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INTERVIEW SERIES

How To Be Positive... Regardless:

**An Interview With Legendary Cookie-Maker
Famous Amos**

 Michael Senoff's
HardToFind Seminars.com

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For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

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Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

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How To Be Positive... Regardless: An Interview With Legendary Cookie-Maker Famous Amos

Wally “Famous” Amos has had his share of ups and downs. As a high school dropout who was sent to live with his aunt when his parents divorced, he could have chosen to see life negatively. Instead he realized the power of being positive, regardless. And in this interview, he shares how that attitude has helped him in business and in life.

According to Wally, in order to be successful you have to commit to an idea as soon as it comes to you. You can’t wait for “the best time” to do something or for someone to do it for you. You have to go for it right away, or someone else will beat you to it.

So in this audio, you’ll hear how Famous Amos took his simple idea and made a fortune with it – and how he stayed positive throughout the process.

You’ll Also Hear...

- The challenges Famous Amos has faced in his career and how he got past them
- How fear is the thing that stops most people from succeeding, how to get over it, and why he calls it “False Evidence Appearing Real”
- What Famous Amos means when he says, “The only thing you can do on your own is fail” – and how not to let your ego get in the way of your success
- How to live for today, control the things you can control, and stop worrying about the rest
- All about branding – and why Famous Amos says you’re always selling yourself regardless of whether it’s your personal or business life
- All about how Wally lost Famous Amos – the lessons he learned from that loss and what he’s doing today

Wally doesn’t worry about much, including money. Even though he says you won’t always know where the money’s going to come from for your ideas, you know that no new money needs to be created for success. It’s already out there in circulation. You just need to figure out how to get it to circulate your way – and stay positive that it will. And in this interview, you’ll hear all about it.

Hi I'm Raven Blair Davis and I've teamed up with Michael Senoff's www.hardtfindseminars.com to bring you the Nation's best interviews on business, marketing and success. Now lets get going . . .

Raven: You were responsible for offering the world's I believe first store selling chocolate chip cookies. What inspired you to start Famous Amos cookies?

Wally: Well first of all I wanted to do something that I really love doing and I loved chocolate chip cookies since I was 12 years old. I've loved baking them since 1970. So I'd been an agent and a personal manager in show business for a combination of about 14 years and got tired of doing that and wanted to do something else and didn't know what it was. But one evening the latter part of 1974 I was having dinner with a friend, her name is B.J. Gilmore and she'd been Quincy Jones' secretary, and we were good friends my office was next to Quincy's at A&M Records. And somehow the conversation got around to cookies and she said "You know Wally you and I should open a store selling chocolate chip cookies together." And then she immediately followed that with I've got a friend that I could get to put up the money.

So Raven when she said that she had my full attention and it was at that moment that I made the commitment that I made the decision to open one store selling chocolate chip cookies. B.J. never found her friend but I found mine in Helen Ready and Marvin Gaye and Marty Mogul and in five months I was selling cookies because I was motivated, I was inspired, I was excited, I was enthusiastic, all of those things create wonderful results and I was selling cookies.

Raven: Well you know I caught what you said at first you said "You made the decision" and it all starts there doesn't it.

Wally: It does and I think that even more powerful than making the decision what comes as a package deal is making the commitment. Commitment is I will, not I hope, I guess, or maybe, or I'll try, no when you commit to do something you say it. I will do this regardless and once you have that commitment in hand nothing can stop you.

Raven: I know starting out there had to be a lot of challenges that you faced. So can you share with us how you got past any of the particular challenges that you found yourself facing?

Wally: Everyday was a challenge because I had never opened a retail store before so for me it was all a challenge. But I'll give you another definition of challenge. Challenge is just an opportunity for growth. When you confront what it is that is challenging you, you will go through it and usually it's just getting past the fear. There is a friend who sends inspirational messages everyday and the message that I got today is so powerful.

Raven: Can you share it?

