

Ep #204: Client Interview: Measuring Metrics



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Stacey Brown Randall

***Roadmap to Grow Your Business* with Stacey Brown Randall**

Ep #204: Client Interview: Measuring Metrics

Stacey Brown Randall: It's everybody's favorite topic. What exactly am I talking about? Oh, metrics. Okay, okay. So maybe it's not your favorite topic to talk about measuring your business' metrics. But no matter how much you love this topic or loathe this topic, it's an important one. So we're going to dive in.

You are not just another hustling salesperson. You are the expert, the resource, the valuable partner for your clients, and how you grow your business should reflect how your clients see you.

Welcome to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. We generate referrals without asking, build positive client experiences, and help you take control of your business.

Here's your charmingly sarcastic host, Stacey Brown Randall.

Stacey B. Randa...: Hey there, and welcome to episode 204 of the Roadmap To Grow Your Business podcast. I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall. Here's a shout out I want to give a real quick before we dive into talking metrics. Well, this is a metric in and of itself. I want to give a shout out to the Rev Grow, the team of Mark, Lori and Val. They brought in 30 referrals in one quarter for the company and eight brand new referral sources, which means eight new people who started referring them. And of course, that was part of the 30 referrals they brought in one quarter. So congratulations to them.

Stacey B. Randa...: And when you think about the ROI, the approximate ROI of those that they've closed, we're probably talking about somewhere in the range of about \$15,000 per month in new revenue. That's right. Think about that for

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one second. What would it mean to get referrals in one quarter and of those that you closed, it meant an extra \$15,000 to your bottom line every single month. And those new clients came the easiest way possible, through referrals, that you were able to generate naturally, which means without manipulation, incentivizing, and of course, without even asking. Congratulations to the Rev Grow team.

Stacey B. Randa...: All right, let's move to today's episode. All right. So when your nickname is Pineapple Jack, let's just go ahead and assume, because it's true, that's one cool dude. All right. I mean, when you have a nickname, Pineapple Jack, there's just quite nothing like it. And I'm so excited to introduce you guys to my friend and Growth by Referrals student Jack Tompkins. He is a business analyst and consultant. So Jack is the owner of Pineapple Consulting Firm, and he absolutely loves helping small businesses become data-driven. I know some of you're thinking to yourself, "Yeah, I did not become an attorney, or an interior designer, or a real estate agent, or a consultant because I all of a sudden needed to become data-driven."

Stacey B. Randa...: But we do know it really does drive the business decisions that we make. And we talk about that a good amount here on the podcast. And I think it's one that we need to constantly remember. So Jack is our guy, he's going to come and help us fall in love, maybe, with becoming data-driven. Originally from Connecticut, Jack spent years after college in corporate America like me, and like many of you, with roles ranging from an analyst to partnership manager. But he started his own firm Pineapple Consulting Group a few years ago. And he and his team helped small businesses become more data

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driven by creating KPIs, which if you don't know what that is, those are key performance indicators by creating a KPI dashboard with visual representation of their performance, along with the analytical support to fully tell the story of their business.

Stacey B. Randa...: So what I love most about this is, it's not just data and numbers on a page, he creates the visual representation of that through visual dashboards that help you see it with colors, help them see it with colors, to understand what's actually going on in your business. And as much as you may love pulling data or loathe pulling data, let's be honest, pulling it is one thing, actually figuring out what it's trying to tell you, that's an entirely different story. So we have got Jack. Pineapple Jack is going to talk to us on this episode about the things that you should be tracking in your business, like what are those important metrics to be tracking? And then of course, some best practices as well. And of course, because he is a member of the Growth by Referrals program, he's also going to talk a little bit about that.

Stacey B. Randa...: And we have a funny story to tell about what he did to the master dashboard that I provide in that program, how he made it, oh, like a million times better. You guys are going to definitely want to stick around for that story. So here we go. My interview with Pineapple Jack. Jack, welcome to the podcast. So excited to have you on and to have this conversation with you. It's not often I get to talk to somebody who is so new in the process of going through the Growth by Referrals program. And then in addition to that, also has great insight to share based on the work that you do. So I'm really looking forward to this conversation and I know my audience is as well. But before we dive into all things, metrics, dashboards,

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tracking, and all the things that make you the guru and the expert that you are, you're going to have to explain how you came up with the name of your company, Pineapple Consulting Group, no consulting firm, excuse me, Pineapple Consulting Firm.

