



Episode 20: **Selling Online**

www.customapparelstartups.com/selling-online/

Mark S: Okay thanks everyone and welcome to... what do we at, Episode 21?

Mark V: It sounds right.

Mark S: I think we are at about episode 21 for the Custom Apparels Startups Podcasts. My name is Mark Stephenson from ColDesi.

Mark V: And I am Marc Vila from Colman and Company and today we're talking about selling online. And we got a guest with us.

Mark S: We do not have a guest, we have kind of a friend, we have a partner in this whole marketing endeavored here and guess what his name is Marc?

Mark S: It's Marco. So today's podcast has Mark, Marc and Marco. It's amazing, it's the trifecta. Hey Marco!

Marco P: How are you Mark and Marc?

Mark S: Good, thanks, why don't you introduce yourself?

Mark V: Sure yeah.

Mark S: Let's get that background, who is Marco Pena and what is he all about.

Marco P: Thanks, I don't know how long do you have, so I'll give you the short version.

Mark S: (laughing) Thanks

Marco P: Alright Mark? No worries, no worries. Yeah, Marco Pena, I appreciate it guys, I've known you guys for some time now. So I am the Business Development Manager for the DecoNetwork. DecoNetwork as you guys know we are an International technology company, we built a platform for the decorating industry, so everybody who is listening to this podcast right now I am talking to you. We have developed something specifically for you, we were tired of seeing so many clients just throw money away and trying

to get their business online, trying to get their business situated, trying to service their clients and they would go and they would have all these custom built solutions created for them at 10s of thousands and 100,000 dollars only to walk away just so disappointed, so we said "there's got to be a better way". So we've built this platform and we are very excited, I've been in this industry for... I don't want to tell you, it kind of dates me a little bit but 21 years.

Mark S: Wow.

Marco P: I started when I was 5.

Mark S: Man, 5? I would guess like 2 or 3.

Marco P: Yeah, I should have gone with your answer.

Mark S: Yeah.

Marco P: I worked with a major embroidery company at the time and then I went to go work with Wilcom and then Wilcom let me to DecoNetwork and so I am excited to be where I am at.

Mark S: So, you got that magic combination, you are an actual apparel business guy and who got into the online E-commerce platform business.

Marco P: Correct, you know what's really nice about my history, there is many clients that I've helped set-up and startups and trained probably 150-100 startups in my time and so the common question the common concern often times was "Hey, listen I got this awesome equipment" (you know you guys sell some great equipment) and "I am excited" and they truly are excited, this is a turning point in their life or career or their retirement, whatever that is, super excited. Now the capability this new functionality, this new thing that they are going to go out and sell and then also they hit something like "how do I get my clients to buy from me? Where do I find them? What do I do with this now?"

Mark S: Right, it's good that you said this Marco because I think probably half of our podcast have been related to exactly that.

Mark V: Yeah and I think what's really cool about what Marco did and helped to create and what he does now is that we talk to so many people especially at Colman and Company, on the supply side, that they are trying to grow their business in a lot of different directions and they are doing the work, they are ordering the supplies, they are doing so much and the selling online think is honestly is simply put 'Scary' for a lot of people.

Mark S: You know, did we actually say what this podcast was about?

Mark V: I think I said that.

Mark S: We're always banding about titles and some of the ones that we'd considered for this was: Life and times of Marco Pena.

Marco P: That'll be episode 22.

Mark S: So, we came up with: Terrifying ways that you can sell online.

Mark V: Yeah, or just Getting started online is hard or is not hard and I don't know there is so many things and we talk to all these people and I think it is so cool that Marco, what I was trying to say is that you had come up with a solution that was really for all of these people, that me and the people that I work with talk to all the time and hopefully in this conversation today some of the things that you learned in starting this and helping people get started, you can pass on some of that knowledge, so that folks that listen maybe they don't have a store and they say "I would love to work with what Marco does" or maybe they really do have a store and they feel that it is a mess.

Mark S: It's probably a mess, I mean let's be honest.

Mark V: I would love to help some people clean up what they have and I'd love to help people start who aren't doing it yet and I would love to help other people to at-least understand and I think that if that works some people will finish listening to this and they'll finally understand a little bit more about selling online, then they can at-least put this into a long term plan for their business if it's not tomorrow it is 2016.

Mark S: So, let's put Marco who I am basically, I am going to do air quotes now: He is the Industry guide for this, for shopping carts, for E-commerce and for Custom Apparels, Why? What's the opportunity like Marco? Why should someone that just started or is in first couple of years of a custom apparel business whether or not it's an embroidery business or custom printed Tees or screen printing or Bling, why is having an E-commerce website a good idea?

