

WHAT'S A

FANOCRACY

AND WHY DO YOU NEED ONE?

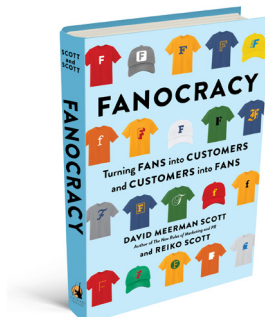
THE POWER OF MAKING BUSINESS PERSONAL



David Meerman Scott and Reiko Scott

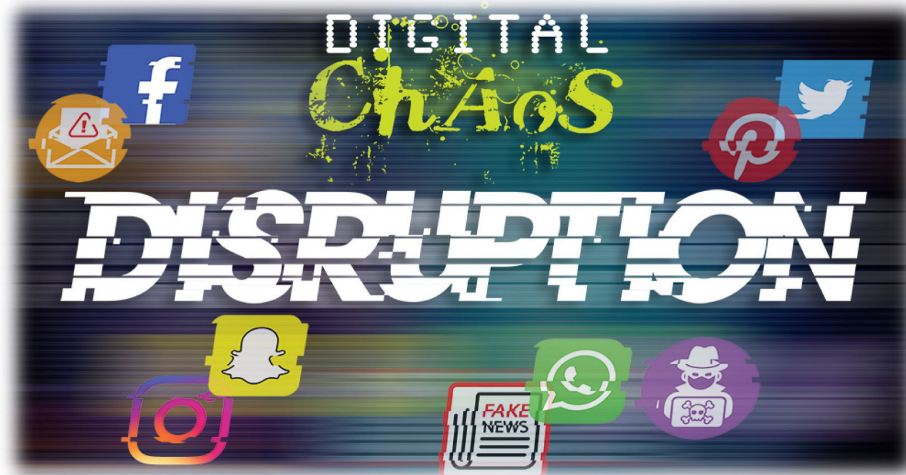
Fandom isn't just for actors, athletes, musicians, and authors anymore. It can be rocket fuel for any business or nonprofit that chooses to focus on inspiring and nurturing true fans.

Fandom spans generations and subject matter to bind individuals together in excitement, purpose, and buying power. No matter who you're dealing with, understanding fandom is the cornerstone to success.



www.fanocracy.com

THE LONELY CHAOS OF THE DIGITAL AGE



Social networks such as Facebook and content distribution services like YouTube are free, simple to use, and reach every human on the planet with an internet connection, so it's no wonder that billions of people around the world have gravitated to them. However, the result is a polarizing and cold digital world. We get tidal waves of spam email and social networks that display advertisements instead of messages from our friends and fake news instead of what we as humans really need to know to lead fulfilling productive lives.

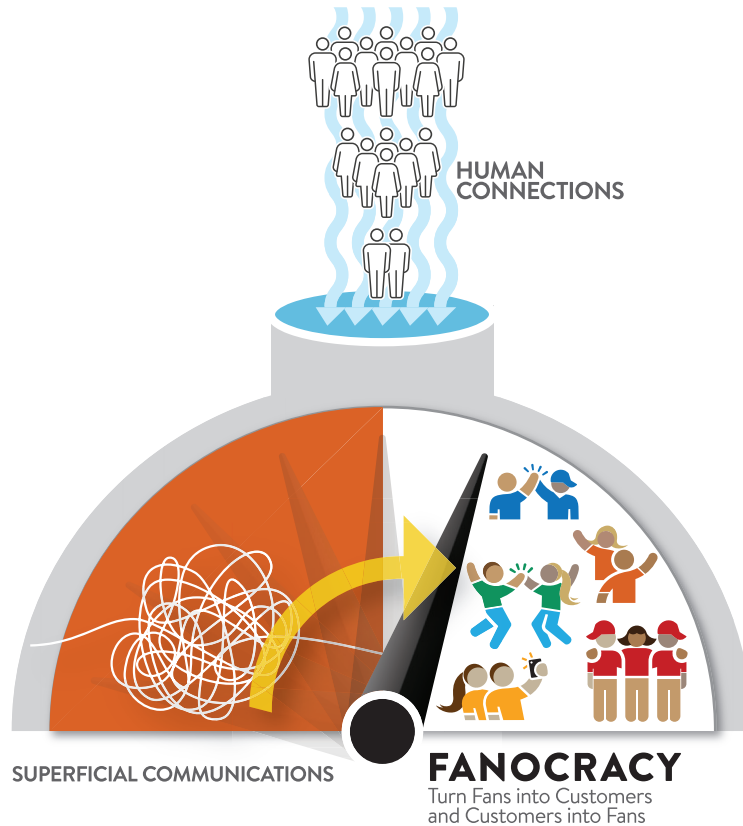
**THE PENDULUM HAS SWUNG TOO FAR IN THE DIRECTION OF
SUPERFICIAL ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS AT A TIME PEOPLE ARE HUNGRY
FOR TRUE HUMAN CONNECTION.**