Jack Tompkins: The pineapple's the important part, right?

Stacey B. Randa...: It is.

Jack Tompkins: Well, so thank you so much. It's always fun talking with you, Stacey. And I love the program so far, but yeah, so where did pineapple come from? There's a whole long answer to it, but the short one is number one, I really just like pineapples. Number two, I moved to Charlotte, North Carolina from Connecticut. One, to embrace the Southern hospitality and pineapple is a symbol of Southern hospitality. So I really wanted to dive with two feet into that. And then lastly, pineapples really, they symbolize vacation to me like sitting on a beach, drinking something out of a pineapple with a true vacation. And that's so difficult to do as a small business owner. So my goal for the whole firm is to help other clients and other small business owners save enough time or make enough money so they can take that real vacation where they don't have the laptop out. And so kind of all that was symbolized together in the very welcoming symbol of the pineapple.

Stacey B. Randa...: I love that. And guys, Jack even has a picture, a headshot of him where he's holding a pineapple and I have asked him to give it to me so that we can put it on the show notes page, because I think it's brilliant. I think that, okay, so I say this, I think when people name their companies something really unique and clever, and there's a story behind it, it helps you remember it, right?

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I'm never going to forget that your company name starts with pineapple, right? Let's be honest, I may forget there's a consulting and a firm that follows it, but I'm never going to forget that it's Pineapple.

Stacey B. Randa...: And we were talking about our friend, Michele Williams before, and her company is Scarlet Thread. And there's a whole Scarlet Thread Consulting, and there's a whole story behind where that comes from with her, from a story in the Bible. And so when you hear those stories, you're like never going to forget it, right? I mean, yes, does Pineapple Consulting Firm not say exactly what you do? Well, guess what, neither does the parent company for mine, which is Brown Randall Group. Let's be honest, those are just my last names, right? There's nothing fancy about the name of my parent company. But when I think about people who take the time to really give their company a unique name and then there's a story behind it, I think it's just brilliant. So you nailed it. Congratulations.

Jack Tompkins: I appreciate that. It honestly was not intentional, but it's worked out well, and there's a lot of people that only know me as Pineapple Jack now.

Stacey B. Randa...: Right? Oh my gosh, I love that, Pineapple Jack. So how long have you owned your business?

Jack Tompkins: Full-time, I'm coming up on two years now.

Stacey B. Randa...: Oh my God. You're still a baby.

Jack Tompkins: I know.

Stacey B. Randa...: I love it. I love it. And things are going really well, which is amazing. And obviously I'm a fan, right? Because you took time within, coming up on those two years, you

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took time to invest in yourself and your referral generation by joining the Growth by Referrals program. So of course, that's how I've gotten to know you a little bit more than I knew you prior, so that's great. I always like watching people kind of go through the process of the program because you guys upload work and then I review it. I just get to see insights. Right. I get to know people a little bit better, so that is fantastic. Congratulations on coming up on two years, that's amazing. We just need to get you to the five year mark so that you're not going to fall into the business failure club like I did with my first business so many years ago, but yes.

Stacey B. Randa...: Okay. Awesome. All right. So here's the thing I love doing these combo interviews because it gives us a chance for you to share your expertise with my audience. And we also get to talk about the "aha" moments you have through your referral journey. And you know, it's funny, people are like, "Oh, do you look for people in your program to then be on the podcast?" And my answer is like, "No. Things usually fall in my lap." And that's exactly what happened with you. We were having a conversation as you were getting started in the Growth by Referrals program. And I did know what you did, but we were getting started as you were going through the Growth by Referrals program. And you mentioned something about the tracking and the dashboards. And then of course, that reminded me, that's what you do for a living.

Stacey B. Randa...: It's all about the importance of tracking metrics and how that tracking works and you build that for clients. And I was like, "Oh, this is really good, because this is something all small business owners need to know." So I've got a couple of questions I want to ask you about this, but I wanted to start with... So everybody knows you need

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to be tracking some things, because what gets measured, gets managed. And I don't remember who said that, but some... Was that Drucker?