Marco P: That's a great question, and so the opportunity is incredible, it's ridiculous I would say and I don't throw that word around a lot but it really is. In North America, there is over 310 million Internet users, 87%, 87.7 to be exact percent of the population has access to the internet. This is your potential, this is your client base, anybody that can access the internet is an opportunity, that's just in North America (and that's just growing by the way) let's talk turkey day, Thanks giving just passed, now I don't have the numbers for 2015 yet, they are still not in yet as you know it just passed, the thanks giving passed. But for 2014 the online sales were up 18.7%, 18.7% who would not want that? In any business? Year on year we are seeing double digit increases, year on year. You know what's really fueling that? Mobile devices.

Mobile sales were up 48% of all traffic, 27% of all sales happen through mobile devices, absolutely incredible and not too long ago people were afraid to do any type of E-commerce on their mobile devices but it's been a game changer, it is changing people's mentality.

Mark S: It's funny to say that Marco but we were at our traditional family poker game on Friday instead of going out and doing black Friday shopping and my oldest daughter (she's into dolls) she didn't feel like

playing and she wanted to go shopping, so she went and sat on the sofa and pulled out her I-phone and for the next hour she was doing Christmas shopping online.

Marco P: Ain't that great? And what a wonderful satisfaction right? When she was done.

Mark V: Yeah.

Mark S: Yeah, all you got to do is hit the buy button and it is all over and I guess it's about making that possible for your customers as apparel decorator.

Marco P: Absolutely because there is a couple of things and Mark one or Mark two one of you guys said "Hey, listen this is scary for people, people say alright I see the opportunity" let me throw a couple of other numbers here really quickly, spending in 2014 for E-commerce going to internet, retailer.com was a 262 billion dollars. 262 billion dollars and that's a 13% increase and now that's globally and that's across the board.

Mark S: Yeah, so that number has got to be much bigger just inside the United States.

Marco P: Absolutely, absolutely, now let me just share something else that's a little bit closer to home, to everybody listening here, you guys have heard of companies like Zazzle and Custom Ink and This Thistleprint and cafepress, these are the top five biggest, kind of create your own customize it- E-commerce retailers out there, they are the ones that I have just mentioned that brought tears or blood boiling to anybody that's listening to this coz they say that we've lost a lot of business to these guys and I don't like them or whatever, but you got to respect the work that they have done and they have done an incredible job marketing themselves, those top five in our industry specific to the decoration industry have grown twelve fold in the last 9 years and in 2012 they had 1.9 billion dollars in sales with over 16 million unique visitors.

Mark S: And the keys to these business are if you go online you can go to a Zazzle or Cafepress and you can upload your own design and get a T-shirt printed.

Marco P: Absolutely a pre-decorated one.

Mark V: Go ahead Marco.

Marco P: I apologize Marc, I was just going to say, Maybe a funny T-shirt, it doesn't have to be create your own. The consumer often goes in with an idea of like hey! I am going to create some big funny or original and then they find something they like better -that has already been created and they are purchasing that.

Mark V: Yeah, what I was going to say was, because now what I believe is a great opportunity because of what exists and what you have and how much easier it is to get up and running online for anybody, really no matter how small you are and we're now at an opportunity phase for all of these small businesses and

all the folks of you that are listening out there, that already run a business and now you are ready to get online and now is actually a new opportunity because you've got these folks that came in and they were revolutionary in one way or another, they came up with an idea and they spend a lot of money to get going and they are the big one and whoever is the big one in on something cashes in on it, they cash in on a period of time and then more competition comes in and more noise comes in the area and then some of their pie dwindles down to other businesses, other niche markets.

Mark S: Yeah, it's a big pie, whole of your friends and family and just ask them have you ever thought about buying a custom T-shirt? Have you ever looked online for funny T-shirt or a printed Tee for a gift or look for embroidery for a business polo or anything like that.

Mark V: And if you are listening to this now and you got a niche product, so if you sell something that is unique crowd of people or specific to your area, something very unique or unique licensing or artwork or whatever it is, but if it is a niche and you got some sort of a market that you speak to and that is not just like put a name on a hat but is something nice and specific, then it is the golden opportunity for you to get online because you got a narrow group of people trying to find you and trying to find what you sell. which means although you are going to compete with some of those really big companies in one way or another online when you are competing in a much smaller market and you got to put that stuff online because as we said everyone would love to just go on my tablet or my phone and I do Irish dancing and I want to get some hats and you do embroidery and Bling stuff for Irish dancing, you got to have a website and you got to make it, so that local people could find it, which we just did a podcast on and then people are going to find you and they're going to be sitting on their phone and they're going to say, perfect! Just what I wanted.

