

Jillian Flodstrom ([00:08](#)):

One of the things that I loved about today's episode with Ray was that it was so refreshing to hear how he saw need, and he filled the need in his business. And what's cool about that is he's forcing us to think outside the box. And I know forcing is a big word, like it seems kind of aggressive, but it was so interesting. I found myself thinking, okay, even though I'm not in the physical therapy space, my business is completely different from that. There's so many things in the client journey that I can use. There's so many things with technology, with ai, with all this amazing stuff that we have access to with our smartphones. Any sort of technology that we use in our business, if we use that to think outside the box, to think about what our clients are going through, how they're interacting with our business from their perspective. Fascinating stuff. If you are in that space and you are looking for ways to improve your business from a technology standpoint, if you wanna find out more about the client journey and how to map that out, make sure that you check out Ray's episode because there are so many good things in it.

Jillian Flodstrom ([01:27](#)):

Today's guest has been in the PT business for 15 years and founded two medical technology innovations that changed the way that physical therapy practices operate. He designed automation software to help companies work more efficiently, secure more repeat clients, provide an all-in-one clinical service and more. His technology is like a business partner that does the bulk of the tasks for you, takes care of your clients, and pays attention to their needs. With sheer dedication, not only will you have more time for personal things that equally matter, but you'll also save time for yourself and your customers without the headaches, I mean, who doesn't need less headaches, please welcome Ray to the show. How are you?

Ray Benarardinelli ([02:12](#)):

Good. It sounds like we're already done. I'm just gonna wrap it up here. I don't thank everybody for coming. <Laugh>, that intro was, was good enough that anything I say is gonna be downhill from there. <Laugh>?

Jillian Flodstrom ([02:22](#)):

No. I, I'm excited to talk to you today because I think that this is one of the things that all of us as business owners struggled. Like we know that we need technology in our business. It can be so frustrating when it doesn't work. But I guess the theme of that would be never give up because you can totally figure it out. But tell us how you got created, you know, or started creating software programs to improve business operations.

Ray Benarardinelli ([02:49](#)):

Pain <laugh>, pain <laugh>. You know, I had my own physical therapy private practice for 15 years. It was a lot of pain a lot of pain, a lot of searching for the answer and not finding it, and then just deciding, Hey, maybe I'm the one who's supposed to start doing some of this. I'm, maybe I'm supposed to start fixing the issues that everybody's having right now. So that's, that's kind of how it started. It was just the living in the pain, losing countless hours with my family, really like drove me. It was really a selfish endeavor to start. And then when I started to do it and I started to pick my head up and look around, I saw everybody else was having the same problem as me. So then it kinda shifted to solving the customer problem.

Jillian Flodstrom ([03:37](#)):

I love that because you took something that was frustrating to you and you're like, okay, I went out to the open market, I can't find it, I need it. So you created it and now you're sharing it with others. I mean,

that's a huge lesson in opportunity in inefficiency and ways to build stronger relationships with other businesses and also give them back time with their families too. So what's the best way for us to look for in, for inefficiencies and stronger relationships in our business?

Ray Benarardinelli ([04:12](#)):

Honestly, it's really, it's mapping the process, like writing the process out. What, what does it look like for your customer? Like, try to see things through their eyes. What does it look like to do business with you? What's their first interaction? What happens after that? Where does that information go? What do you do with that information? You know how does that information flow to the next person that might need it? You know, how is this improving the, that, in our case, the patient? How is it improving that patient's life cycle with your business? What are you doing with information you have after they've purchased and after they're done making their purchases? What do you do with that information? You know, by and large, I was finding that I was doing nothing with it. Like every opportunity I had to set a expectation within my customer, I wasn't taking it. You know, we were letting the customer set their own expectation and then when their expectation wasn't met, we wondered why they went away.

Jillian Flodstrom ([05:12](#)):

I love that, like, looking at it from the client journey, from their perspective, putting on their shoes and saying, okay, what does this look like from their side? Because I think that happens to all of us. We're so busy, like creating things and, you know, giving people this service that we've created, but we rarely look at it from their perspective. So how, what's the best way to do that? Because like, the thing that popped into my mind was like, mind mapping software of like how to create that journey. Like how did you do that? Did you just do it on the back of a napkin? What did it look like for you?

