

5 Ways To Profit From Growing Your Personal Network



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Over the last five years, my Dad has watched me attend one conference after another. New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Costa Rica, Mexico, Chicago, and Philadelphia, just to name a few. I have spent thousands of dollars on travel, event tickets, and important dinners to meet with and learn from influential industry leaders. And no matter how excited I am about what I learned, or who I met, my Dad always asks me the same question: “How is that going to translate into cash?”

Every time he says it, I could *almost* shake him. How does he not get it? How does he not see the value of these relationships? Even though it seems obvious to me, I know my Dad is not alone in his thinking. Historically, the path to cash has been very linear. Each person or relationship is seen like a transaction, serving a very distinct and clear purpose. Today, however, we are living in a relationship economy.



Ted Rubin, an industry leader in social marketing strategy and brand evangelism, calls this currency “Return On Relationship” (ROR). “ROR is the value that is accrued by a person or brand due to nurturing a relationship, whereas ROI is simple dollars and cents. ROR is the value (both perceived and real) that will accrue over time through loyalty, recommendations and sharing.”

Growing and building a network of relationships is essential, which is why [Network Under 40's](#) founder, Darrah Brustein, has built a lifestyle and company out of connecting people.

I recently caught up with Darrah on this week's [podcast episode](#) where she shares how to turn connections into cash.

Darrah says, “I can track most things that have happened in my life — both personally and professionally — back to a relationship I've had with someone. Once I met a man at a networking event and he asked to interview me on his podcast about my [kids books](#). Several months later, he randomly wrote about Network Under 40 in Inc. Magazine which generated global interest that facilitated our expansion. You never know how you can help someone, as well as the power of their connections and influence.”

Darrah is on a mission to redefine the way people think about the word “networking.” In her opinion, “networking has become synonymous with selfishness, when at its root, I believe it's about selflessness.”

To thrive in this relationship economy you have to be willing to give more value upfront than you are trying to receive. That is why the best time to cultivate relationships is when you have nothing to take—only something to offer—so that when your time comes to ask, you don't appear self-serving. Some of the best business returns end up being the most random and you never know which connections will cash in at which time.