Mark S: And some other markets might be, let's name a few, just so maybe we'll pique the interest.

Mark V: Let's even name things maybe we don't talk about a lot, we talked about cheer moms, we talked about baseball moms.

Mark S: Fishing!

Mark V: Fishing.

Mark S: Hunting! Outdoor stuff, heck, you could be maybe not Christmas because that will be very popular, maybe you are the go to person for Harbor day.

Mark V: Yeah, and it's also specific sports, so if you are involved in and I mean like subs of subs, so you might be in...

Mark S: Beer Pong

Mark V: Beer Pong, that is interesting I was not thinking about it as a sport, I was thinking like I am in Martial Arts but you are not just in Martial arts, you are in MMA, you are not just in MMA, I'm in like a

Krav MaGa Jujitsu and that's a niche market that I sell to, these are the people whom I talk to, I make all types of stuff for that. Get a website for all of those things even though you are happy to make a corporate logo T-shirt, these are the things that if you do these things you got to be inspired to get online as Mark said there is so much of that pie to be shared.

Mark S: As a matter of fact there is somebody that just signed up for your Custom Apparel Startups Facebook Group which I am plugging right now, it is go to Facebook and just type in Custom Apparel Startups and you'll find us who is actually starting his own MMA product line. So yeah, he is getting all that stuff done and we've had customer being successful by just doing bling T-shirts for dog shows and we've had customers do softball, curl softball is a big market for them.

Mark V: Bands, there is... and this was a long time ago and is not a current customer of mine now, I wish I can remember exactly but a customer had bought a Direct to Garment Printer from me, back when I used to sell printers many years ago and they did band T-shirts and I said "Oh, cool how do you sell them? What do you do?" And he said I go to the concert and I set up stuff like that and okay, they go online and buy, (and was not long ago, 5 years ago) but then he is like no, no I just do it there. And now that memory pops into my head and I am thinking to myself "wait a minute, this guy was the only guy who made it! for this niche band out of Chicago" So they had a big enough following, they had 100,000 people that liked them but they were not a massive global band but anybody going online and searching for shirts for that band should have found him.

Mark S: Yeah right.

Mark V: He probably would have sold twice as many shirts. With Marco and we talked about some of the niche markets. Why don't people you think get a shopping cart, why don't they develop an online presence?

Marco P: Well, quite frankly it is scary for a lot of people, they think that there is no room for them at the top. I just mentioned the top five and they've accounted for 1.9 billion dollars and you think wow! There is just no room for me and it is too expensive, I don't know how to do it, where do I start? I've heard horror stories. But there is the other thing to that, there are less than 2% of an estimated 100 Billion dollar industry, so quite frankly their slice of the pie is very-very small and anybody listening to this podcast, let me encourage you, there is a lot of room for growth and there is a lot of room for you to be part of this and there is a lot of room for you to be capture some of this market, they don't have to take your clients, they don't have to grow so big that there is no room for you.

There is room for you, but the opportunity is there but where do I start? Well, typically it is a scary proposition if you think about it; there is a lot of complexity to it. obviously it is a unique business model, one of the people don't understand sometimes the legal ramification, the complexity of what is hosting, holding a website and imagery, where do I get the images from? What about a shopping cart (shopping carts are not created equal) for example most traditional shopping carts out there if you go to like: Shopifier or illisuonar or any one of those things. What they do sell is they do sell is a shopping cart, they sell the hosting and they sell some themes, that's great! but there is a problem with that: Shopping carts are not created the same, so that for example in our industry well, shirts cost differently, decorations cost differently, a shirt for example will cost more if it is a darker shirt vs. a light vs. a white, it's XX vs. an XL will

cost differently, different cuts and the type of decoration that you do will vary, if it is a darker shirt, there is probably a pre-treatment that you do, if you are doing DTG.

Mark S: Printing right?

Marco P: If you are printing exactly, If you are embroidering you might have to add more underlay on that shirt, if it is a white you have to do a white under base on that, so there is all these variables that most shopping carts just simply don't understand and for them a shirt is a shirt is a shirt... and so we've taken a lot of that complexity with-in DecoNetwork and we said that look: understand the industry we've worked for the industry and we understand that there are these complexities and we built a platform that is a turnkey solution that just kind of figures all this stuff out so that...

Mark S: Marco I think really the first thing that you said was probably the main things that keep people back that you found some solutions to and that's they don't know what to do... they have no idea, well you were describing what people might be afraid of and the complexities and things like that there were about four words that most of the people listening to the podcast have no idea what they are, they have no idea what a hosting is, they don't know that the pricing might be different for different sized shirts so that basic kind of can I do it? Or I can't do it because I don't know what to do? I want a website, I bought a machine I can do the work but how do I get it online? That's one of the big things.

