaller still so they're able to respond to a lot of their comments. They're able to be more relatable to the people who follow them. A lot of times, it's very niche. They're around their same age or the same likes versus when you start getting up into your celebrity-dom or even your social celebrity, it's a little bit more fragmented.

You also have to realize that some of those really big numbers that you're seeing oftentimes have a lot of what's called dead accounts hanging on them. It's not necessarily active accounts and there's also these weird things that are robots that spam and follow accounts so that they can make they're fake accounts look bigger. It's a whole [inaudible 00:12:54], yeah.

Stephen W.: Then, you, as an agency in this space, how do you sift through that so that an influencer doesn't tell you or a member of your team, "Oh, I have 100,000 or 150,000 whatevers and they don't because some of that are dead accounts.

Stacy Jones: Sure, so there's actually different software that's free that you can google and you can find. You can put in the influencer's handle and ... The handle being their @ their name. It'll let you know what percentage of them have viable accounts versus dead accounts.

Stephen W.: How do we find this software again?

Stacy Jones: You can find it online. Funnily enough, we've actually written a blog called Five Steps to Tell If an Influencer Has Fake Instagram Followers and it gives you all sorts of different steps. That blog was so popular, I guess a lot of people want to find out if influencers have fake Instagram followers that we followed it up with another blog that has the link in there. If you google it, you'll be able to find that.

Stephen W.: Okay, great and then, Stacy, if you send me those couple of links, we'll be sure to include those in the show notes as well. Onward Nation, it sounds like ... Stacy, that's on your blog, right?

Stacy Jones: It is.

Stephen W.: Okay, so, Onward Nation, we'll include those links so that you can quickly and easily find Stacy's content and be able to go through that process and that recipe. That's awesome so thank you very much for that, Stacy. One of the things that I think is really fascinating about what you've done is that you've taken ... Maybe fascinating's not the right word. Brilliant? Brilliant. Brilliant is the better word about what you've done, because you host a podcast. You've recorded just dozens and dozens and dozens of solo cast episodes where it's all your thought leadership and all your expertise around this topic. Then, Onward Nation, what she has so brilliantly done is she's taken these pieces of cornerstone content, these episodes, and then that became then the curriculum for this new course that you launched.

I think that is so phenomenal how your podcast then fed into the curriculum. Really brilliant. Where did you get that idea, because I think that is so on point that you produced a podcast and then monetized it by creating curriculum out of it? Really smart, how did you get that idea?

Stacy Jones: I actually came to that idea very backwards. The whole plan was to actually turn blogs that I've been writing into a book. I've been talking about that now for years, and the good news is we have over 700 odd blogs. In fact, I have potentially three books that could be worked into so I [inaudible 00:15:40] narrow that down a little it now. Along the way, we started blogging, our agency, back in 2012 and I launched the podcast last March. With that, we're up to about 80 podcasts now, with on a week going out.

As I was creating podcast content, I was pulling from a lot of blog content on how-tos because we like really ... My whole differentiation with Hollywood Branded for our clients is that we're really firmly about education. That includes education of ourselves as well as our clients. We want to know and make sure that they know and understand that how we're suggesting they spend their money is actually wisely done. Where there's some things with risk in the world of influencers and content partnerships, we want to make sure that they have all the tools that are needed to make those decisions and make sure that they're smart decisions along the way.

From that, with those how-to blogs and those how-to podcasts, and staring at this book that one day will be published, if I can get through the editing process and get it down to a number of chapters that someone would actually be willing to read, versus having a tomb to carry around with them. I came up with the content marketing idea of what we call our Influencer Marketing School. With that, I've taken it a little bit further, where we actually offer certification as well.

We're not a school. My husband is a principal and he is just ... Oh, his mind is blown that I can say that we offer certification something and that I've titled something Influencer Marketing School when we are not an accredited institution and I make ... By no means are we an accredited institution but what we've been doing is, for over 20 years, all of the practices of what I talk about in my podcast and talk about in this curriculum in a school, so that brands and agencies can either do it themselves, if they're not quite ready to work with an agency like ours, or they can have the knowledge and feel confident as they start building and spending more money working with agencies like ours. That's really how it came about.