Jack Tompkins: Somebody very famous. I don't know.

Stacey B. Randa...: Yeah. Some management philosophy guru, I think it was Peter Drucker. Anyway, I may be wrong and then I'm wrong. But if I'm not, that's what I'm attributing it to. Okay. So the idea that what we measure is actually what we manage. And a lot of small business owners, they either are tracking nothing, or they're tracking everything, or they're haphazardly tracking a few things. I feel like until you have your tracking mechanisms locked and loaded, you're a little haphazard in terms of what you're tracking or you're overdoing it or you're just not doing it at all. But what was it for you that you were like, "You know what? This is really important. And I can build a business around helping other small business owners manage their metrics, manage their dashboards, and I can build them for them and I can show them how they're supposed to work for them and make it easy for them." Like what was it that triggered you to be like, "I can make a company that will do this for other small business owners." Because it is obviously a gap.

Jack Tompkins: Yeah. It's a good point because kind of like what you were saying, there's the three different tiers of small business data tracking, nothing, way too much and haphazard, until they have something in place. And then I guess that would be the fourth tier or the graduation tier, right?

Stacey B. Randa...: Right.

Jack Tompkins: So I've always been very numbers-driven. In the corporate world, I found that when I had to present to

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somebody, it was always, I could talk about it for five minutes or I could just turn my computer around, show them the dashboard, and then they got the answer within five seconds. And so it really was an efficiency thing. And then that formed into this business of, "Okay, if people aren't tracking things, they know that they should be tracking things. If people are tracking things or too many things, they know that they should be only be focusing on the right things, and if people are haphazardly tracking things, then they just need a little bit of structure."

Jack Tompkins: So all of those different tiers kind of morph themselves into basically a market opportunity. And there's not a whole lot of people that do dashboards and data and analytics for small businesses. So I put some feelers out in the market and got some really good reception of "yes". The first few people I talked to, "Absolutely, I want to be able to track my metrics. I want to be more data-driven. I have no idea how," or, "I don't have the time to do it" or, "That's something that's above my head because it's just not my forte," which I'm a data nerd. I think you mentioned guru, I'm going to use the word "nerd".

Stacey B. Randa...: Okay.

Jack Tompkins: Either one works, but it was a very needed service when I started and still is obviously, and it's been a really, really fun gap to fill.

Stacey B. Randa...: I think that's awesome. Well, first I think it's also because you are awesome at something that I abhor, which is the use of technology to get to what you need. But my whole business runs on technology. I say that jokingly and I remember one time I was saying it to my kids and my husband was like, "You actually know how to do more technology than you usually allow yourself credit

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for, because you've been forced to learn because your whole business." I mean, when we think about all of our online programs and our newest offering, building a referral business, we're in 11 different countries all around the world, like of course my business runs off technology. It's the only way I can reach and help and deliver my trainings to those folks.

Stacey B. Randa...: But you love it, and you can build something that a small business owner... Let's just be honest, a business owner can look at and be like, "I get it." Like I remember when I used to do stuff more with data, it was never the collection of it or the analyzing of it. But what I always loved was the stories that came out of the data, of what it told you and what it informed and then how you made better decisions. So when you're talking and thinking about making better decisions from that data that you're tracking, what are the things that you think at a bare minimum, small business owners should be tracking in their business?

Jack Tompkins: That's a good question. So, where do I start? So obviously, track referrals, that's number one.

Stacey B. Randa...: Good, and you get a gold star.

Jack Tompkins: Yeah. But in all seriousness, like that is, obviously in small business, referrals are proudly going to be your number one source of clients, so that is something that should be on the list. I always like to say, start with what matters most. Because if you're thinking, if you're just starting out or you're just starting out tracking or anything like that, what matters most to your business? So I have a client who they do like trucking logistics stuff. So it's a truck going out, delivering a package. So his one thing was, "How many stops does that truck make a day?"

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Because that means that we could figure out how many packages were delivered and you could figure out how efficient it was. And it kind of just rolls on from there. So kind of just start there and then your questions to yourself will guide you to the next metrics.