Mark V: And I am already still trying to perfect how to run a business and how to...

Mark S: Right.

Mark V: This is why, this is what I had thought of when you were saying all those things, is because all of that stuff that you said in regards to the pricing of the shirts and the different types of shirts that there can be and all of these variables and when you got an online store it's actually a tool for your business to run your business out of it.

Mark S: It can be.

Mark V: It can be if you do it right, so here somebody walks in to Colman and Company and they buy some ink, it goes through the online store.

Mark S: Even if they walk in.

Mark V: Even if you walk in.

Mark S: They are not writing us a cheque or a separate invoice or thinks like that.

Mark V: Yeah it goes through the online store, so they come in and our representative will log into the store through the computer, will ring it out, put in the credit card information, click okay and it's done. Marco I guess, just about anybody could do that with their online store even if they have a walk-in.

Marco P: Absolutely Marc, thanks for mentioning that because that was the other thing that you had mentioned earlier on, one of the fears that people have is "quite frankly I am just too busy running my business, how do I take on this new endeavor, how do I even begin to tackle this? I am so stretched already with the resources I have, how do I do this?" And thank you for saying that because quite frankly we understand that, most people that are in business they are way too busy but, here is the problem with being busy, they are productive busy, most of the methods that we have found that are the decorators today use are the paper orders forums, the E-mailing back and forth, the clip-boards, the paperwork, all that is... it's a thief of your time, it is a robber of your time and quite frankly it is unproductive, it is costly and it's air-prone. So one of the things that we tackle is we're not just an online solution, we certainly are that but one of things that we tackle and I think we tackle it phenomenally is that we have a solution built into all of our systems called business hub and I'd love to talk to anybody that's interested in business hub it really is a central focal point of DecoNetwork if you think about it. Now people come to us because of the design, people come to us because of the website, that's kind of the sizzle or sexy of it, but the reality of it is people don't realize how expensive it is to run a business, the order-taking, the E-mails going back and forth, the follow-up, the file cabinets that kind of thing.

Mark S: So, I just want to differentiate here, because at first we were talking about the opportunity of having an online store, of selling online, the markets you can go after, the size of the markets and the percentage of the market that is still up for grabs and how all that is good. Then we talk about some of the things that people might be afraid of doing that and now what we are understanding really is that it's not just getting an E-commerce platform; it is just getting an E-commerce platform if you are going through Etzy or Shopify or Woo-commerce or one of the off the shelf shopping carts but DecoNetwork has kind of a business system built in that will actually help run the rest of your business and not just online.

Marco P: Absolutely, and that's really the key component, lot of clients simply don't know that they are in-efficient, so DecoNetwork really is about offering a complete solution, front-end which we are going to give them the tools to do, but in order for you to be really successful in the front end is you have to invest your time, it's not different than when you start a retail shop right? You got to find the location, you got to scope it out, you got to put a bid on it, you got to go there and paint it, turn on the lights, how am I going to set it up, buy a blind so that you could put a showroom in the front, you got to move in, you got all this work to do and that's just to get the door open and once you open, you got to put some signs up, you got to hand some flyers, you got to let people know you are there, it is a really long process. The online store is in some respects faster but it also requires a process too, because you still got to setup your products, you still got to know whom you are going to sell, you got to know who your client base is; there is still some things that you have to do, and what we've done though is we've said "Okay we understand that these things have to be done, we're going to simplify and we've got a package for you that's a turnkey solution, it's got the images, it's got the products' it's got the shopping cart that is designed for it, it includes the whole scene and I don't have to look for the whole scene, it includes the payment gateway connection you just got to turn that on, it includes the shipping providers already on there, you just got to set-up an account with them, we've done a lot of that stuff but in addition to that what we've also done is say "okay look in order for you to be able to do that you're going to need to find some time to be able to do that and the only way to really make that happen is to free up some of your time in the way you do your business now and that's how business really takes effect and really helps people because what we've seen is the average user on DecoNetwork has a increase of about 60-70% productivity when they start using business hub or DecoNetwork to run their existing business, if they

start to use they start to use their existing through DecoNetwork there is going to be an increase in Productivity therefore you just bought more time by using DecoNetwork, so that you can actually start to build your online presence.

Mark S: So I got some more questions that people have written down here and you answered most of them. And one of them is how do I accept credit cards, so you pretty much got that taken care of.