Stephen W.: Really, really fantastic and ... Where can ... Onward Nation, we'll include this link in the show notes as well but where can Onward Nation business owners find out more about the course?

Stacy Jones: Sure, if they just visit learn.HollywoodBranded.com, the course is there.

Stephen W.: Okay, so let's go back to the micro influencer piece. You were mentioning the highest engagement, they respond to their comments. That took us down the path of finding dead accounts and whatnot. You gave us the couple of blog posts as tools there. Let's go back to the micro influencers for just a second, because I want to see if we can, or if you can ... Excuse me. Give some additional context to Onward Nation business owners. If they were looking to do something with micro influencers, is there any sort of frame of reference regarding cost and so forth, or is it just all over the board, depending upon the influencer they decide to work with?

Stacy Jones: It's really all over the board. What we've tried to do is devise what is a CPN model, cost per thousand basis. You can come up with a structured pricing based off of fan count and also looking at engagement. It's a little bit more difficult than just saying, "Okay, for $12.50 you should reach 1,000 individuals," but it's not so far off from that.

It depends on what you, as a brand, are looking for from the influencer. Days gone by, everyone thought that they could work with influencers for free. We just did this survey and this massive research report. We interviewed 650 different micro influencers in fact and it was just exactly these questions. It was how much do you get paid. Do you work for free? By the way, they don't work for free. They don't like working for free. They despise working for free.

It's a lot about ... The feedback that we got was what the challenges are for them and what they think would be best practices for brands in general for that. Really, when you're working with an influencer, you need to work with them as a partner, and not just say, "Hey, here's this. I want you to push it out. This is what I want you to say." It's really about coming up and crafting an idea with them, finding out through them what their platforms would be strongest in order to push out messaging, and what type of content.

Having a still image, that might be it. Or is it having them do and create a video, which is going to cost you more money because it's all time to actually create the concept of the video and edit the video. Or is it multiple hosts of videos and photos and statements? It really comes into being a campaign.

We used to see a lot of brands who did one-hit wonders. You'd go out and you'd be like, "I want this influencer and then I want 20 more influencers and they just all need to just [inaudible 00:21:15] my brand." That doesn't work so well anymore to those who are followers, because seeing it one time in their influencer feed isn't going to have that whole recognition factor. They're going to see it and there might be a good enough call to action where they go and visit your website or purchase it or download the item, whatever it might be. Really, the strongest campaigns we see are when brands look at an influencer, again no matter the size, as a partner and they create multiple ways to work with and have that influencer touch their fan base with that brand's messaging.

Stephen W.: Then give us some expectations here. Again, if I am the business owner and I'm thinking, "Okay, I want to be in this space. I think there's benefit to my brand," what type of activities, what type of role, what type of partnership ... What is appropriate to ask for? What is inappropriate to ask for?

Stacy Jones: Yeah, you can ask for anything as long as that includes dollars coming as well. In life, you can pretty much ask anything as long as you have dollars to support that ask. What you can't ask ... You cannot ask an influencer to not include #sponsored, #ad, #paid. You have to, by law, call out any time a brand gifts or pays an influencer to promote a product. This gets really interesting because they've taken it to the level where, if you're a celebrity and you are known for doing national media ad campaigns and now you're just you work for Nike. Nike is ... You're a brand ambassador for them and you're going to do callouts on your social and you're on TV spots and you're in ads for them. Unless there is truly absolute transparency that every last person out there is going to be aware that you are paid to be that brand ambassador, they're going to have to call out ad too to any level out there.

You can't ask the influencer, because they can get in trouble, but more so, the influencer's not going to get so much trouble. You are as the brand. If you have an agency working for you, they're going to need to tell you no also, because they too can actually be fined, so anyone who's involved in it. You're going to see more and more of those #ads, #paid. What's interesting, in that survey that I told you about, we had 71% of those influencers come back saying that they didn't think that it affected the authenticity of their post.