The solution isn't to do more of the same. It takes more heart to start a movement.

In a digital world where our lives are increasingly cluttered and superficial, we're missing something tremendously powerful: genuine human connection. People are most invested in that which creates a sense of intimacy, warmth, and shared meaning in a world that would otherwise relegate them to a statistic.

**THE RELATIONSHIP WE BUILD WITH OUR CUSTOMERS IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES WE SELL THEM.**

TURNING FANS INTO CUSTOMERS AND CUSTOMERS INTO FANS



The most powerful marketing force in the world isn't social media, email blasts, search ads, or even those 15 second commercials before a YouTube video. **It's fandom.**

The key is creating a "Fanocracy" - an organization that puts the needs and wishes of fans ahead of every other priority. It can be scary, at first, to focus on intangibles like community, generosity, and fun, rather than squeezing every penny from each interaction. But those who apply the strategies in Fanocracy are more likely to dominate their categories. A Fanocracy develops when an organization honors fans and consciously fosters meaningful connection among them.

And beyond the financial benefits, Fanocracies spread more joy and inspiration to the world at large!

**BUILDING CONNECTIONS TO LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE
LEADS TO SUCCESS IN OUR BUSINESS AND JOY IN OUR HEART.**

DEFINE: FANOCRACY

The solution to any frustration about the lack of human connection in our lives is easy. It's up to each individual to develop and nurture what they are most passionate about. For us, it's going to concerts or cosplaying at Comic Con. For others, it might be running, golf, needlepoint, going to plays, collecting fine wine, Saturday afternoons at art galleries and museums, taking writing classes, going to conferences, yoga, gym, gardening, or fishing.

We call this act of consciously bringing people together through a shared endeavor a fanocracy: an organization or person that honors fans and consciously fosters meaningful connection among them.

WHEN WE BUILD ON OUR INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS TO ACHIEVE GREATNESS TOGETHER, FANOCRACY COMES ALIVE.

The suffix “-ocracy,” from the Greek “kratos” for rule, is used in popular culture as well as by academics, to mean government by a particular sort of people or according to a particular principle. A fanocracy is a culture where fans rule, and that's what we see emerging in today's world. We are moving into an era that prizes people over products.

The fundamental ingredient for true fandom—meaningful and active human connection—demonstrates a shift in the way a company relates with their customers. They are more forthright, helpful and transparent. They create new experiences by turning customers into like-minded, enthusiastic fans.

A true Fanocracy mobilized people to think, feel and act together with a helpful, positive force during difficult times. Fanocracy empowers people in a way that no single individual would ever be able to accomplish by himself or herself. Mastering life happens when the joy we have in our work and play feels the same.

ON THE NEXT PAGES YOU WILL FIND THE ELEMENTS TO CREATE A FANOCRACY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION.



NINE STEPS TO BUILDING YOUR FANOCRACY

1. GET CLOSER THAN USUAL

Personal interactions are what makes us human. And humanity is what builds a loyal following. The idea of proximity to customers is something that any organization can implement in order to build the kind of fandom that creates a true Fanocracy.

**THE CLOSER YOU GET TO OTHER PEOPLE,
THE MORE POWERFUL THE SHARED EMOTIONS ARE.**

2. LET GO OF YOUR CREATIONS

Once you put your art, product or service out into the world, it's not fully yours. It takes time to find that place where you can let go of your creations, yet still understand the heart of your fans.