Wally: Yes. It was by actually Eleanor Roosevelt. This said "*You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience by which you really start to look fear in the face.*" The thing that stops most people is fear. The fear that they're not good enough, they fear that they don't know what they're doing, they feel that they can't do stuff it's just one fear after another. When you confront that which you fear the most you can't help but to see because you do gain strength, courage and confidence. But there's a great thing about fear also the word actually says False Evidence Appearing Real. What you fear doesn't exist and if it does exist it only exists in your mind not in someone else's mind. So when you can grow beyond your fear and know that you can do anything that you set your mind to, regardless of your lifestyle, regardless of your education, regardless of your experience, but you are capable of doing whatever you think of because if you couldn't do it you never would have thought of it because everything starts with a thought.

And thank God for me that I didn't totally understand that at that time but I've always been a relevantly positive person and I understood that I could open one store selling chocolate chip cookies. I'd been baking cookies for five years clearly I knew how to make them but I didn't know how to have a retail store but it was just one thing after another, its common sense. If you think about what you want to do the answers will come, if you start figuring it out the answers will come. You can't sit back and say "Well I don't know how to do this." And then is the thing is people start calling everybody asking them. I get so many people ask me how to do stuff. I don't know I mean I didn't know how to open a retail store but I figured it out. I am a high school dropout...

Raven: I read that.

Wally: ... so most of you all listening have more education than I do. So whatever it is that you want to do you have to start you have to just go do it. And don't let the economy bother you, don't let anything

stop you. Be positive regardless and move forward with your idea. That's the key. That's all I've done that's all I continue to do. Any business any idea that you come up with how will it get done if you don't do it. You're going to wait for somebody else to do it, you're going to wait for your husband, your wife, your mother, your friends. You're going to wait for somebody to tell you when is the best time to do it? You're going to look at your astrological chart and see when is the perfect? No the best time to do anything is when you get the idea. That is the only time when you get the idea that's the time to do it.

See here's the thing people don't understand, ideas do not come through you exclusively, ideas are just permeating the universe. When you tune into an idea you're not the only one more than one person can tune into the ideas in the universe so if you don't respond to them someone else will. And then what will happen later when that idea becomes a reality in someone else's life you'll say that person stole my idea. You can't own ideas if you don't respond to them then someone else will. So that's why it's important to do it when you get the idea because you're just one of maybe millions that got the same idea. See you come in the world buck naked you're going to leave buck naked you will take nothing with you. See you've never seen a U-Haul following a hearse. So the idea is to use yourself up while you are here. You know don't be saving stuff because you're going to die and leave it. People got tons of stuff saved in self-storage places they die and there it is. So the idea is to do it now don't wait do it now. The best time in the world to do anything is right now.

And you got to rely on something spiritual also because the reality is ideas come through you and not from you. They come from a much higher source than you but they are channeled through you. So you are just a channel for ideas. And you want to be an open and clear channel to realize that there is a greater force than the universe than you and that all ideas come from that force. I think it's a great secret to one being successful but our ego gets in the way and we want to believe that we're doing everything and we can't do anything. The only thing you can do by yourself is fail. So you're going to need a team of people and you're going to need God on your side and God is always on your side. If you think that God is no longer with you guess who moved.

Raven: You.

Wally: Amen.

Raven: If I'm not mistaking I think I heard an interview where you were sharing that your aunt use to make cookies.

Wally: It was my Aunt Della that first made cookies for me. When I was 12-years-old my mother and father divorced I was living in Tallahassee, Florida and they decided to go their separate ways. My mother went to Orlando to her mother and she sent me to New York City to live with Aunt Della her sister. Now that could be another negative, you know, I came from divorced parents I can't do this, I can't do that, I'm not worthy, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Nothing could be further from the truth. You mother and father just decided to get a divorce it's not a reflection on you at all, you know, you don't have to think that, you don't have to believe that, it's not true. You are still free to go and to live your life and I'm proof of that I came from divorced parents. But I went to New York and lived with Aunt Della who gave me lots of love and who made chocolate chip cookies for me. How was I to know that 27 years later when I was 39-years-old that I would open the world's first store exclusively selling chocolate chip cookies. You don't know there are no facts on this. You can't know where your life is going and you can only live it one day at a time. Be your best every day prepare yourself for whatever may come. Education comes in handy with that. Education just prepares you to take advantage of all the opportunities that will come your way. It gives you a strong foundation, it gives you confidence also.