Stephen W.: Really?

Stacy Jones: No, yeah, so just because something's marked as paid or as an ad, people know. Even if it wasn't marked, people who are looking at it, they're like, "Oh, yeah, they must be getting paid something to do that." While it's all nice and well, old says are, "Oh, they just love the product so much that they shared their love for me on their virtual platforms," well, that's not really how it works. Never really has.

The people who are looking at it and the people who are the followers and fans, they're able to look past it because, if they truly ... If the influencer is truly the right fit for your brand, then it is an authentic partnership, because the influencer, most of them ... There are certainly sellouts out there. Most of them are only looking for brand partnerships that feel real and are brands that they would want to support and like anyways.

Stephen W.: Wow, so that's ... I think that's excellent. That is a perfect framework for business owners who are thinking about going down this space. I think you really did a great job of setting the expectations. It really blows me away. The other day, I was ... I don't even remember the media source. It was in my Facebook feed but it blows me away at how some of the ... What's the term that you used? A celebrity influencer, although I think Dwayne Johnson is in the real celebrity category if I'm tracking with you.

Stacy Jones: He is.

Stephen W.: Okay, and so I saw an article about how Dwayne is now charging brands $1 million to send a tweet. I don't know if that's legit or not, or if it was fake news or whatever, but just the headline caught my eye. I thought, "Holy, banana's, $1 million to send a tweet. Staggering!"

Stacy Jones: It's unlikely that any brand is going to be willing to spend $1 million for a single tweet but, if you look at a campaign which includes a number of tweets or several social posts, that's not surprising at all. You had mentioned earlier, Dwayne Johnson has 105 million followers on his Instagram platform alone. That's not Facebook. That's not Twitter. That's not YouTube. He has all of those things. That's a massive, massive reach.

His reach is comparable to the Super Bowl, which I believe was 126 million this year or 123 million this year ...

Stephen W.: Wow.

Stacy Jones: ... somewhere. It's 120 something. How is that any different? A Super Bowl ad costs $5 million so how is it different to have Dwayne Johnson, who has 105 million followers on that platform send out messaging, his love, creating something? It's not just going to be like a, "Hey, guys. I love my Nike shoes." It's going to be something more that he does. How is that any different than a custom crafted ad that the brand has now spent at least $1 million in creating themselves to start?

Stephen W.: Right, and when you and I were together in Austin, the Project Rock campaign with Under Armour was just rolling out. Now, it's very difficult to find Dwayne Johnson Project Rock Under Armour gear, because they just can't keep it in stock. They rolled it out with ... The first initial launch of it was with, essentially, a 30 to 60 second commercial, if you will on Instagram. Within 48 hours, it received almost 5 million views. I'm like, "Oh, my gosh."

At dinner that night, Onward Nation, Stacy and I were talking about how not only is Dwayne Johnson a talent, not only is he the real celebrity, he's also the production company. Seven Bucks Production produced the creative for that launch. I'm like, "Wow." It's like from almost A to Z, soup to nuts, it's him. That's staggering to me.

Stacy Jones: Okay, well, dial that back, Stephen and think about your macro influencer that has 100,000 followers or your micro influencer that has 9,000 followers, whatever it might be. They're that same content factory. They have to create the content. They have to come up with the copy. They have to be their own cameramen. They have to [inaudible 00:28:37] editor. They have to be able to be funny or write well. All of that, and then they have to actually have created relationships where they have a base of followers to be there.

From that small little blip all the way up to Dwayne Johnson, it's all really the same thing, although Dwayne Johnson has a lot more people working for him than some of these smaller influencers. That's what brands have to look at. You have ... We were told literally that 83% of influencers won't work for a percentage of sales as a compensation anymore. That they ... Over half of the ones that we interviewed have blogging and social platform posting as their main source of income.

The 650 people we talked to, that ranged from small little influencers to people who had hundreds of thousands, maybe very low millions of followers across it. A lot of them were what we would classify as micro influencer and they are actually making a living doing influencer marketing.

