

Competitive Pricing Strategies for Sustainable Business Growth **with Casey Brown**

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Narrator: Why do some companies stand out while others seem to merely show up? That's what we'll explore with leaders across multiple industries to hear how they're creating better experiences by design. And now your host, Susan Quinn.

Susan Quinn: Today we're joined by Casey Brown. She's a trained engineer, a Six Sigma black belt, and now, one of the most sought-after pricing experts. Casey helps companies replace fear-based discounting with a more confident, strategic approach to pricing that helps reflect the true value of the work that we do. We're going to talk about the two right times to raise prices and how to connect pricing to the customers language of value.

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Casey, it is such a pleasure to have you with us today. I saw you speak—this has been last year at an event, at a conference, with Agency Management Institute—and I knew immediately that I needed to get you on this podcast. So, as a bit of an introduction to our listeners, tell us the background, because I recall that you have a pretty impressive background as an engineer and a Six Sigma, and now you're a pricing specialist. So, how did we get from that point to where you are today?

Casey Brown: Well, I wish I could tell you it was some kind of very planful straight line, but the reality is like lots of folk's career path, it took some twists and turns. You mentioned engineering, so that's where I started my career, but not because I really knew what engineers did, just because when I was in high school, I was good at math and science, and it seemed like a logical first career step to make.

But once I was doing engineering, I really liked the technical and analytical aspects of it, but I'm an extrovert, and I love people, and I love to talk, and I was seeing the folks in the sales side of the business, the commercial side of the business, doing things that looked to me really interesting and compelling, and I wanted to get a little closer to the sales side of the business. And the best way to do that, I was working at GE at the time, General Electric, on the old Jack Welch Hay Day, and the best way to get into a new area of the business was to go into Six Sigma, which you also mentioned. So, I became an early Six Sigma black belt at GE, which was rotational. And ended up doing rotations in sales and marketing and then did a rotation in pricing and that was the beginning of my love affair with this field. It's an intersection of art and science, people and process, data and psychology. And I haven't really looked back. I mean, there's been twists and turns in the pricing journey too and started my company about 15 years ago, but what has

been the same for me for about 25 years now is just the fascination with this particular field.

Susan Quinn: Wow. So, pricing is an art and science, but let's drill down into to that. So, you were intrigued. You went from spreadsheets to, yeah, I'm good with numbers, to I'm fascinated by pricing. What captured you in that moment to say, are we not doing it well and we need to do it better?

Casey Brown: So, yeah, there's a lot of opportunity to improve it, I would say, but I think what my first fascination with it was realizing the difference between the academic understanding of pricing versus the real world. So, if you open an econ textbook, you'll see the demand curve where there's this really simple, basic mathematical relationship between price and demand, right? If you charge less, you'll sell more. If charge more, you'll sell less. And it seems very straightforward, but anybody that's ever been inside of an actual negotiation in business knows it's far less straightforward. It's far less mathematical. There's a lot more... I kind of liken pricing to a game of poker. You know, it's a little bit more like you're looking at your hand, trying to kind of hide your strength of your own hand, guess at the strength of your opponent's hand. Everybody's bluffing. Buyers are trying to hide how much they're willing to pay, and sellers are trying to hide how little they're willing to accept. And you know it's a lot more nuanced, and gray, and mysterious in the real world than I ever learned in a textbook and that just kind of captured my interest and fascination.

And yeah, it's been, like I said, a 25-year journey, and what keeps me so fascinated about it, even after all these years, is kind of the last thing you hinted at, which is there's a lot of opportunity to do this better. You know, in the poker game of pricing, both sides sort of buy into the illusion that the buyer has the better hand, and I believe that if you have exceptional products and services that you provide to your customers, then you have a strong hand to play, too.

I'm on a mission going around the world, giving keynotes, and my team trains organizations to do this better because I believe if you're excellent at what you do, you got to be paid like you're excellent. And too many companies are accepting mediocre pay for excellent work. So, it's not gotten boring yet. I don't think I have another career in my future. I think it's pricing forever for me.