Aunt Della made chocolate chip cookies it was 27 years later that I was having a meeting with in Hollywood, California where I was living with a client a young lady name Shelly Summers and she had just made some cookies that she brought to our meeting. My God they reminded me so much of Aunt Della's they were homemade cookies I hadn't had any in ages. I said "Girl where did you get these cookies from?" And she said with a little funny sound "The recipe's on the back of the Nestles Toll House Chocolate Chip package." As soon as the meeting was over Raven I went and got me some chocolate chips and I'll be darn if she wasn't right there was the recipe. That started my journey with chocolate chip cookies. So I made them for five years, gave them away to friends, gave them away at meetings and became well-known for making really great tasting chocolate chip cookies. As they say really the rest is history when B.J. and I had that meeting that night and I made the commitment that's the power in commitment.

There's a poem written by Goethe, it's in my book "*The Power in You.*" First of all it's called "*The Power of Commitment*" written by Goethe the German, G-O-E-T-H-E "*The Power of Commitment*".

“Until one is committed there is hesitancy the chance to draw back always in effectiveness concerning all acts of initiative and creation. There is one elementary truth that ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans that the moment one definitely commits oneself then providence moves through. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events, issues from the decision rising in ones favor all matter of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no one could have dreamed would have come his way. Are you in earnest?” That’s asking are you really serious are you really committed. “And seek this very minute whatever you can do. Whatever you can do or dream you can begin it. Boldness has genius power and magic in it. Only engage in the mind grows heated. Begin folks. Begin now and then the tasks will be completed.”

That’s a powerful piece if you know that that’s the way life is. If you know that you are the cause and effect of everything in your life then it’s not unbelievable. The thing also is it works every time. So commitment worked for me 34 years ago when I started Famous Amos. Commitment also works for me four years ago when I started a company in Hawaii called www.chipandcookie.com. We got two retail stores here in Hawaii and we sell cookies online. This is my original cookie. This is my personal recipe. This is the same recipe that made me famous. It’s not the recipe that Famous Amos cookies use today but this is the recipe that I use to create Famous Amos. So I have resurrected that recipe. So there are a lot of people listening that as they hear me speak now they are remembering the taste of a Wally Amos cookie. It’s the taste of butter it’s the taste of lots and lots of chocolate. It’s the taste of pure vanilla extract. It’s the taste that you only get when you make cookies by hand, not with a machine, not plopped onto a cookie sheet but gently placed onto a cookie sheet. It’s a cookie made with lots of aloha and aloha is love so that’s what you get. When you get a Wally Amos cookie and you can only get it in Hawaii or you can get it online and it’ll ship obviously from Hawaii. So...

Raven: Online where can we go get it?

Wally: www.chipandcookie.com.

Raven: I want to talk to you about the economy because you know a lot of people are really having a hard time dealing with this. My thing is cut the TV off don’t listen to the negativity.

Wally: And don’t read the papers.

Raven: And don't read the papers right.

Wally: You know what I'm not interested in the economy. I have no control over the economy. Control the controllable, control the things you can control in your sphere of influence. I'm not in control I'm not in charge of the economy.

Raven: And I like what you said because that's what I was going to ask you what's the biggest suggestion that you can throw out for those listeners that are worried about their business and the economy right now? Now you just said it don't worry about it.

Wally: Okay two things, maybe even three things. First of all stop worrying because the literal translation of worry is to strangle and guess who you're strangling when you worry, yourself? So quit killing yourself stop worrying start focusing on answers and solutions. That's the only way you will save your business by focusing on answers and solutions and doing it every single day. And here is the kicker though, above and beyond everything else be positive regardless every second of every single day folks. No one has ever created a business from being negative. No one has ever written a great piece of music by being negative. No one has ever built a skyscraper by being negative. You create other things from being positive. You grow your business by being positive. Focus on answers and solutions. What do you need to do today to get your business going?