Marco P: Sorry, Mark, if I may really quickly I am going to throw a couple of buzz words just so that people can kind of understand. There are two things, being able to accept credit cards that you have to have so that you can do this properly, you never-ever-ever accept a credit card through an E-mail or anything like that or through an online forum, it is not a good way to do that. So what you want to use is a Payment Gateway and a merchant account. A payment Gateway basically accepts a credit card and a Merchant account will then grab that transaction and put it into your bank, we work with people like Authorize.net and we have a partnership with Mula and if anybody is scared doesn't know where to start, we've got people that will connect you, we never actually handle any of the money, we don't do that it is all done through the gateway, we have people that we partner with.

Mark S: One of the other fear is that I don't want to take credit cards online because I am afraid that information is stolen and I know Colamn and Company get's that all the time.

Mark V: What do we get specifically?

Mark S: You get people that don't want to give you their, they will actually call and give you their Credit Card number because they don't want to type it online.

Mark V: Sure, actually this is something that I have written down and I've quite been itching to say this for many episodes. But the credit card thing is so awesome when you got an online store. Okay, first of all you're always going to have some people that have extreme levels of caution.

Mark S: They are paranoid, just say it, they are paranoid.

Mark V: All of your credit card information is online always, that's how credit cards are processed through the internet, even if you are at a store, it scans and it follows tubes and pipes all over the world and it goes somewhere and the credit card company gives the thumbs up.

Mark S: They are not mailing that credit card slip into corporate.

Mark V: Exactly it's always going to be on internet, so if anyone is listening and you ever worry about that, it's already gone to the internet.

Mark S: You need to let that go.

Mark V: It always is. But when you are trying to accept, when you want to be able to accept credit cards, you got to do it one way or another, many of our customers they had somebody call them or they Google searched and they got a little cheap box that sits next to their register or in their office where you type in the code and you scan it and you ask in if you want a receipt because that paper is expensive and you don't want to have to print a second copy for them all of these wonderful things. Pena bought an online store and you set-up merchant service and gateway and it's secure and all that credit card information also now leaves your hands as a business owner, so as far Colman and Company goes and most online businesses we are not holding the risk anymore. The credit card is going through that merchant service company, they are the ones that are secure, they are the ones, it's all built into websites now that the risk is on those credit card companies, so somebody is not going to come into our site or any site like a DecoNetwork site or anything like that and have to worry about their credit card information not being secure from your business.

Mark S: Right.

Mark V: Because it is secured through a third party agency that does that.

Mark S: Okay.

Mark V: I hope I made sense.

Mark S: It did to me, how about you Marco?

Marco P: I loved it, very good explanation.

Mark S: So that was one of the fears and we've already talked about things like accepting credit cards and whether or not you can do it, do we touch on how to manage your inventory? Because that is always a big thing for new apparel decorators is how do I get those pictures of T-shirts or hoodies and things like that I want to sell online and how do I keep track of that image.

Marco P: Great question and that is actually believe it or not, inventory is one of the biggest reasons. I did a top ten reasons why websites fail research paper and one of the reasons was poor; actually two of them, one was poor imaging on websites, consumers didn't take to that well, if they cannot see what they are buying in a clear image, they won't buy it. The other one was poor inventory management. So you are touching on two different things there, first thing is imagery, imagery is really-really important, you want a good quality image and good descriptions and basically you want to give that consumer or that coach or that Tee mom or the restaurant owner, whoever is on your website that is going to purchase, you want to give them the assurance is what they are purchasing is what they believe they are purchasing. They don't want to get it and then open the box up all excited -then all of a sudden they are discouraged because "that's not what I thought I would get."

Mark V: Right.

Marco P: So, imagery is very-very important, what we've done is we've partnered with companies like SanMar, SNS, Americana, Bodek and Rhodes we've got a ton of all the real major suppliers out there and so we've done is we've gotten their catalogs, which right there alone saved anybody looking at and checking their website, right there we've saved you tens of hours.

Mark S: Yeah, not only that but when you are standing in front of a customer with a catalog and leafing through the pages trying to find a shirt.

Marco P: What a waste of time, what a waste of time.

Mark S: Or you can upload it on the website.

Mark V: Yeah and the other one is, is that your customer stops you "oh wait! that one!" and that's the brand you don't like to use because it's scorching or you don't like to use because it doesn't work with your type of decorating. You can actually make a catalog that is yours.

Marco P: Absolutely.

Mark V: And not the things that you don't want them to buy or ask about.

Marco P: Here is the thing Marc with that, the reality is, the shirts don't really sell the product, it's the media on the shirt that sells the product, it's the logo for the baseball team, it's the youth group's camping trip imagery, whatever that is right? The baseball team logo, that's what is going to sell the shirt, people don't care if it's a 6.2 VS a 6.8 ounce shirt, they really don't.

Mark S: They don't know.