Susan Quinn: Well, I think we all want to be paid for what we're worth. But I love this notion of, I mean, if you are, in terms of your team, doing excellent work and you are investing in your team and both the hard skills and the soft skills and that your product or service is growing others or, you know fill in the blank.

So how do we, let's say like everyone's had the whole academic pricing from the econ back in the day, but what steps can we take to begin to look at it with more confidence to be able to be paid for what we're worth?

Casey Brown: There's so many answers to that question that I'll try to contain myself to just a couple. But I think one pitfall, I guess I see for better-in-class and best-in-class companies is that they're very focused on being best-in-class and better-in-class when it comes to their products and services. They're vigilant and hyper-focused on excellence in terms of the work they're putting out, whether it's a service or a product. And they're very focused on selling and serving their customers and selling and serving and selling and serving, and you get on kind of a hamster

wheel of sell and serve. And the thing that gets the least focus and attention is, are we being paid well for it?

So honestly, one of the very biggest, earliest moves a company can make that suspects or knows there they're not commanding the prices they really deserve is pay more attention to it.

I do a lot of keynotes, as you as you know, and I ask in every keynote, the audience of CEOs in the room, raise your hand if you have sales meetings in your company and every hand goes up or just about. Raise your hands if have any meetings about operations and efficiency and cost and waste and excellence in your operational execution. And just about every hand goes up. And I say raise your hands if you're meeting on a regular basis about the strategic nature of your pricing, and one or two or five or zero hands go up. And so, sort of under the old adage of what gets measured gets done, the very fact of shining a light on this will change our behavior, which will change our results. So, we've just got to elevate it as a function in our business. I know that sales will always have the throne at the head of the table but pull up a stool for pricing.

Literally the act of just focusing on this more, having more conversations about it internally, interrogating our own habits and inspecting our beliefs will move the needle on our actions, which will move the needle on our results.

Susan Quinn: Very neat. So, the strategic nature of pricing, and I love the way you query the audience and then few hands go up on the strategic nature. How do we begin to look at pricing through a strategic lens?

Casey Brown: Yeah, I think we have to come up out of the weeds of the specific opportunity. So, in other words, you know, some objections people sometimes have when I ask that question is like, well, we're not having strategic pricing meetings per se, but we are talking about pricing. And I know that's absolutely true. They're talking about what their margins are doing, or they're making a decision around a new customer opportunity and figuring out what fees to charge or what rates to charge or what price to put on the product. Or they're launching a brand-new service or product and they're making some pricing decisions.

But we're doing this on a pretty tactical basis. In other words, this customer, this product, this project, this opportunity. What I really encourage organizations to do is sort of come up out of the weeds a little bit and look around and make sure you're still pointing in the right direction. So, widen the aperture and look at your business holistically and say, hey, you know, what's happening with win rates, or what's happening, you know, with our deal velocity? What, if any, changes are we seeing in the type of feedback we're getting around our value and around our pricing?

So, I think it's absolutely worth looking at a more strategic level at your business running regarding to pricing. But I don't want to overemphasize that because one of the biggest misses in a lot of organizations, or I'd say opportunities, isn't necessarily that their strategy is off track, but sometimes it's an issue of execution.

So, in other words, we know what to do. We've got a good basis for our pricing strategy. we've empowered our team to go communicate and sell and defend value with customers. But there's some fear-based discounting happening or some out-of-control underpricing that comes from a place of, I don't want to lose the deal. Because most pricing decisions are made from fear, not

confidence. And we're mostly pricing not to lose rather than pricing to win. So, while strategy is a good idea, don't forget the execution.

Susan Quinn: So, a fear approach, I don't even want to go there because I like the whole notion of confidence and that you've got an excellent approach to how you do your work. And I think we surround ourselves with clients who fall into that same mode.

So, I think you talked about best in class. We've written a book about it. Does Your Company Show Up or Stand Out, and best in class is, I mean, you're fascinated by pricing, I'm fascinated by what makes certain companies stand out, and I think it's many things, but the basics are, at least in our industry, you've got your time and your material, and you've got a lot of competition. And I love that you say, look at your win rates, but can the market decide your pricing structure for you, or are there ways through this wider lens that you can show your value for solving their problems and people will pay that premium?