Jack Tompkins: So it could be revenue, it could be how many one-on-ones did you have this week? Anything like that. Start with what matters most to you, something that you probably already know, much to your point, Stacey, if not a technology person, but use it and are very good at it, whether you know it or not kind of thing, same thing with data. You probably look at it more than you realize, and you probably know a few numbers offhand. You probably know your revenue last month kind of just offhand and then, "Okay, great. So where did that revenue come from? Okay, great, was it because I had a one on one?" And so your questions kind of guide you from there. I guess that'd be my summary start with what matters most. I group things into financial, marketing and operational buckets. So maybe pick one in each there and again, referrals should definitely be on that list.

Stacey B. Randa...: It should be at the very top of that list, of course. But you know, I'm a little biased. No, I love that because I think you're helping people understand answering the question, "Okay, where do I start?" Because to our point that we said earlier, you can track everything, and not everything needs to be tracked. And sometimes you can just be tracking so much stuff, you're actually getting nothing else done. So when you think about it, I mean, I love that idea that you kind of said, it's like, "Start with the end in mind. What's the one thing that you know you need to be tracking, because it is going to create the end result you're looking for?" And that's how I do almost everything

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that I build and teach, is I reverse engineer it. It's like, "Okay, how am I getting this result? Okay, let me unpack it and reverse engineer back to kind of where it all started from."

Stacey B. Randa...: And I mean, I have built an entire business by reverse engineering some psychology and brain science and like some economic practices and some social psychology type theories to arrive at the business that I have, helping people create referrals. And so I think it's so important from that idea that it's not like you need to know everything, but like what you said is like, "You got to pick the one thing that you think that matters, and then let that guide what else you'll need to ultimately be tracking," which is so good. Okay. So when a business owner's having a conversation with you and they're like, "Okay, I need to track my referrals and I need to track how many packages we delivered with our trucks." How do you tell them or show them the answer? I know what your answer of this is, but I want you to be able to explain it for our audience in terms of how do you show it to them? How do you build it? What are you building that allows them to see the answer in a matter of seconds and get the information they need?

Jack Tompkins: Yeah. It seems kind of wild to just say it like that. It's kind of weird, but it is how it works. It's visualizing data. They say a picture's worth a thousand words, right? Depending on which research you look at, images are processed up to 60,000 times faster than text. So a picture could be worth 60,000 words. So, that is essentially what I do. I put it into very digestible dashboards, which are a series of visuals and it'll be like your main KPIs, your main key performance indicators, with some comparisons to

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different time periods. There's only some trend graphs, there's things like pie charts, everything like that.

Jack Tompkins: It is putting boring looking data, and I say that again as a data nerd. But just endless columns and rows of black and white things in Excel is pretty boring to look at. A colorful dashboard in your brand colors with some things popping out, some big green arrows up and some big red arrows down, you can get the picture really quickly. And it'll really kind of set the foundation for your business of "Boom, okay. I made this many stops today" or, "Great, I had this many referrals this month. How can I get more? How can I do more?" And so it kind of just easily puts out a data-driven foundation just by visualizing it in dashboards and visuals.

Stacey B. Randa...: I love it. I think that is so great. And I think to your point, I mean, a picture's worth a thousand words. If you've got a big green arrow that you're looking at, you're like, "Yes, that is up and red means bad." Like it does. It makes it super easy and super fast and I think that is fantastic. And then being able to take that information from a client and building them the dashboard that can track all that, but making it pretty right. We're all about the pretty and you know, because you've now been in the Growth by Referrals program and you've gotten through the first three modules. So you've identified your existing referral sources and you've building out your referral plan. You know, we use a lot of Excel, but it's not nearly as pretty as yours.

Jack Tompkins: It gets the job done though.

Stacey B. Randa...: Thank you.

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Jack Tompkins: Yeah, it totally does. It's very clean and simple though, which is hugely important.

Stacey B. Randa...: It is. I always tell folks, I'm like, "When you build out your referral plan and that Excel spreadsheet that we gave you, that's templated for you so all you have to do is pop in your information, it's not supposed to live there. If it lives there, it's just going to collect dust on your digital shelf and that means you won't actually do anything with it. I need you to like print it out or put it into your workflow," which is what you're about to go through when you get through module five, which you won't need it. But module five is there for folks to be like, "Okay, how do I take this thing off a spreadsheet and put it into actual implementation, and make sure we actually execute on it?" Because that's where it's supposed to ultimately be.