Marco P: They don't know and they don't care, they are trusting you are the expert and you are the one that knows what is the best thing for them to put it on and that's ultimately what's happening. So what you said is exactly right, so what we do is we actually partner up with these companies, we get their catalogs and we don't just get their catalogs and put it on DecoNetwork though, we actually have a team here in Los Angeles, it's called our Catalog team, what they do is they literally go through every single products, we remove backgrounds we clean up the imagery and sometimes we remove the tags just so it is nice and clean. We make sure that everything is properly formatted, why do we go through all that, the expenses is ridiculous actually if you think about it, the reason we go through that is because we want the consumer when they are on your side to have the best possible buying experience, so if a shirt when they go from yellow to green to see the difference, it's hopping around because the images were taken at an different angle, that throws our eyes off and it gives them a bad experience, we painstakingly go through every single product and we make sure that the images look good and the descriptions are well laid out, formatted properly and we are trying to give them as much information as possible.

The other thing that we do is a kind of proprietary technology that we created, we built an algorithm with each product, and we said "okay well, look in DTG you can work with certain types of shirts, but there is

other shirts which are really not ideal, same thing with screen printing and same thing with embroidery and you don't really want to embroider on typically on a fine line shirts that have lines going across right? So what we've done is we created this algorithm that when you sign up for DecoNetwork it'll ask you what do you do? What kind of decoration types do you offer and as you select certain decoration types it automatically selects and deselects the products that are built around our algorithm, which is really intelligent. What we believe you should offer and you shouldn't offer and you can overwrite that whenever you want but the beauty is more than likely you won't be taking an order for something that you can't fulfill, assured that ink is going to run on, it's not going to hold the ink because it was not designed for that type of decorations. So we built some algorithms in there which if you are looking at starting a business, you are going to start from scratch, you're going to pay a developer to do that, he is not going to want to do that.

Mark S: No, honestly and that will save you literally a crap load of money because you're going to print once on a wrong... Here's what's going to happen, you're going to get a Viper2 because that is the best Direct to Garment Printer on the planet.

Marco P: Yup.

Mark S: And you are going to buy it from ColDesi because we're awesome and you can't get it anywhere else and then you are going to let your customer pick the shirt out of a catalog that they want to print on and it's not going to be right for DTG and there are reasons for that, but whatever they are it's not going to be right, you're going to print 25 shirts and your customer is going to put them through the wash and the design is going to look like junk afterwards. It is going to cost you the ink the time, the customer, the money for the shirt and the money to replace the order.

Mark V: As you sell online with the way that I am gathering for as I am sitting here and I listen to a lot of good stuff that Marco said there at that point I think just really hit something on me it's when you start selling online coz that's what we came here to talk about it starts bringing all of these things together and I am going to think of it like working out, so somebody says that they what I want to do? "I want to lose weight", what I want to do "I want to grow my business". So what is one way I could lose weight? "I could start running, right?" You start running and you improve your muscle structure and you improve your metabolism and you sleep better and all of these things start happening in your body altogether because you were working on one part of it, when you start selling online and you start offering that all of a sudden all of these other things start to automatically get better.

Mark S: Get better.

Mark V: So now you're only offering the right shirts, when you were guessing before, now you are offering credit card securely, now you've got an easy place when somebody wants to buy something even if you are doing it yourself, checking it out and getting a receipt automatically E-mailed.

Mark S: You know what that means? That I have to start working now, I'd rather just get an E-commerce site, if that can help me, Marco if I start with DecoNetwork will that help me?

(Everyone laughing)

Mark S: He is trying to figure out a way to say "Yes"

Marco P: Because you are so busy taking orders you don't have time to eat junk food.

Mark S: Oh, there you go! I like that, I like that.

Mark V: You have some time to do that exercise, and I want to add something to as we start getting closer to the end here because there is a lot of overwhelming amount of information in this podcast and a lot of it is a complicated way of explaining somethings because some of these things are complicated in themselves, but you are not doing it, you are not creating the security for the credit card, someone's done it but there is a solution for it and there is a tons of ways to do that and what shirt you print on can be complicated but there is solutions to simplify that but all of this is a way of simplifying it and making it easy but start small, okay, and this is what I think is one of the biggest problems that just all small business owners run into Apparel Decorators are subject to a lot and then online stores a lot too. I know you might have 45 great shirts or have ideas, let's just say all of them are great. 45 products takes a long time to think about and put together, no matter what system it is because you just have to think about them all, you got to describe them right, you got to price them right, you have to think about your sizes and from what I am understanding Marco, your software makes that easier but there is still work to it, so what happens is you got 45 and you get 30 into doing some of it and there is so much more work that you have to do, just all of the things together, all of the thought, just the thought and then you get overwhelmed and you stop.

Mark S: Start with 10.