Casey Brown: Sure, absolutely. So, the answer is yes. The degree to which it's true varies. And so, in other words, there are industries which are very competitive and commoditized, and there is relatively little opportunity for differentiation.

I have yet to see an industry, literally have never seen one where there is zero opportunity for differentiation. So, I like to challenge people when they say, oh, I sell a commodity to really explore how they can differentiate with service, with speed, with communication, with the ease of doing business, with other things. So, even if the product or service itself is pretty commoditized, how can you stand out and be special?

But at that end of the spectrum where there's less opportunity for differentiation, in those cases, it's a lot harder to disrupt the pricing model that the world is used to. So, it's like, this is what you sell and it's time and material and that's way it is. It's really hard to kind of break out of a mold when you're in that end of the spectrum, of the commoditization spectrum, so to speak.

It's not impossible. I think about things like, I mean, it's a really different example, but, you know, taxi service was like, you get in a taxi, and they start the meter, and they start going. And that's the way the world worked for a million jillion years. And then Uber came along and disrupted. So, even a very competitive and commoditized industry with a very established pricing model is ripe for disruption, so I don't want to paint the picture that there's no opportunity there.

But if you go to the other end of the spectrum where there's a lot of differentiation, real and perceived, then it's really incumbent on you as the seller to communicate and defend your value in a way that the customer connects with. And I think, you know, just using marketing agencies as an example, it's like you could get on ChatGPT and design a website in a few minutes. I'm not suggesting that's a great idea, but it is possible to do that at zero dollars, right? And you can pay half a million dollars or more for a website or branding or digital marketing campaigns. There's a huge variation in the amount that people pay for this stuff. And I think it's very largely due to the 'you get what you pay for'.

But another reality is that some companies are doing a far better job of telling and defending their story and establishing in the mind of the customer, that value is there. And you're able to, I won't say you can dictate what the customer thinks, but you can certainly influence it

You mentioned when we were chatting before the TED Talk I delivered in 2015, I opened that talk by saying no one will ever pay you what you're worth. They'll only ever pay you what they think you're worth.

Susan Quinn: Mm.

Casey Brown: And you control their thinking. You have a role to play in their thinking about your value, which is going to have a straight line to the price you can earn.

Susan Quinn: Let's open up the discussions of how can we control the thinking or how does that whole process take place?

Casey Brown: Mm-hmm. Well, this is where your work and my work might have some nice touch points. I believe that it is too common that companies want to tell their story, but the customer never cares about your story. They only care about their problems, their needs, their issues, their goals, their hopes, their dreams, their fears, their pain. And so, one of the keys is to make sure that we're telling our story not in our own language, but in the language of our customers and not customers en masse, customers individually, because customer A and customer B have very different needs, even for the same product or service that they're buying from us.

Even though our value prop for our product or service may be like, you know, you sell a widget and it's 27% more efficient in manufacturing than the other widget, or you sell a service, and we can get you, you know, 25% higher customer engagement with our service.

That's like, we get very insular in our language. We talk about ourselves. We talk about our products and our services, so I think one of the cornerstones of being paid well for your excellence is to connect what you do to something the customer deeply cares about. And I don't just mean on the logical or rational end of things, but the emotional impact of that to that person who's across the table buying from you.

Susan Quinn: Getting into the psychology of it, but I agree 100%. And there is the art and science to that. You are at the end of the day, overused statement, but you are solving for their pain points, for their needs, that you understand them. And so, the value when you can bring that to the surface, I know that it serves us well as we approach new business.

Casey Brown: It's fascinating to me because I think, my guess is, everybody listening to this is maybe nodding along. Like, yeah, of course, of course it matters to put it in the language of the customer, but I run into it, and I imagine you must too. Like, even though this is a thing we know, when you look at the way we talk about our products and services, if you look at what shows up in proposals, if you look at the messaging that's on websites, there's still a lot of me, me, me, my process, my product, my service. So, I think that this is one of those issues of, we know it's important, but are we doing an excellent job of interrogating how we're executing on that, you know, what grade do we give ourselves? Because I'm not seeing a ton of A pluses out there in terms of really connecting with your customers challenges.

