

by northwest7
on November 13, 2016
under Campus Life
Permalink

SEATTLE ECOMMERCE CONFERENCE: A WEEKEND OF COLLABORATION FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Posted: Tuesday, November 8, 2016 6:00 pm

By Sarah Ulrich

Photo credit Zac Price



The first Seattle Ecommerce Conference took place November 4-5. The event brought together entrepreneurs from Oregon to Arizona with varying business interests, to network over meals, and learn from ecommerce experts through seminars.

The organizer and grand marshal of the event was Gary Gillespie, a former communication professor at NU for 31 years. Gillespie retired in spring 2016 and now focuses on expanding Leda Art Supply, his private label business that was launched in July 2015 and whose sketchbooks have already been featured on the first page of Art Supplies on Amazon.

Gillespie understands firsthand the benefit of community support when it comes to launching a new business, and explained the intent behind the Ecommerce Conference was to help people network, become inspired, and learn information that could make their businesses more successful.

"We just know that so much of what happens is through community, so we're offering this environment for people to connect" said Gillespie.

Gillespie termed the event a "mastermind meetup," drawing from the business term for a group where like-minded entrepreneurs and business owners can share advice and celebrate successes together.

The event began Friday night with featured speaker Jason Miles addressing how, what, and where to sell online. Miles is an alumnus from NU and still teaches marketing as an adjunct professor. He spoke from a personal story of success, having launched a doll clothing business called Liberty Jane Clothing with his wife in 2008. Sales were slow at first, but through perseverance and various marketing strategies, the business has now flourished, with over 1.8 million of their clothing patterns downloaded since 2009.

"This isn't any type of get-rich-quick scheme," Miles said. "Selling online is hard work—but if you want the freedom and potential income opportunity—then there has never been a better time to start."

The other experts to facilitate the weekend's seminars were: Ryan Reger and Jenni Hunt, NU business professor Larry Ishmael, and Gary Gillespie and his business partner Kyle Hamar. They all addressed how to utilize Shopify and Amazon, private labeling, business strategy tips, and how to use Facebook and online marketing.

Attendees came with varying experience—some looking to expand a pre-existing operation, and others exploring how to turn their interests and hobbies into a business.

Attendee Kindra Martinenko is both a business owner and business coach for others, and enjoys coming to these conferences in order to network and find new ideas.

to network and find new ideas.

Even when the content is refresh, Martinenko said, "it's strengthening what you already know, and confirms you're on the right path."

Seminar facilitators Reger and Hunt offered advice to aspiring entrepreneurs, both emphasizing the value of community and taking the step to create one's vision.

"Take action," emphasized Reger. "Ideas are great, but you've got to take action on them. Pick one and do it."

"There's no such thing as a bad idea," said Hunt, noting the benefits of brainstorming, yet the danger of getting stuck in that idea phase. "You don't have to have it all figured out ahead of time. Sometimes you just need to move forward and look at it as training."

The Seattle Ecommerce Conference is likely to be an annual event, Gillespie reported.

© THE TALON

Powered by [WordPress](#) | Hosted by [Edublogs](#) | Protected by [CloudFlare](#)