Ray Benarardinelli ([05:47](#)):

Oh, no. Well, well first, well first I love the en the this analogy and it, it's kind of what you're talking about. You know, like they say, it's like trying to read a paper that's two inches from your face, right? When trying to run your own business. But it's not, it's like trying to read a paper two inches from your face while the back of the book is closed on your head and shutting off all the light and you can't see it. Like you have to be able to step back. So, so what I did is I started working with some coaching stuff. Started out, to be perfectly honest, I started out free, just started listening to people's stuff, people talking, you know read some books about you know, customer experience, Disney, those sorts of things. Found a guy in the physical therapy space that was doing it great and started collaborating with him.

Ray Benarardinelli ([06:34](#)):

And then I started to map it like, it's gotta be written down. If it's not written down, you're not, you're not really doing anything. You're pretending like you're, you're solving the problem, but until you're writing it out and you have like a clear flow of each and every touchpoint you don't really understand it. And you've gotta understand where you have your churn, like where your customers are churning, where, where is that? You have to understand where that is. You cannot fix it if you don't know where the problem is. So really start, just start writing it down. Start writing down each interaction that they have with you and then start to live in that space, right? So the space in between when the customer reaches out to you and what you say to the customers where success happens, it's in that space before you respond. And if you start looking at that space between that first contact and that first interaction with you, that's where all the success and all the ability to create success lies. Because the response is

what creates the relationship. The relationship is what creates the customer and so on and so on and so on.

Jillian Flodstrom ([07:50](#)):

Once we've determined what that process looks like, like what the client journey is for our clients in our business, what are areas that technology could either help us improve or support making that journey that much better for our clients?

Ray Benarardinelli ([08:07](#)):

Well, technology's sort of broken to be perfectly honest. There is a, and, and this is one of the major things that we went about solving in the physical therapy realm. There's a major disconnect, right? So we use like, you know, A C R M or you know, whatever you are using to contact with your customer, you know, there's so many products out there, go high level, all these products, right? They don't create a real relationship with a customer. It's all I say. I'll say BS because I, I wanted to say the the word, but it's all BS and they know it and, and you know it, right? And then when you have an interaction with them, you have no idea what they got. You have no idea the, the emails, the text. Did you, oh, did they get a 20% off you?

Ray Benarardinelli ([08:57](#)):

You have no idea. You have no idea. So what has to happen is you have to find a way to join that a that online experience with the real live in-person experience. Like you have to find a way to make this journey online support the interaction that, that the physical person is having with the customer. Because that changes everything because now it, it makes it a real thing to the customer. So, you know, if you sent them a 20 off, 20% off coupon and, and you found a way that you know that, right? You know, that you, you get an app, you have the app on their phone, they're in, you can see, you know, they, their location services show they're with you now you can see everything they've done. You can see every interaction they've had with your business online. Somebody can look at that and now you can have a conversation with that person. You know, could you imagine if you were going to buy a car and they knew like you looked at this car, this is what you looked at, this is the color you looked at, this is the package you looked at and, and they came up to you and, and started talking to you about it. You know, if you go, went the whole way through the build, if you didn't go through the, through the build, it totally changes everything and they can tailor what they're doing to you and your expectation and what you're looking for.

Jillian Flodstrom ([10:20](#)):

That's so cool. And it's something that should be obvious, but I don't think, right, I mean, I know that in our business we don't look at it like that, but we should because you're right. I mean, let's talk about how you did that in your business because I think it's important to give examples because even as we're talking and like, oh my gosh, there are things that I could be doing so much better and like the wheels are turning. So give me some examples of what you did in your business to like, make that happen.

Ray Benarardinelli ([10:47](#)):

So, so one of the most basic things that we did was just an interaction. So like when people schedule with us, you know, or where physical therapist, they, they schedule with us on the schedule. It tells you everything that the customer got. So you can look at, they, they got this email, you can review the copy of the email if you want. There. They got this text. We do, I don't know if you're familiar with a voice

drop, like your phone doesn't ring and you have a missed call on voicemail. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>, mm-hmm <affirmative>. So we do those, but they're all specifically from their therapist, not from the business, from the person that they're having the interaction and the relationship with, right? That person can see everything that went between the last two times they saw one another. So now they walk in and they say, Hey, did you get my email?