Susan Quinn: Casey, when does a business know that it's time to up the pricing? Is it something that should take place each year?

Casey Brown: Oh, it's such a good question. So, I would say there's a couple of answers I'd give for

that. One is there are two right times to raise your prices. Only two. When you can and when you must.

Susan Quinn: [Laughter]

Casey Brown: So, when you can, if you have the ability to raise prices and it doesn't cost you sales volume, then you are sitting on money that is yours and you're not asking for it. If you have the opportunity to increase prices and you don't do it, you're letting your dollar sit in your customer's bank account. And I would like to encourage everybody who's in that situation to think about what that's costing you.

You know, if you were to do a price increase right now instead of six months from now, and that generate generated an extra \$50,000 in benefit for your company, what would you spend \$50,000 on? What difference could that make right now for your team, for your customers, for you, for your business? And so, when you can and you don't do it, it's really costing you.

And then when you must. So, there are companies that are just, you know, a perfect example is what's going on right now with tariffs, where the cost basis is changing so dramatically that whether the customer is tolerant of a price increase or not, companies are in an existential threat of if I don't do this, then I don't exist anymore. So, the when you can and the when you must.

Just a little bit more on the when you can, though, because that's a bit of a tongue-in-cheek answer, although it's true. How often how and what's the right timing to look at this? I would say there are industries, you know, there are some commodity chemicals and metals where, like spot buy, where pricing might change multiple times a day. You both go buy an airline ticket today, you buy the same airline ticket on the same flight tomorrow, it might be a different price. So, there are industries where the dynamic nature of pricing is like literally multiple times a day that number can change.

Other industries, I would say most industries, it's far more appropriate to do that far less often. At least once a year is a really good place to start. But I think especially in volatile times when the economy is in flux, when there are outside forces driving change in your business or your industry, it's not inappropriate to look at it more often.

You know, I mentioned one of the first things I said is like, let's talk about pricing on a strategic basis more often. So, I'd say, you know, in absence of a different schedule, I'd love to see every business having a quarterly pricing meeting, a strategic pricing meeting quarterly where they're asking themselves a number of questions, including, is this a good time for us to think about a price increase?

And some businesses haven't done one in seven years, and they need to do it. Some have done it last quarter and it's still time to look at it. It's always worth looking at and asking ourselves that question.

I will say two more things on timing. I could talk about this one question for a whole hour, but I'll constrain myself. One thing is to think about when, let's say you do an annual price increase, when in the year makes the most sense. A lot of companies are on this sort of January 1st, set it and forget it kind of thing, and I would say that the best time to increase prices are when your

customers are the least sensitive to it, which is often when your customers are the busiest.

So, you know, if you have a seasonal business where summer is the really busy time, that might be a nice time to be announcing a price increase. Don't announce it in January when they're dead and they got nothing but time to beat you up on price and shop your competition. So, time your price increase according to when you're going to get the least amount of negative pushback to it.

And the other thing is around timing is almost certainly my advice to just about every single company I meet is that you have more pricing power than you think. You could go more than you think, meaning asking for a higher price increase than you think, and you could do it sooner than you think. So, if somebody is listening to this and they're on the fence, do a price increase—do it.

There is so much perseverating and hand-wringing and worrying and calculating and what if-ing. And then we do a price increase and most often there's very little, if any, pushback. I've heard that story a thousand times where like, we announced it, and we were so scared. We were ready to lose 15%, you know, sales volume. And then we barely heard anything. It was crickets.

Susan Quinn: Yeah.

Casey Brown: Or a couple folks complained, but then it was fine. So, don't let your own fears about the possible outcome that you're kind of building up in your head stop you from gaining price increase right now instead of months down the road.