This chip and cookie business I am skating on thin ice because I've run out of money a couple of times already and don't know where the next batch is coming from. But the one thing I do know it is not necessary to print any additional money for me to get the money that I need it is already in circulation. Another thing I do know in order for me to get the money I must stay in business. I must keep the doors open somehow, some way. I don't need to know the answer. I got to share one other thing with you I'm a member of Unity Church and Howard Caesar is the pastor of Unity Church in Houston. It's a wonderful church. I've spoken there many, many, many times. So you're not in partnership with the bank, you're not in partnership with other people you are in partnership with God. Here is a daily word from May 9, 2007 it's called "Let Go Let God." In partnership with God I lived from the understanding that greater good is possible.

*Dear God I feel your presence in this moment of
contemplation becoming still and releasing concerns of*

yesterday and thoughts of tomorrow. I experience the ease that comes from thinking only of you. In this state of restful meditation I renew my faith in your Spirit to bring order, peace, abundance and wholeness to all outer conditions. There is nothing in this universe that exists outside you. Thank you God for healing, protecting and guiding me and those who are dear to me. I release and let go more completely so that I may experience your presence even more fully living from the understanding of our partnership. I know greater good is possible.

The daily word is always inspired by scripture. This is from 2 Samuels 22 chapter 33 verse "Who is the rock except our God the God who has girded me with strength has opened wide my path." You know who do you trust? Who do you put your faith in? That's what I want to know because if it's not God whatever your interpretation of God is, and everyone has their own interpretation, but you got to believe in something greater than yourself. That's where the answers come from. As I said the answers come through you they don't come from you they come from a higher source. Many of us call that higher source God some call it Buddha, it doesn't matter what you call it, but it is critical to believe that there is a higher source in the universe. That's where you have to put your trust. That's where you have to put your belief system.

I need to just share one other thing because you know I just said a keyword and that keyword was 'trust' because trust is really, really, important. Who do you trust? You know trust is deeper than faith. Trust is more powerful than faith because to trust is just to give up everything, totally to just jump off the cliff knowing that you're wearing a parachute even though you can't see it that's trust okay. So here is a book I read called "Streams in the Desert" a wonderful little book of daily prayers and this one was from December 15 and it just repeats itself every year. The word trust is the heart of faith and is the Old Testament word given to the incident are early stages of faith. The word faith conveys more an act of will while the word belief conveys an act of the denying our intellect. But trust is the language of the heart. The words faith and belief refer more to a truth believed to something expected to happen. Trust implies more than this for it sees and feels and it leans on those who have a great living and genuine heart of love.

Therefore let us trust also in him all through the delays in spite of all the difficulties and in the face of all the rejection we encounter in life and in spite of our feelings and evidence to the contrary. And even

when we cannot understand our way or our situation may we still trust also in Him for he shall bring it to pass. The way will open a situation will be changed and the end result will be peace. The cloud will finally be lifted and the light of eternal noon day will shine at last. Trust and rest when all around you puts your faith to stringent test let no fear or foe confound you. Wait for God and trust and rest. Trust and rest with heart abiding like a bird lying in its nest underneath its feathers hiding, fold your wings and trust and rest. You know I have to tell you something.

Raven: Wow, that's beautiful.

Wally: I was talking with my bookkeeper earlier who comes in every Tuesday and Thursday and we are really short on cash and yet the opportunity is becoming larger than it's ever been since I started this company four years ago. And I needed something to remind me, something to bring up my strengths. And talking with you and being reminded of these pieces of materials that I read frequently but not for some time. It has just fortified me because you must live it, you can't just say how great they are and how nice they are and not live it. If you believe it then you must live it. So there's no messages from business school that's going to get you through really, alright, because those messages change every day, those books change every day, facts change every day. The truth never ever changes God is the truth. God's support is the truth. God is our creator is the truth. That's not going to change. So this interview is for me it's not for your listeners and I am being fortified today and I am being reminded today of what it has taken to get me this far, which is God, and still help me cross the finish line. I'm convinced.

Raven: Well I'm glad that you had this experience. You know one thing that I sense and feel from you from every interview I've ever heard you do is you have fun you seem to enjoy life. How important is it for us not only in our personal life but in our businesses to have F-U-N?