Stacey B. Randa...: So what I loved though is when you were going through the program, you reached out as you were uploading some of your data and you were like, "So I kind of took yours and made it my own." And I was like, "Of course you did Pineapple Jack, of course you did, because you couldn't help yourself." And then I got to see what you created and it was colorful and it was awesome and it was great. So tell me a little bit about, not necessarily using my though clean, but yet boring Excel spreadsheets. Tell me a little bit about your kind of initial thoughts and your initial reactions as you've just been going through the Growth by Referrals program.

Jack Tompkins: Yeah. So I appreciate the kind words by the way. Thank you. So it's been really cool, right? It's one of the biggest things that really jumped out to me, and this is... I forget, it was probably module one. I think it was even in the definition stage, but what is a referral? And that hit home

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right off the bat, because I've been tracking referrals pretty much since I started the business and my definition has now changed. And it was, "Oh man, somebody made a connection for me," which I now know is not really referral. It's very different looking at it with this person sent me a connection who needs what I do right now. And I forget all the criteria, but-

Stacey B. Randa...: You nailed it.

Jack Tompkins: Oh, perfect. Okay.

Stacey B. Randa...: Yeah. They connected you and there was a need identified.

Jack Tompkins: Perfect. Okay. Yeah. So it's very different looking at it through that lens versus, "Hey, somebody just did a blank email intro", or, "Hey, you should connect with this person. Here's their contact info." Very different ways to look at it. And when I look at now, kind of the stage that I'm at in the program, it has transferred and carried its way through because now I'm identifying, or I have identified referral partners, which has been really, really exciting to see, "Oh wow. These people are actually give me business. That's really cool." And I know kind of the right criteria to look at them. So it's been great, honestly from a data perspective too, but obviously from a business perspective, what do those things mean and how do they translate to business, or how do they translate to revenue or new clients or anything like that? It has changed a lot of my overall marketing strategy, honestly.

Stacey B. Randa...: That is awesome. I'm so glad that you had those moments of like, "Oh, I can look at this differently and see this differently and then do different things. And it's driving different decisions." That is awesome. What is also

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awesome though, you're not even two years in business and you already almost have a dozen referral sources, which also says a lot about the work that you do, and then obviously how you take care of your clients. So, that is also incredible. I just wanted to give a quick shout out to you. I have people who will join the program five or 10 years in business and won't even have yet five or six referral sources. And it doesn't mean there's anything wrong with them. But it does usually mean that they're just not focused on that referral piece and that referral generation. And when I see somebody, not yet two years in business with almost a dozen referral sources, I'm like, "Oh, this has been a focus, whether they intended for it to be or not, this has just been a focus."

Stacey B. Randa...: And it's like we said at the very beginning, "What gets measured gets managed." And if referrals are a focus, you're going to do something about it. And I think that's great. And I love the fact that you have that whole process, where you can actually go through and get the data out that you need by going through GBR and now make different decisions on it. So, you still have coming up since you've gone through module three, which is definitions, then identifying your referral sources, and now you've built your referral plan for them, those touch points to take care of them. You still got language and what we call processitizing, which I'm not quite sure is a word, but I just like it. And then you're tracking. And then you're going to start tracking it every quarter, because again, your results matter. We don't do all this work for you then not to get more referrals. Like, that is the whole point. And module six will bring up that tracking.

Stacey B. Randa...: So I'm excited to see as you kind of continue on in your journey. If you were having a conversation with

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someone and they were thinking about taking their referrals more seriously, and whether that's joining the GBR program or one of our other programs or not, what would you tell them is the importance behind the referral piece?

Jack Tompkins: Importance behind the referral piece? Well, so GBR does a good job of kind of explaining part of that too, and I definitely recommend it. The importance behind it is, a lot of your business is going to come from referrals, whether you intentionally focus on it or not, but it is a great way to get business. So it's somebody that you know that's giving you a connection or that's giving you somebody who needs what you do at the right time. And they can happen naturally. I mean, they obviously do happen naturally, but the more you focus on them, the more they come, right? The more it's a part of your marketing plan, the more they happen, the more your business grows.