Susan Quinn: Well, there is a whole lot packed in there and I certainly appreciate it because I think the good news is we keep clients a long time. So, these are legacy. We have probably not always charged the going rate. And I recently sat down with our Director of Finance, and I said, I'd like to just look back over the last five years and I want to see in terms of our cost of goods, you know, insurance and our material costs for equipment and salaries are going up, insurance, I mean, they definitely have their annual price increase each year.

Casey Brown: Sure.

Susan Quinn: And we looked at that. I mean, it literally, it was a gut punch. And then our pricing had pretty much stayed the same over a five-year period.

Casey Brown: Yeah. Yeah.

Susan Quinn: And, you know, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out what's wrong with that equation.

Casey Brown: Well, and I think that what you're describing, this idea of selling to the same customers over and over for years, is a very common challenge. And in those cases, we don't necessarily just look at these folks as customers, we look at them as partners. And so, we don't want to rock the boat. We don't want to upset the apple cart. We're afraid to be seen as someone who's just after a profit grab instead of a long-term partner.

I think all of those feelings or those fears are reasonable. Feel the feelings, think the thoughts, just don't let that be the reason you don't ask for what you're worth. The reality is they're a long-term customer of yours because they get value over and over and over again for years by being

your client. They've chosen to work with you because the value is the best that they can get. So, I would encourage anyone who's got that fear to raise prices on existing customers to say, it's not greedy. It's not gouging. It's not taking advantage of anyone. It's not going to damage the relationship if it's done in the right way. It is appropriate morally and commercially to ask for a higher price for the value that you deliver to clients who have been with you for a long time.

Susan Quinn: I like that a lot. Are there any red flags that a business owner, the sales team, whomever is working on it, that you have a pricing problem?

Casey Brown: Yeah, everybody says yes to everything all the time. It so sounds funny to say it, but to be honest with you, we need to hear no. We need to be we need to lose business over price, and we need to hear price pushback. Those are two pieces of evidence that our pricing strategy is on track. If we are not getting enough no's, if we are not getting enough price pushback, then we're leaving a heck of a lot of money on the table.

Susan Quinn: Ah.

Casey Brown: Yes, feels way better than no, but we need no. If you were to give a client a quote for something and you would say, this is going to be X thousand dollars per month or this project is going to cost X dollars or, and they say, okay, that sounds good. That's what I call an auto yes, an automatic yes, meaning they just accepted the work at the price you quoted without any pushback.

An auto yes is data that our prices are fair or possibly too low. And so, where I see a lot of businesses, one red flag is I see a lot of auto yeses, at least in some areas the business, like maybe they're getting beat up on this stuff over here, but the rush services are never questioned or the certain product line, they never push back on that. That just flies through without any issue. I would say if your auto yes rate is too high, that's a pitfall, a red flag that your prices are too low.

Susan Quinn: If you are consistently in a, I would call it value engineering, are you probably in the right ballpark that you're creating some sense of value? And if there is pushback, because I think you're right. If every single person is saying yes, then you may be a lot of value and just a really good price. And so, they're going to go with it. But is this value engineering an important part so that everyone feels a sense of fairness?

Casey Brown: Sure. So, if I can make sure I'm understanding what you're asking about, you say this set of services is going to be X and they say, well, we can't afford that or that's outside the budget. We could do 75% of X and then now you're kind of going back to the scope and reworking it-, okay, great.

So yes, I think that making sure that we don't change the price without changing the offering is very important for a variety reasons. One is it allows the customer to sort of opt into the things that they care the most about. It allows the selling organization to protect their profitability and their margins by making sure they're not over delivering at too low of a price.

There's a third reason that's, I think, very compelling to make sure we engage in adjusting scope when we adjust the price, which is trust. So, if you said to the customer, this such and such set

of services is going to be 10,000 and they say, well, we've got 8,000 in the budget. You say, OK, I can do it for 8,000. What you've told the customer is you were overcharging them in the first place. You were trying to see what you could get away with, right? And so, but if you say, hey, we can't do this full set of services in this fashion for 8,000. Here's what we can do. Then I think you are, one, pressure testing the technique because sometimes the customers are just, it's just a tactic. They're just seeing what they could get away with, right? You're really pressure testing the tactic, but then you're also, again, collaborating at that point with the customer on what the what's most important to them. And maybe something can you know be phased or something could be done, this piece of it could be done in a more automated way, or they don't care about you know steps A, B, and C. They only care about A and B. I think that's really important.