Stephen W.: That is amazing. Amazing, and so the 83%, let me just give that back to you and make sure I'm tracking with you. 83% said they do not want to be compensated as a percentage of sales?

Stacy Jones: Correct. No one trusts in it. Every brand we've ever worked with, I think, has come and said, "Oh, if we have this special link and people click on it, then we'll pay the influencer by how successful they are." Their elbow's in the game and ours is and everyone wins."

That's not how it works because the brand's also getting the content that they've created that they can repurpose out. There's a value in that.

Stephen W.: Also, in fairness to the influencer, if I see a blog post or I see an Instagram post or whatever and I see that amazing launch. Then, one day when I'm off of my phone and I just go into the store and I buy the thing, then the influencer's out in the cold. He or she does not get credit for influencing me in the purchase when they had everything to do with me making that decision.

Stacy Jones: Correct. It's the same thing as a TV ad sale. If you're watching a TV commercial, same thing. Network's not getting paid off of commissions. Print ads, same thing. The digital banners that are running, same thing.

Stephen W.: This is so phenomenal. Let me take this back into putting you in center focus at the business owner here, because you've given us really great mentorship throughout this entire conversation. I'm really curious about mentors who have been impactful in your life and in the lessons that they have taught you. Share with us what you would consider to be the most influential lesson that you ever learned from one of your mentors, Stacy, and then how that lesson helped you become the business owner and the thought leader you are today.

Stacy Jones: You know, Stephen, I would love to say that this was the best thing that one of my mentors taught me that was positive and phenomenal. I actually think one of my best learning experiences has been what bosses have done negatively versus positively. I had a former boss who once stated that, once an employee was paid, you had done your obligation to that employee once that employee worked those hours, they had done their obligation to you and that there was nothing further owed.

This boss happened to be a CFO, so he was very numbers and financially driven and that was who he was but I don't believe that. I think one of the most important jobs I have as a business owner is to actually help my employees grow into the individuals that they're still going to become. That continues long after their employment ends with me. Everyone's going to leave a job. We all move on. One day, I may sell my company. Everyone moves. The foundation I try to put in place with individual employees is really going to help build it out for them for a lifetime as they continue to grow in other jobs and even other industries. That's the lesson I want to pass on to them.

I actively tell, literally did it yesterday as well, that, whatever situation they find themselves in life, including where they work, how they interact with other employees and their bosses, that the bottom line is that they need to find a way to do it with grace. If you treat others with grace and respect, that's going to pay off in the long-run. That includes keeping those relationships alive. There's no reason to burn bridges, so if that answers your question.

Stephen W.: It does but it also ... I think it also speaks to the heart of you as a business owner and how much you care about your team and how invested you are with each of them and how their success, while they're working with you or maybe if they choose to go someplace else, that ... How you support them through that process and how you are invested in them, as you hope that they're invested in you too. That's an awesome lesson, Stacy, to share with us.

Stacy Jones: Thank you.

Stephen W.: Aww, that's fantastic. This entire conversation has just been off the charts. Just really, really good, because I know so very little about this topic and so ... influencer marketing. Being able to spend time and hang out and learn from an expert such as yourself has really been phenomenal, just a great opportunity for ... Thinking selfishly, great opportunity for me but a really wonderful opportunity for Onward Nation business owners, because we don't know about this. The fact that you've studied this and built an agency around it and been doing it for decades and built a course around it and fantastic podcasts around it and, at some point, several books around it, really phenomenal opportunity for us, Stacy.

Before I ask you my last question, I just want to say thank you. Thank you for being so generous and sharing your expertise. I'm grateful for that, my friend. Thank you.

Stacy Jones: Thank you. You make it very easy to chat.

Stephen W.: Thanks, for that. Here's my last question for you. It'll be a scenario, give us a chance to go a little bit deeper into strategy. Imagine you're standing in front of a room of brand new business owners, people just like you when you were starting out. Maybe they're battling their way through fear or worry or doubt or maybe they're just struggling to try and find footing. What would be two or three strategies, Stacy, that you would recommend that they focus on to best ensure success?