Jack Tompkins: So it is, I don't want to call it easy, because it's definitely not easy, but it doesn't really feel like work. It just feels like you're sending a genuine, thank you. And you might get business from thanking somebody, which is a really cool phenomenon, because if you're doing things like SEO or email marketing, you have to kind of have a sales hat on, and it doesn't really feel that way when you're doing referrals, because you are saying genuinely, "thank you for being in my life and part of my business," and it's pretty exciting.

Stacey B. Randa...: Yeah. I think it's definitely like you said, it is work, but I like to call it, it's the fun work. It's the things we want to do. It is work, but it'll be fun. It'll be way more fun than anything else you got to do.

Jack Tompkins: Exactly.

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Stacey B. Randa...: Definitely better than any kind of cold calling or spending every day of the week networking.

Jack Tompkins: Right. A hundred percent.

Stacey B. Randa...: Yeah. That is awesome. Okay. So Jack, I'm sorry, I wanted to call you Pineapple Jack. I am sure that there are lots of people who were like, "Okay, he builds these tracking things for small businesses. I need to know how to get in touch with him." So please share with my audience, how can they reach out to you, how can they find you? Where's the best place for them to start, so that they can learn more about how you help small businesses track their metrics?

Jack Tompkins: Sure. So thank you again so much for having me on super appreciate it. My website is the best way to get in touch with me. I even have some, actually a bunch of example dashboards and videos on there, but the website is pineapplecf.com. So Pineapple and then abbreviated for consulting firm, cf.com.

Stacey B. Randa...: Perfect. And we will link to that in the show notes, so anyone can just go to the show notes page for this episode and then click right through to Jack's website as well, and you can go and check out all the fun, colorful dashboards that you don't normally see when you're dealing with Excel. So Jack, thank you so much for taking some time to come on and talk about the importance of tracking and kind of what we should be paying attention to tracking.

Stacey B. Randa...: And I think you really gave a great starter strategy for folks to be like, "What do I want to track?" And you kind of gave a great outline of how to answer that question, which I think is fabulous. And then of course, I

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always love hearing about the experience that people are having as they're going through the GBR program. So thank you for sharing that as well. And then it was just great to be able to spend this time with you and to be able to see you going through the program and uploading your work. And I can't wait for when you start tracking your referral results after you have everything in place. So thank you, again.

Jack Tompkins: Thank you. And I'm looking forward to that too. It's more data for me.

Stacey B. Randa...: Right. More data, and you know what else it means? More revenue.

Jack Tompkins: Exactly.

Stacey B. Randa...: It is like the good kind of data because when referrals come in, they usually come with dollars attached to them, so that's good.

Jack Tompkins: That's exactly right.

Stacey B. Randa...: That's awesome.

Jack Tompkins: Thanks so much again, Stacey. This was awesome, always a pleasure talking with you.

Stacey B. Randa...: Isn't he just the best? Just one smart dude, Pineapple Jack. Thank you so much Pineapple Jack for being on our episode. I really hope you guys will take to heart what Jack was talking about. I really hope that you will start to think about the data that is in your business. Now, if you are a member of any of my programs, like building a referral business or one of my online programs like Growth by Referrals, there are moments throughout those programs where I am having you track. If you've

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never tracked, I'm getting you or trying to get you into the habit of tracking. And if you are used to tracking, I'm kind of hoping you understand to see what you need to be tracking and what that actually means from an ROI perspective. But what I'm teaching in my programs is really the tracking of the referral piece of your business, the referrals' strategy of your business.

Stacey B. Randa...: And so what you need to be paying attention to though, are the other things that need to be tracked in your business as well. It truly helps you make better decisions. And I hope you got that from my interview with Jack. So if you have thoughts to share on this episode, we'd love for you to hop into our Referrals Without Asking Facebook community, and share your thoughts on this episode. You can find that link and of course, links to have to get in touch with Jack as well on the show notes page for this episode, which is staceybrownrandall.com/204. That's 2-0-4 for episode 204. And of course, you know it, Stacey has an E. All right, coming up next week is episode 205. And we're talking about asking, what? Yep. We're talking about what you can and should be asking for, but don't worry, just never for referrals. Until then, take control and grow your business. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. To access all resources and links mentioned in today's show, and to connect with Stacey, head over to www.staceybrownrandall.com.