Susan Quinn: When we look at pricing and we've heard from other professionals that people like to have a choice. And so, you give them these three different options, and the middle one is always going to be... Do you find that cumbersome? Do you recommend that? Do you have any thoughts?

Casey Brown: I do have thoughts. In fact, I wrote an entire blog post about that, which I can send to you if you do show notes that folks want to read a little more detail about it.

Susan Quinn: I do.

Casey Brown: But I would say that there is some truth to it. So, if you look at brain science and neuropsychology, like humans love choice. It gives us a little dopamine hit to have a choice. We love it. But too much choice paralyzes decision process. So, one of the pitfalls I sometimes see is just putting up sort of a buffet of things and letting the customer wander around in the wilderness and figure out what they want to choose. And that oftentimes can really slow them down and really can paralyze the decision process.

The other thing about that is, especially in a professional services space, they're coming to you because you're the expert. They're not the expert in it. That's why they're coming to you. And so, one of the things I caution professional services firms against when they have this habit of, we always put three options in front of them. It's like, well, which one's the right one? You know what they told you and your discovery about what they need and what they want, and you know the right one for them.

So, I'm not saying never present choice. I am saying have a have a firm point of view. Tell your customer, you know, based on everything you've told me, here's what I recommend for you. Here's why I recommend it for you. Here's why I think this is what is really going to solve your problem most effectively. In case that you know creates a budget challenge for you, here's another option. Or in case you want to go even further, here's another option, but this is the one that, to me, makes the most sense for you.

I would say never abdicate your opportunity to be a leader, a trusted advisor to the customer by having a point of view about what they should do. Don't just throw three options on the table and say, well, pick one. I think that that hurts their trust in you as the expert when you do that.

Susan Quinn: That's a great point. I mean, it's a conversation. It's a little bit of giving to get and understanding that as we're learning about you, that this could be a great path for you.

Casey Brown: Yeah.

Susan Quinn: Are there any tools or resources or places that a business owner can go for any assistance as they are strategically looking at pricing? Or is it kind of you create your own spreadsheet internally and methodology and processes?

Casey Brown: So, great question. So, I like to think that that our organization does a good job of putting out some helpful tools and resources. So, I have a book called Fearless Pricing available for less than \$10 on Kindle. So, this doesn't require a lot of money. Also, there's some a free blog and a lot of resources we put out on LinkedIn as well. So, that's one place I would point people at.

As it pertains to developing their own pricing strategy, I would just encourage, you know, kind of back to something I said previously, which is it's almost certain that the strategy isn't in any wholesale way off track. Like you would not be in business for years and years if your strategy was terrible. You have a good strategy. You may have a B plus strategy.

In my experience, what it takes to take a B plus pricing strategy to an A plus is a lot of time and effort and sometimes a lot of money. But what it takes to take a B plus or a C plus execution to an A plus is a lot faster and easier. And so, what I believe is that that very often when we suspect we have a pricing opportunity, we want to go look at how it's structured. How we're charging. Is this the right, you know, should it be time and materials or should it be value-based? And if it is time and materials, should it be X dollars per hour or 10% higher or...? We get very into our design of our solution, but where I see most leaking happening is not in the design of the solution, but in whose job it is to carry that number out to the customer and communicate and defend it with confidence and ease and not give away the farm when the customer says that's outside my budget so and so is cheaper. And so, while looking for strategic resources is a big opportunity where I'd really focus is in shoring up the team whose job it is to communicate and defend it.

Susan Quinn: You talked about psychology in the beginning, and I mean, our whole world has got a lot of psychology, and, you know, being able to get into the heads and minds and we're all different. That's the beautiful part of life. But is there an interesting psychology of the firms that do have higher pricing, that they are the premium brand? Do they attract certain clients and customers? Do you see anything in that regard?