**FANOCRACY IS BUILT ON THE EXPERIENCES OF ALL ITS MEMBERS,
RATHER THAN LIMITED TO THE IMAGINATION OF ONE CREATOR.**

3. GIVE MORE THAN YOU HAVE TO

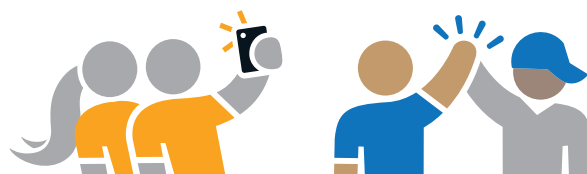
When we give to others rather than take, we develop fans. However, the idea of “completely free” is particularly tough for marketers, because many have been taught to require email registration when they offer content.

**FREE CONTENT WITH STRINGS ATTACHED FEELS LIKE COERCION—
GREAT CONTENT GIVEN FREELY, ATTRACTS LOYAL FANS.**

4. BUILD IDENTITY TO BECOME MORE THAN A PRODUCT

People become fans because—even though a product might be mass-produced—they are able to assign emotional weight to decisions around how they use the product. Providing room for each individual to incorporate a product into their lives is a quality that will make it successful.

**BRANDS ARE POWERFUL WAYS OF IDENTIFYING OURSELVES
TO OTHERS AND ARE HOW WE EXPLORE WHO WE ARE.**



5.

BE SMART ABOUT YOUR INFLUENCERS

Cultivating advocates who truly want to support a brand because they like the company as well as its products and services is much more likely to build a Fanocracy than merely paying for a celebrity endorsement.

**THE BEST PEOPLE TO CHAMPION YOUR IDEAS OR PRODUCTS
ARE THOSE WHO ARE THE MOST BELIEVABLE.**

6.

BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

A great way to create love for what you do is figure out ways to let people into your world by allowing them to create their own experience or be an important part of what you do. While everyone else is making products and services sold via transactions, you create fans!

**WELCOMING FANS INTO OUR INNER WORLDS
MELTS BARRIERS BETWEEN SELLER AND BUYER.**

7.

LISTEN TO RE-HUMANIZE

Executives today recognize how the automation of our world holds tremendous opportunities for their business. To build a Fanocracy, you must recognize that your customers have lives beyond their digital footprint and once you learn more about them, you inspire loyalty.

**YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CUSTOMER
STARTS WITH YOUR CURIOSITY ABOUT THEM.**

8.

TELL THE TRUTH, EVEN WHEN IT HURTS

Over the course of many interactions taking months or years, a customer learns what a brand stands for. When your fans know they can always rely on you to be open and honest, even when you make a mistake (*especially when you make a mistake*) they will honor and respect you and be eager to do business with you.

**BUILDING TRUST AND TELLING THE TRUTH ARE ESSENTIAL
INGREDIENTS IN CREATING A FANOCRACY.**

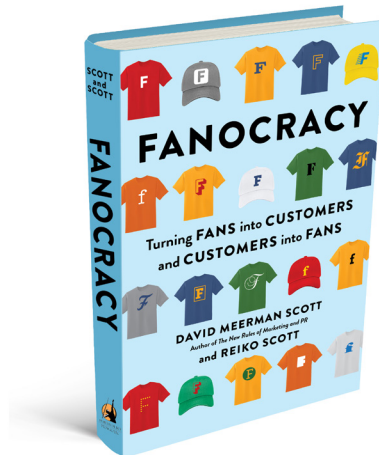
9.

DEVELOP EMPLOYEES WHO ARE FANS

Customers expect to find employees who are “just doing their job.” Yet, when an employee shows strong passion about what they are doing, it’s infectious. And this is essential in building your Fanocracy.