Ray Benarardinelli ([11:30](#)):

And now guess what happens to your email? Open rates, they triple just with one question because you're engaging with them. We started using mining out the goals for the patient, like the real reason that they're coming to physical therapy. And we started, we created the software to automatically put those into the email so the email looks like somebody actually typed it out, right? So it'll be talking about their back and that they want to get back to playing with their grandchildren. So we've kinda really made it a personal experience. And then that in that experience is reinforced by the human being when they walk into the room with them and say, Hey, did you get my email? Oh no, I didn't get a chance. Oh, well I sent you an email about this. Make sure you check my emails cuz I send you some important stuff.

Ray Benarardinelli ([12:17](#)):

You'll also get some texts from me and you know, I'll, I'll try and give you a call every now and again. And the person's kind of blown away because nobody does that in medi, you know, in medicine anymore. There's, you know, it's not like people go out of their way to reach out to you when they're done with work. So it really blows people away and cre creates a different experience. And we found that, like for us, cancellation, no-shows are a big thing. We found that it almost eliminated the problem because now we're creating a relationship with this person. Now they look at you in totally a different light because you are gaining that information from them. You're creating that relationship with them. And then we do some other things like use net promoter score to monitor where they are so that the therapist then knows if this person loves you and they wanna refer other people to you or if they're about to go away. So, you know, it, there's just a lot of insights into what's going on in the mind of the customer. A lot of reinforcement between the online and online and offline interaction so that you're creating an experience for them.

Jillian Flodstrom ([13:26](#)):

I love the fact too that it's like, it's amazing from a client perspective because I mean, who wouldn't wanna be treated like that? You're actually forming a relationship. Someone cares about your wellbeing. Obviously in medicine that is like something that's so rare these days, but also from like an employee perspective, like how empowering that must be for your staff that feels like, okay, I've got this many people that I need to see today, but I feel confident knowing that all those details are there. I don't have to store that stuff in my brain. It's all in the system. I mean, talk about that from an employee's perspective too.

Ray Benarardinelli ([14:03](#)):

Yeah. Well the, there's a number of things that get the employee so as, as like there, there's two employees here really the owner and the person who's running that marketing and you know, and or the person who's running that marketing and the, the person who is meeting with the person face-to-face. There's another other whole other load of problems that therapists have that we, that we solved. Like their documentation takes forever and other softwares with us, it's almost instantaneous. Cause AI does it for them. But the employee, like, it's the same thing really. It's a, you're focusing in on the person to

say, okay, what are your problems? Where are they and how can we help them? How can we help to serve you? Ultimately, the same way that you're doing it with a, with a customer is the same thing that happens with the employee.

Ray Benarardinelli ([14:58](#)):

So yeah, employee retention goes through the roof naturally because now we're trying to solve their problems because that's all anybody's looking for. We're all just the people, bunch of people running around this little, little blue thing going around the sun trying to solve the problems that we have on a day-to-day basis. And if we feel like someone is doing that for us and trying to help us do that, there's no level of devotion that we will have to them that doesn't absolutely astound the other person because yeah, I, I mean we're just all a bunch of people trying to solve problems and if you can solve their problems, it really helps. And the the problem then becomes is a, we we run into a one-to-one problem, right? Everybody wants something to be one-to-one, but really you need to be one to many because you only have two hands.

Ray Benarardinelli ([15:53](#)):

You can only serve so many people with your two hands, you know, or, or your, your voice. But now what we're doing, we're, right now we're trying to do one to many. We're trying to use this podcast to reach out a large number of people, right? We're trying to do the same thing with software. We're trying to create that one to one relationship, but by doing it on the software end for the provider, for the business, and for the employee as a one to many. So now when they're creating one piece of content, like, you know, a follow up call to see how somebody's doing after their first visit, right? I'd love to do that for every single one of my patients. I don't have time, right? So automated the process now, every single patient gets a personalized phone call from me, that voicemail from me checking in and seeing how they're doing every single time.

Jillian Flodstrom ([16:49](#)):

So, cool. Okay. What, I mean, all this stuff is incredible. What are some other like, areas in operating our business that could, technology could really help us improve? I love all these ideas. I'm like a sponge. I'm like, give me more, I need more ideas.

Ray Benarardinelli ([17:05](#)):

So, well, they're, well, one thing that I, one of my, there's a company called Sheets, I don't know if you've ever heard of them. They're a convene store chain down the east coast. They're kind of moving, actually, I think they're all the way down to Florida now, all the way up the east coast and Ohio, Kentucky, they're, they're getting pretty big. So they, so one of their sea level people was a patient of mine and you know, we were having pretty much this conversation, to be perfectly honest. We're sitting there talking about technology and how it can be used and how they're not using it to the, to the fullest extent. I'm like, nobody's using it to, to the fullest extent. And and she said to me, she said, I think we're doing a pretty good job. And I said, no, no, you're not.