Casey Brown: Absolutely, yes. So, this is called the price quality effect, where customers infer the quality by the price tag itself. The price tag gives them a clue. Like if it's, the price tag tells them this is the best, you know, wine or the worst garbage. You know, there's a, I make a joke when I do this, you know, in a keynote, I talk, I say that nobody ever went to a 99 cent all-you-can-eat-shrimp buffet. Right. Like that price tag would be suspiciously cheap.

So, there is such a thing as suspiciously cheap, but there is also something such as reassuringly expensive. And I would say that, you know, I would bet every single person listening to this podcast has at one point in their life gone into a physical store or online shopping and put the more expensive version of something in our cart because we wanted to make sure we were getting the good stuff because it was for your mom or your camping trip this weekend or whatever. And you wanted to get the good stuff. And there was no other indicator that that was the better one other than the price tag, but the price tag indicated that to you and that drove your choice.

So, that happens in product-based businesses, but you think about in service-based businesses, why it's even more important because you cannot touch and feel the product. I mean, you can

see samples or portfolios or, you know, case studies, but you're not able to you know hold two widgets side by side and sort of test the difference. You're really being asked to trust in what somebody's telling you that they can do for you. And so, price tag is an important indicator to them of the quality.

Sometimes there are companies that the price tag is pretty misaligned with their quality, either too high or too low. But it is absolutely the case that consumers and businesses make purchasing decisions rooted in their belief of your quality that is affected by your price tag.

Susan Quinn: Yeah, well, and that's where your whole brand experience, your employee experience of how you are servicing them, if you've got that high price, you better create a pretty profound and seamless experience.

Casey Brown: Absolutely.

Susan Quinn: And then if I would say the marketplace then will call you out if you're not delivering.

Casey Brown: Oh, sure. Yeah. If your value starts to be misaligned with your price in the wrong direction, meaning your value is too low for the price you're charging, you're going to get swift and painful market feedback.

Where I see most companies going wrong is the opposite problem. Is that the value that we're providing far outstrips the price we're asking. The marketplace won't give you unpleasant feedback about that. The marketplace loves that. They're getting, you know, something for nothing. So, that's, again, where I would say that the greater sin or the more common mistake is not overpricing, it's underpricing.

Susan Quinn: Well, definitely want our audience to get your book, *Fearless Pricing*, and gain access to all the different ways you're helping to inform us. But as we're wrapping up, Casey, I always ask this question around this concept of what do you do to keep being relevant, to sharpening your pencil, to bettering your best?

Casey Brown: Well, I love conversations like this. I love conversations with our client base. I need to talk all the time to business owners because that's how I keep my finger on the pulse with what's going on in their business. And I'll use the sort of current round of tariffs as an example. Certainly, manufacturers and distributors that are importing products are very directly affected. And I like to hear directly from them about that. But I'm also hearing and seeing from businesses that are not directly affected by tariffs, including marketing agencies, law firms, engineering firms, companies that don't even touch a product are starting to see their businesses be affected by tariffs because some of their customers are being more cautious with spending cash. There's an economic wobbliness, I think, in a lot of industries. And so, my ability to stay relevant with our content is rooted in staying really connected to the business community and specifically the B2B community. What they're seeing, what they're feeling, what's happening with their deals, their pipelines, their deal velocity, their win rates. If I have a sense of that, then I feel like I can give the most helpful and up-to-the-minute advice.

Susan Quinn: Well, I know that there are many of our listeners who can benefit from what you bring to the table. So, I can't thank you enough for your expertise, for your wisdom. And I will certainly be reading many of your blogs and staying up-to-date on pricing because you know what, it's a key part of our profitability and doing it right, you don't just wing it, you have to

strategically make sure you're doing it right. Thank you for all that you brought today.

Casey Brown: Oh, thank you so much. It was a delight to be here.

Narrator: Thank you for being part of our best in class community. And until next time, keep bettering your best. Narrator: Thank you for being part of our best in class community. And until next time, keep bettering your best.

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