Stacy Jones: I can tell you for one ... It'll save you a lot of pain. Make sure you hire anyone with more than one person's input. I think, when you're starting out, you're the one making the calls and you're the one choosing who's going to join your team. It would be very helpful, I promise you, to have someone besides just you chime in. The reason for that is, when you do need to fire them, because it does happen, not all the people but sometimes, if nothing else, if that person's not a fit, you can have someone else to say, "Why didn't we see that?," instead of just feeling like it was you leading into that fire.

Really, my main point is you want to fire quickly. If you have an employee and it's not working out, you need to have them move on. It's something that's been one of the hardest business lessons I've had and it doesn't get easier with time but you cannot delay firing employees. It's such a relief, I promise, each and every time to have that mission accomplished when it really needs to be. If you let them stay and make excuses and they think ... You think that they can step it up, not they, you think that they can step it up, because you, as an entrepreneur, you'd step it up. You think that they're capable and that they're going to just charge with it but they still don't, even when you've given them that opportunity, know that they're going to poison your good team members that you have, then you're going to have to start everything all over again.

I've had this happen a couple of times and it's really something that ... I am a nice person. I'm a person that is too nice to a degree sometimes. That is something I wish someone had taught me to toughen up a little bit earlier in my career.

Another point would be that your success is really in the details. It's the little things that, when they get missed, that cause big projects to fail. You need to take time to develop processes and procedures that are in writing or video and which can be shared as training for future onboarding employees and so that you have standardized business practices.

Then, my last point ... I didn't start out saying, "Oh, I work with social influencers." I started off working with celebrities and movies and TV shows. All of a sudden, about a decade ago, not even, about seven years or so ago, this whole social influencer role started evolving and taking shape and I jumped in. I was at the forefront of it. I was already doing enough in the space that it made sense to have that added on as a strategy.

As a business owner, I suggest that you innovate. You always innovate. Just innovate. Find ways to be the leader in your category and even a little ways. Be the first ones there. Be the ones who do something a little bit different. Maybe you're not the biggest business but find out what you can do that's better than what your competitors do, because you're innovating. Keep looking for those opportunities to ride the wave of change and bringing new value to your customers.

Right now, we're moving so fast with regards to technology and changes. That means everything, literally everything, is going to become outdated. Every business is going to go by the wayside, if it's not innovative. If you make those [inaudible 00:38:51] keep on taking chances on new opportunities, then you're going to find success and continue to grow.

Stephen W.: Well-said, my friend. Just great conversation from beginning to end. Again, I'm grateful that we could have it and so thank you for taking the time. Before we go, before we close out and say goodbye, tell us the best way to connect with you, Stacy.

Stacy Jones: Sure, so you can email me, stacy@HollywoodBranded.com. You can also reach out to us on our website, HollywoodBranded.com. You can find all of those wonderful 700-odd articles I mentioned on our blog: blog.HollywoodBranded.com. you can listen to our podcast you can find through our website. It's called Marketing Mistakes and How to Avoid Them. Then, of course, remember the learn.HollywoodBranded.com site for any sort of education that you or your team would benefit from.

Stephen W.: Okay, Onward Nation, no matter how many notes you took or how often you go back and re-listen to Stacy's words of wisdom in this episode, and I sure hope that you do, the key is you have to take what she so generously shared with you, all the framing, all the lessons, all the strategy, all the tactics ... Take it, and apply it into your business right away and accelerate your results.

Stacy, we all have the same 86,400 seconds in a day. I am grateful, again, you took time out of your compressed schedule to come onto the show, to be our mentor and to be our guide, to help us move our businesses onward to that next level. Thank you so much, my friend.

Stacy Jones: Thank you. I truly appreciate this opportunity to speak with everyone.

Announcer: This episode is complete so head over to OnwardNation.com for show notes and more food to fuel your ambition. Continue to find your recipe for success here at Onward Nation.