**AUTHENTIC ADVOCACY FROM INSIDE YOUR ORGANIZATION
WILL INSPIRE THE ENTHUSIASM, ENJOYMENT AND PASSION
THAT CREATES A FANOCRACY.**

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

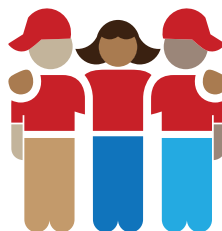


GRAB YOUR COPY OF

FANOCRACY: *Turning Fans into Customers and Customers into Fans*

Fanocracy features a wide range of examples, including...

- **The surfboard maker that invites customers into its workshop, where it reveals its proprietary processes.**
- **The underwear startup that’s “empowering people to live a life of boldness.”** (Yes, underwear.)
- **The teenager who turned eggs** (the ultimate commodity) **into a unique and delightful brand.**
- **The nonprofit that works closely with musicians to encourage their fans to register and vote.**
- **The battery company that wins loyalty by giving away its products during natural disasters.**



WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

“*Fanocracy* is a deep dive into the strategies to build a powerful culture that drives business success.”

Tony Robbins, *from the foreword to Fanocracy*



“In *Fanocracy*, David and Reiko offer surprising insights into how to put the needs of people ahead of all else so that your customers become passionate fans of all you do.”

Verne Harnish,
founder of Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO)



“David and Reiko make the idea of fan culture real, accessible, and actionable for all business—big, small, nonprofit, for-profit, b2b... and yes, even yours! Most of all, they shine a light on the joy of growing a business when you're surrounded by customers who positively LOVE what you do.”

Ann Handley, *WSJ bestselling author of Everybody Writes and Content Rules*

“The single most important force in my business is the relationship that I have with my fans. Yes, singing ability, songs, and industry support help tremendously, but the direct fan to artist friendship is the most coveted tool in the equation. *Fanocracy* truly emphasizes the importance and how-to's that are necessary to maximize that all important friendship. I just read it, it's FANTASTIC.”

Ronnie Dunn (*Brooks & Dunn*)



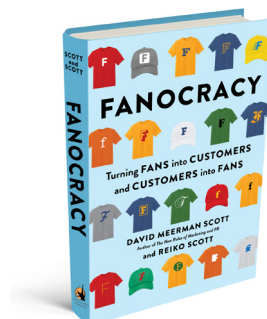
“Our customers are no ordinary customers; they are die-hard fans who bleed for us the world over. *Fanocracy* will teach you how to do the same for your business.”

Joe De Sena, *founder & CEO of Spartan*



“*Fanocracy* shows how to change customers into fans, so your brand can change the world.”

Sally Hogshead, *New York Times bestselling author, and CEO of Fascinate®*



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



David Meerman Scott and his daughter Reiko (*left*) are very different - one is a baby boomer business strategist, the other a millennial medical student. But both noticed that the kind of enthusiasm they once reserved for pleasures like the Grateful Dead (David) and Harry Potter (Reiko) now extends to all sorts of companies and organizations. So they teamed up to explore a big question: Why do some brands, even in supposedly boring categories like car insurance and enterprise software, attract not just customers but raving fans?

David Meerman Scott is an internationally acclaimed business strategist, entrepreneur, advisor to emerging companies, and public speaker. He is the author of ten previous books, including *The New Rules of Marketing & PR* (now in its 6th edition and in 29 languages) and *Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead*. In his spare time he surfs and travels around the world for great live music.

Reiko Scott earned a neuroscience degree from Columbia University and is now a medical student at Boston University. In her spare time she writes and publishes fan fiction based on her favorite fantasy worlds and loves to cosplay at Comic Con.



David Has Been to More Than 750 Live Music Concerts

David at Dead & Company "Playing in the Sand" in Riviera Maya, Mexico on January 19, 2019.

He has forged deep, life-long friendships with those who are as passionate about live music as he is. Fanocracy is about the success that comes with developing passionate fans of your business. You are much more likely to do so when you have a deep understanding of fandom culture yourself.

photo: Jay Blakesberg



Reiko (*center*) dressed as Badb, one of the three forms of the Morrigan, Celtic goddess of war, in *The Wicked+The Divine*.

Exposing ourselves to people who share our interests leads us to live happier lives. When you can introduce your fandom passions and you bring in others who are completely different from you and they become fans, you create an ideal environment—a place where great things happen.

photo: Jamie McKelvie