Mark V: Yes, start with 10, learn the system, start actually trying to sell some of those 10, whatever it might be and then you grow that and add it up, so you don't have to be a big multi million dollar website tomorrow.

Mark S: Well, you know here is why people, one reason why people do that and it's kind of the money fear, because the traditional way for going out and getting a website done is to hire somebody, so your two choices are to hire somebody to do it or to get your nephew to do it or the guy down the street that does websites sometimes or your brother in law and something like that. So the thing is that if you hire somebody to do it, the fear is that you're going to spend 5000 dollars and it not be done.

Mark V: Yeah.

Mark S: You're going to spend 5000 dollars and not like it or something like that. I am going let Marco talk about money in just a second because that's not the way DecoNetwork works. And the other fear or something that you should be afraid of that maybe you are not is you are going to get your cousin or brother in law or the guy at bar to do your website for you and you know them and you like them so even if it is terrible you'll be stuck with it. So, maybe cheap but it is terrible but you are not going to get a different one or a new one because you don't want to say anything.

Mark V: Yeah, and I would also even say this: if you say you are partially through a website or you've started one that's not quite finished because you got trapped into that going too big – too soon type of thing, go in there and delete a bunch of stuff out and start it over and fix it, maybe if you have already invested 3000 dollars in the website and it's not done and hopefully you're seeing some benefits of selling online. Get back in there and simplify it or if it's been long enough, if it's been three years since you spent that three grand.

Mark S: Do it again.

Mark V: Do it again, but get in there and start small if you can, yes if you've got a ton of time and money and resources and employees and all these things then go big. Why not? But if it is you and you are trying to get up and running or you and your husband are business partners or whatever it might be. Get in there and get going, start small let it grow, learn a little bit and then honestly in a year you'll be a pro.

Mark S: You'll be a pro.

Mark V: You'll be because none of it is that hard unless you are talking about programming, but none of this is programming.

Mark S: Hey, Marco let's talk about a couple of things for a second, first of all I'd like you to talk about the money and how you pay for DecoNetworks and then I'd like you to talk about designs and things like that, services or templates and stuff that might be available.

Marco P: Yeah, absolutely so, what you said is exactly right, you've got all those options if you want to start something like this and it can get expensive really quickly, the problem with that is that: Start on that project and it basically becomes some kind of a money pit with no end as you start thinking "well, it'd be great if it did this" sure no problem, another 4000, another 5000. With DecoNetwork you do get the front end, you get the website, you get online design, you get the products, you get the web hosting and you also get a CMS system which helps you manage that. CMS systems is a content management systems which you need for a website, you need to be able to manage the content on it, you get that with DecoNetwork built into system, so normally that can go anywhere from couple of thousands to as high as 20,000 and that's included in DecoNetwork, you get all your production management, you get your customer management, so customer calls you up and six months from now says "hey, the order we did six months ago, we need to do some more" Great! normally you have to go to a file cabinet and find that, it comes in DecoNetwork, it's called a business hub, the ability to quote an order comes in DecoNetwork, in fact that maybe we can do something in different podcasts is the ability to do affiliate stores for fundraising, we have that built into DecoNetwork. So the nice thing about DecoNetwork is that right now it probably sounds very expensive, but if you go to ColDesi.DecoNetwork.com that's coldesi.deconetwork.com, you go to the pricing after sign up; you'll actually find out that it is really-really affordable. Some of the things with DecoNetwork is that we don't have an activation fee, we don't charge you just to do business with us. We feel like our products should stand on their own, there are no locking contracts, you are not going to sign up for a 10 year contract with us, our contract is just month to month, we don't charge any transaction fees. Our business+ plan starts at 89 dollars a month and are our most popular plan "stores" is only 199dollars a month and with stores+ plan at only a 199 dollars a month, you get 5 users and you get all the things that I talked about including the ability to customize your website

and templates for you website and that kind of things, but the really exciting part and maybe the Mark(s) will invite me again to discuss this but with that 199 dollars a month, you get a 100 websites that you can use for all those businesses that we talked about earlier, the ping pong sites.

Mark S: Separate Niche Market sites that you can start.

Mark V: That's cool!

Marco P: Absolutely, customize specific to the market. So let's just say you use a 100 of those sites and you use all 100 of them it comes down to 2 dollars a month for a site, it includes hosting, it includes your imagery, it includes all the things that you need.

Mark S: I'll tell you Marco that second part is really advanced but what I like is that you are not talking about 3000 or 4000 or 6000 dollars to get started on your site and that's part of the fear that you are going to write that cheque and hate it. At 200 dollars a month you can do it and then decide you don't like it later and it is only costing you 200 dollars for every month that you use it.

Marco P: Absolutely.