Wally: Critical. I think you must have fun so I don't separate my business life from my personal life there is only life. I'm looking at an orange here, is there any part of this orange that is not an orange? So it's just life. There's certain segments certain aspects of life but it's all a part of the whole and so whoever you are needs to be lived through all of it but fun is really, really, really critical. Obituaries always list the year you were born and the year you die separated by a dash 1900 – 1996. When you were born or when you died is

not nearly as important as what you did in between what you put in your dash. What have you put in your dash?

The older I get the more fun I want to put in my dash. If it's not fun I won't do it. If it's not fun I cannot do it. There's a great quote on Mark Twain that says "*I do not like work even when another man does it.*" Those sources are from my book "*Watermelon Magic Seeds of Wisdom, Slices of Life*" and all of this stuff is available on my Web site too at www.chipandcookie.com. So it's not only about cookies it's about food for the soul, food for the mind.

Raven: What tips can you share with the listeners who might be currently struggling with their brand because you're the brand man, you know about branding?

Wally: Well what I always do is just I brand myself. Everything that I do revolves around me and that's not to be egotistical but I am the central point of activities that I am involved in, so in a sense I'm always promoting Wally. But I think that's true of most people who own a business you are promoting your business and who better to promote your business than you and you're selling yourself. I don't care what product it is you're selling you're always selling yourself, you're selling your credibility, you're selling your integrity, you're selling your ideas, but it always revolves around you. So that's all I do but it is important to be consistent to be congruent in what you say and what you think and in what you do.

Also I think one of the basic things that you need to succeed in business in life is people need to like you. No one will buy a product from you if they do not like you. So you need to kind of brand things with yourself before you do anything else and you need to maintain your credibility and your integrity if you're going to have any contact at all with the public. And then above and beyond that you really do need a quality product with sustainability. You can't keep a business going on smoke and mirrors. There has to be a product, there has to be a product with substance, with quality that people can use, that people wish to purchase. It's pretty basic really you got to mean with you say and you got to say what you mean.

Raven: And be authentic.

Wally: Totally. The keyword now is 'transparent'. I've written eight books I can't be any more transparent you can see right through me because all you got to do is read one of my books. I've had thousands of interviews but every time I'm interviewed it's the same

message. It might not be the exact same words because there's a lot of ways of saying the same thing, but the message is always the same. I am consistent with my message. I am a positive person. I am known for being positive, I'm known for being kind and loving, I'm known for being fun. So that's what you get when you purchase a Wally product, be it a beautiful watermelon aloha shirt, be it one of my books, be it a chip and cookie doll, be it a chip and cookie book, be it a chocolate chip cookie, a chocolate chip with macadamia nuts or it doesn't matter what it is you're purchasing a piece of Wally and it's real.

Raven: You know what Wally I think I had read or listened to an interview where you talked a little bit about your experience once you lost Famous Amos and one thing that you said was you forgot that it was as a team. Tell us more about that.

Wally: Well it's all teamwork. When I started Famous Amos I totally understood that I was just one person and a lot of people helped me found that company. And it's the only thing you can do by yourself is to fail. Failure is self-induced but if you want to have a success of any kind to any degree then you will absolutely need to have other people working with you. I knew that going in. I often saw myself as a conductor a conductor is nothing without skilled musicians and each chair capable of playing the instruments. So I thought of myself as being a conductor and everybody else was a part of the orchestra and I realized how important the relationship was between conductor and the orchestra. And then I launched Famous Amos and it started happening and I forgot that I was a part of a team because all the attention was now on me. The guilt took over very sneaky, very seductive it just comes in and grabs you and beats you around and so I lost my way. I literally lost my way and thought that I was more important than the rest of the people on the team.

But I was shown that that was a lie, it was not the truth. I'm still part of the team I've learned that lesson. So within every experience there is a lesson and if you don't get the lesson you continue to have the experience until you understand why you're having that experience. So when I lost Famous Amos one of the real things I focused on after that was well, understanding how valuable a team was. And the first business I got involved in after losing Famous Amos was going to call Uncle No Name because Famous Amos had sued me over ownership of our name and likeness. And so I said well you don't need a name to have a product and no name is a name. When I was born I didn't have a name my mother and father called me Wallace Amos Jr., because my father was Wallace

Amos Sr. How creative was that? But I also understood that your name is just how people identify you not who I am.

Raven: Yeah.