Ray Benarardinelli ([17:50](#)):

I said, I just pulled into your place this morning, you know, it's a convenience store. So I was filling up with gas. I didn't go into your store. I have my phone in my pocket with your app on it, and you track what I eat on there, you know what I order, what I buy because I get, you know, discounts on it and I scan my thing every time to get these discounts. I said, and I was standing there at your pump for, for two,

three minutes beat from your front door and you didn't make me an offer. You know, like, you know where I am. I have GPS on my phone, you know that I'm in your parking lot, you know, I'm pumping gas, your app. I gave you permissions to track me, you know, make me an offer.

Jillian Flodstrom ([18:31](#)):

Maybe I'm thirsty,

Ray Benarardinelli ([18:32](#)):

<Laugh>. Yeah. Or, or, or I, I eat that. I used to, this is a while ago, I used to eat their sausage, egg and cheese muffins. I used to love the things, right? So I'm sitting in there in the morning, you know, you know, I've bought a hundred of these things, Hey, 20% off a shm muffin today, you know, and I'll walk into the building and I'll give you my money.

Jillian Flodstrom ([18:53](#)):

That's motivating.

Ray Benarardinelli ([18:55](#)):

Right? Right. But, but it's, you don't take the opportunities. We don't, we don't make people offers when, when they're ready, like when they're ready to buy, and we don't use the tech to track when they're ready to buy. That's just one example off the top of my head. But each naturally, each business is different, but you know, moving them through and knowing where they're at with your business and acting on that information is imperative.

Jillian Flodstrom ([19:27](#)):

Absolutely. That, I mean, that is such good advice. There's so many things that I think that we as business owners don't think about because we're in the day-to-day. Where can people connect with you? Like, what's your favorite social media? Like, where can people connect with you and be like, I need to raise my hand. This is me. Like where I need help Thinking through this, where can people find you to talk to you more about this?

Ray Benarardinelli ([19:50](#)):

I'm, I'm old. Let me just preface this. I'm old. So I'm on Facebook. I try to be on Instagram. I'm not real good at it. <Laugh> I'm not real good at posting or anything like that. So I'm primarily on Facebook. You can find me under Ray Elli my name, which is on the screen. And I have a group, but unless you're really in the therapy space, it's not really pertinent to you called the Physical Therapy Business Builders Group. So it's focused on the specific problems within physical therapy and how to overcome those physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, that, that, that business niche.

Jillian Flodstrom ([20:31](#)):

Absolutely. Well, I think the things that we talked about can really help us to start thinking even if we're not in the PT space, it can start to get us thinking about things in a different way. Like you talked about like, there's so many different things that we could be doing as business owners, we just don't really think of because one, we don't take the time to do it. So carving out time is important, but also just being able to like think about like, what are the cool things that I wish, like you were talking about with the muffin? Like what are some cool things that we could potentially be doing at, you know, doing

better? Does that technology exist? If it doesn't, we could make it. But also too, one question that I always ask all of my guests is, what's one piece of advice that you would give to a small business owner?

Ray Benarardinelli ([21:19](#)):

Keep pushing, keep pushing. Find a, find a tribe. Find people that are going to lift you up and motivate you and keep pushing because that, that we all have downtimes in business. You know, it, it's it, the journey of an entrepreneur really is that rollercoaster ride. And you have those valleys. So if you have a tribe, they're gonna pull you through. They're gonna tell you, Hey, keep going. You know, a good tribe of people, they're gonna tell you, Hey, keep going. You got this. So find a tribe, get with them, and don't give up. Just keep pushing. The, the easiest and most sensible thing in the world to do is to give up, but don't do it <laugh>. You'll regret it for the rest of your life if you do <laugh>

Jillian Flodstrom ([22:04](#)):

Such good advice in so many areas of life, not just business. Just to never give up. Oh, so good. Thank you so much for being here with us today to talk about all things technology is so amazing. I'll be sure to link your Facebook inside the show notes in case people are in the physical therapy space and are like, I need to do some things differently. This is the perfect person that I need to talk to. So thanks again for being here.

Ray Benarardinelli ([22:29](#)):

All right, well thank you so much for having me. I've enjoyed it.