Mark S: That's a huge plus.

Mark V: That's very cool and normally this podcast and always this podcast is never really about pitching a product or trying to get people to buy anything and it's about education; but the online thing is so important and as we discussed in podcast, you don't have to have it if you want to be successful.

Mark S: Right, absolutely not.

Mark V: Okay, so that's important but as we talked about with the working out analogy if you do it and if you have a good product and it's easy to use and you can actually get into it and you only benefit.

Mark S: There is no downside.

Mark V: You don't have to workout to survive; you can live without ever going to the gym.

Mark S: And I do, and I do.

Mark V: And you do. However it is like your business is the same way, there is all the things that we talked about on your podcast you can run, you can skip almost every podcast, skip one of the podcast and not do any of those things and still make money in your business.

Mark S: We'll be sad, we will be sad because you didn't watch them all.

Mark V: But it's like you could not go to any local events and have a successful business, you could only be online and have successful business, you could only do women's clothing and have a successful business and there is a million things that you can do and not do. However I think that having an online store only benefits you. And when I started seeing and when I learned about what DecoNetwork stuff did, I was just like "Man, this is frickin cool for people in our industry".

Mark S: Really.

Mark V: And that's why I am like yeah, I want to talk about it because it is cool and it is not like 3-5-20 thousand dollar commitment which is why sometimes I talk to somebody and they are like, yeah I looked at a website 5 grand, maybe in 2020.

Mark S: I agree with everything that you said which is odd. It's very odd actually.

Mark V: It's I am on all this medicine, I am on this cold med.

Mark S: So, I know we've been yammering on here for a while, we also had done some online webinars and slideshows and things like that with Marco and DecoNetworks. So if you search, go to Google or Bing and search for ColDesi Webinars, what'll happen is you'll get a special YouTube channel that we set-up that just has those webinar reportings. And you'll get to see things like "How to actually use the software" Somebody actually sets up the store Live, you'll see the business hub for doing inventory management and how you can use DecoNetwork if someone walks in the door? How you can take an order? How it helps you paint shirts? and we've done a bunch of them and for a good reason.

Mark V: And also if you are a Colman and Company customer we've got a little watch like button on the top of our page that goes to the YouTube channel and we have a webinar section, I will make sure that some of those Deco ones are in there too.

Mark S: Oh, so it is not like a watch to keep time with.

Mark V: No. It's actually it is a TV; it is an image of a TV which is outdated.

Marco P: Nice.

Mark V: Anyways, Mark is going to recommend maybe a couple of really good ones to drop on there, this way it's an our mix too, just because that's a resource stage and this is an important resource. Just atleast understand, you got to be knowledgeable, you got to atleast know, the knowledge is important.

Mark S: Marco, from DecoNetwork is here, is there is anything else that you would like to educate us on? Anything you'd like to tell us before we sign off here today on episode 20 by the way. It is CASPODCAST not old enough to drink yet!

Mark V: Okay, next week.

Mark S: But next week hopefully we'll be old enough to drink and then the podcast is going to change completely.

Marco P: Yes, I bet.

Mark S: Go ahead Marco.

Marco P: Just want to let everyone know that this is a understandably possibly for a lot of people a scary concept, I just want you to know that we are here to help, whether it is through DecoNetwork or it is through some of the webinars that we've done with the ColDesi which I really appreciate the opportunity to share that with you guys.

But we also have additional services if those people say "hey, I am just too busy" or "I want the website, but I want something really nice and custom but I really don't know how to do that"; Just want to let you know that we have services available for you, we have a DecoCoach team here in LA office, what they do is they will design the website for you, they will send you mock ups and they will talk with you, they will interview you and they will ask you, what do you want your site to look like and who is your target audience and based on that they'll send you a mockup and you'll approve it and they'll send the site. Anybody can get a custom Looking website that's unique to you and unique to your clients and creates a unique buying experience, something that you're really proud of and something that really represents your company well, professionally. For someone who goes through your website, looks at your business card and goes through your website and it looks like you are a huge business or a very professional business, we can help you with that, we got lots of different services that we can help you with, whether it is designing that perfect website or it is creating personal training hours with you and a technician just to record that and give you that recording so that you have that personal training session with them. We've got a lot of services and we're here to help and I just appreciate your time guys.

Mark S: Cool and go to ColDesi.DecoNetwork.com (coldesi.deconetwork.com) and hit start my store and see what happens. This has been episode 20 of the Custom Apparels Startups Podcasts; my name is Mark Stephenson from ColDesi.

Mark V: And I am Marc Vila we've been with Marco Pena here of DecoNetwork, thank you for coming and thanks everybody for listening.

Mark S: Yup, bye!