Wally: Who am I you can't touch. Who I am is a child of God, unique in God's love. My laugh is unlike anyone else's laugh, my fingerprints are unlike anyone else's fingerprint. So the experience of losing Famous Amos truly helped me find myself. That inner me from which I live on a daily basis just started following another journey. And I shared with you earlier that every experience has a lesson for you and it's important to get the lesson so you keep moving on through the experiences. You can't own anything you come here buck naked, you don't even have any formulated ideas, and you leave buck naked. You can't take any funds with you they dress you up and put you in that box but you aint going nowhere.

Raven: Now let's see you started off as an agent, I think you worked at Sax's and then you went from there to being an agent with William Morris.

Wally: I did yes. I really have close to four years. My first job out of the Air Force 1967 was the Supply Department, actually then it was just a temporary job for Christmas holidays and after that I was scheduled to go to secretarial school which in those days they were called Business Schools, and that's what I did. I worked at Sax's and unloaded boxes and just the minimal type job but it paid and I needed to do something. It wasn't necessarily to make some money but I didn't want to be hanging around on the street corner I wanted to do something. And so I did this job through the Christmas and then I started school in January. And I'd done such a great job at Sak's they offered me an opportunity to come to work in the morning before I went to school because I went to school in the afternoon.

After a while I became the manager of the Supply Department and the job became too much so then I worked from them and went to school at night and I was studying shorthand and typing in business school and stuff. And after almost four years of working at Sak's I was making \$85 a week, I'd married my first wife we had a two-year-old son and Maria was pregnant with Gregory our second child, and I wanted perhaps as much as more money I wanted recognition for a job well done, but I wanted more money also because had some expenses and raising a family and that required some cash. So I asked Sak's for a \$10 a week raise and they said "I'm sorry Wally we can't do that." And I said "Well if you don't give

me at least a \$5 dollar a week raise I'm going to leave." And they thought and they said "Well Wally you got to do what you go to do."

You know that was not the easiest thing to do because I'm a high school dropout so I had no great education to fall back on. I've always kind of gotten by with common sense and I realized that Sak's was not my security that Sak's was the place that I worked. I didn't have the spiritual understanding that I have either but I knew that there had to be something better than Sak's, something as good as Sak's that I feel needed and wanted. And so I gave them two week notice and left. And I did not have a job and couldn't find anything to my liking so I went back to Collegiate Secretarial Institute where I had gone to school and, you know, this is where it really comes in handy to maintain a strong reputation which is what I've always done. And I went back to Collegiate and told them what had happened and Sak's gave me a glowing letter of reference. You don't burn your bridges because you never know when you'll have to cross them again.

And so Lee Meyer at Collegiate said "Don't worry we'll get you another job better than that." She lived up to her word she sent me over to William Morris Agency who at the time was looking for a black trainee. So I showed up at the right time, right place, right color and I got the job. But I had take a \$35 dollar a week pay cut and I had to start in the mailroom because that's where you start in the William Morris Agency you're just a gopher, you know, you go get tickets, you go trips and you deliver mail and stuff throughout the office, you do whatever they ask you to do. And I did it all gladly and two months I was out of the mailroom and in less than a year I made agent. I went on to have a very, very successful career at the William Morris Agency. I was the first agent to book Simon & Garfunkel, The Supremes and Marvin Gaye and a lot of the rock acts during the '60s I had something to do with. It was a great, great experience and I had a good time doing it.

Raven: When I heard your interview one thing stood out to me and that was when you mentioned that you felt when you were working there that you were on the outside looking in. Is that because you always knew that there was something more for Wally?

Wally: You know I don't know it's just that I was in show business for 14 years, seven years at William Morris office another seven years as a personal manager, and I'm always reminded of the quote from Jesus that says "*Be of the world but not in it.*" And I was on show business I never felt a part of show business. I never felt really that I belonged in show business. So it was just a matter of time and

time came and I needed to set a new goal and I decided I wanted to sell chocolate chip cookies. I didn't know what else to do. And as I mentioned that B.J. Gilmore came into my life and cookies wound up being the thing for me. But I enjoyed show business, learned a lot, and it did a lot for me, and it led me to cookies.

Raven: When I look at your branding it kind of stands out above the norm. It kind of has that little stardom quality...

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Wally: Because I learned how to do that in show business. I learned how to market, I mean learned how to promote, I learned how to do that in show business and the one thing is when if you look at show business in order to rise to the top you really got to be good, you got to be different, you got to let your uniqueness shine in any business. What is unique about you and your business? You have to let the public know what this is. What is the main selling point about your business that differentiates you from everything else? You have to let your customers know what that is, otherwise you're just an also. And I've never wanted to be an also I wanted to make the best chocolate chip cookie in the world and we make America's best tasting cookies. I'm convinced of that because I haven't tasted one better yet. Everybody I know is always bragging about mine, they're always bragging about Chip and Cookie, they're always bragging about Wally's there is no recipe, Wally's personal recipe.

So you have to be unique because in a field now where there's so much stuff and everybody's attention span is like that short that long. What makes you different? Why should somebody buy what you're doing? So you have to be better, you have to have quality, but you also have to have a way to let people know it because it's you and 10 million other products. It's like going online. So you get a Web site. Okay what's next? You're now one of two billion, 30 billion Web sites how will people know that you're there. You got to get that word out.

Raven: And be unique in doing it.

Wally: Exactly.

Raven: So two quick tips on being unique and getting the word out.

Wally: You got to be yourself. You got to be who you are you can't pretend that you're somebody else. You got to be you. You got to

trust somebody bigger than you, somebody greater than you. You got to trust the unknown. You got to trust something you can't see.

Raven: And fight that fear like you talked about.

Wally: Don't fight it just face it because what you fight, what you resist persists. Don't fight it acknowledge that it can't hurt you. Acknowledge first that you are creating it and then move on.

Raven: You're a huge literacy advocate. What led you to make a difference in that area and also tell us more about the Chip and Cookie Read Aloud Foundation?

Wally: Read Aloud. Well, I got involved in adult literacy because I wanted to use my fame for more than selling cookies. My belief has always been that it is just a vehicle that helps me to serve because your basic reason for living is to serve one another. I discovered Literacy Volunteerism of America in 1979. Volunteered to become their spokesperson for about 24, 25 years did exactly that in every possible way and met a lot of friends, made a lot of friends, and just had a great sense of love and doing something that was very worthwhile.

In time I discovered that trying to get rid of the problem of adult literacy was a huge and wasn't really making any headway. But maybe a way to do that is to create generations of young people who can read and who love reading. And the best way to do that is by having parents read aloud to their children. So my wife Christine and I we formed the Read Aloud Foundation in our effort to encourage parents to read aloud to their kids to promote the importance, the values and the benefits of reading aloud to children and will donate 10% of the profits from our company once we've become profitable. And so that's my commitment, that's my passion and I'm working to make some money for Chip and Cookie so that I can do more good by promoting reading aloud. And we're well on our way because in October Read Aloud will launch a national campaign in partnership with the Library of Congress, with the US Postal Service and with eBay PayPal and five million parents that will commit to reading aloud to their children for 10 minutes a day from birth through six years old.

Promote reading aloud if you've got kids read to them if you don't then find somebody else's kid to read to. Go to daycares, go to kindergartens, go to places where there are young people who maybe don't get read to and read to them, but everybody can start talking about how important it is to read aloud to children. So that's

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what I want everybody to do. We're going to create this ground swell of awareness. The Post Office on our launch will send out 143 million postcards because every day they go through 143 million addresses and there's more than 143 million people at all of those addresses because many of them have multiple people, businesses could have thousands of people, you know. So we want everybody to know how important it is. EBay is designing our Web site for and they were power this Read Aloud Web site. But you can also go to www.ReadAloud.org you can get some information on how important it is to read aloud to your children. But if you do have children, by all means, please read aloud to them if they're young children from birth to six years old. It is so critical for you to read to your children. Please do. Please do.

Raven: Final comment for our listening audience.

Wally: Love is the answer. You got to love yourself, you love all those that are a part of your life and just be the best you can. Be positive regardless, positive regardless. Yes, yes, yes.

Raven: Well thank you again for another amazing interview. Wally Amos.

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