

Small But Mighty Agency Podcast

Episode 117: 3 Opportunities Agency Owners Can't Ignore in 2025

Speakers: Audrey Joy Kwan

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What trends will shape the agency landscape in 2025?

As we step into 2025, it's clear the agency world isn't just keeping pace—it's transforming rapidly. From shifting client expectations to the ongoing evolution of technology, staying ahead has never been more important—or more challenging.

In this episode, we're diving into three key trends that are set to define the agency landscape in 2025. But we're not stopping there—along with each trend, I'm unpacking the opportunities they bring so you can not only adapt but thrive in the year ahead.

So, whether you're gearing up for growth or planning how to navigate uncertainty, this episode will help you make smarter moves. Grab your coffee, get comfortable, and let's tackle these trends together!

Audrey Joy Kwan:

Welcome to the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. If you want to grow an agency to seven figures and beyond without working more hours in your business, you're in the right place. I'm your host, Audrey Joy Kwan. I know what it takes to build an agency, including supporting an agency owner in selling and exiting. I also have a Masters degree in Communications specializing in Organizational development. My team and I have worked behind the scenes of multiple seven figure agencies and have coached and consulted with over 150 agency owners. All this to say when you join us on the

Small But Mighty Agency Podcast, you get real world experience and practical tips to help you work less, earn more, and lead with integrity. So let's go.

Audrey Joy Kwan:

Hey friends, welcome back to the *Small But Mighty Agency Podcast*! I'm so glad you're here today because we're talking about something that's been on my radar: the biggest opportunities for agency owners in 2025.

I've been sitting in a few virtual rooms with business owners reflecting on what worked—and what didn't—in 2024.

As they shared their stories, trends emerged and these same trends impact agency owners too.

The agency world is shifting —we're seeing rapid changes fueled by things like AI and automation, but at the same time, there's a huge drive toward authentic, human-centered connection.

Here's the thing: while these changes might feel overwhelming, they also bring incredible opportunities to grow your agency in smart, sustainable ways. Today, we're diving into how to navigate these shifts—from building trust in a misinformation-heavy market to standing out in a crowded space. It's all about turning challenges into opportunities.

So, let's get started!

Let's start with the buzzword on everyone's mind: AI. It's no secret that AI tools are transforming workflows for agencies—streamlining content creation, client communication, and operations. But here's the twist: as AI grows, so does the human desire for genuine connection.

We're seeing a renaissance of “older” connection methods. Clients and audiences crave authenticity, and this is reflected in the resurgence of personal touches. In-person events, handwritten notes, and communities are making a comeback because they evoke emotion and trust.

So, what does this mean for you as an agency owner? It's all about bringing back the personal, human touch in ways that genuinely resonate. Think about strategies that focus on building real relationships—both one-on-one and in communities. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- This is the year to double down on relationships. Join communities that align with your agency's values and focus on building genuine connections. Think about where your ideal clients and collaborators are already spending time—whether it's industry-specific groups, online forums, or even local meetups. These spaces are golden opportunities to share ideas, contribute value, and form partnerships that not only align with your mission but also position your agency as a trusted resource. Investing in these relationships now will pay dividends in the long run.
- How about this—sending a handwritten thank-you card to your clients? It's such a small gesture, but it can mean so much. In a world where everything is digital, getting something personal in the mail really stands out and makes people feel special. Another idea? Create personalized care packages for your clients. It doesn't have to be extravagant—maybe a book you know they'll love or a small token that reflects their interests. It's all about showing that you see them as individuals.
- You can also make them feel valued by offering exclusive perks, like early access to your events or content that feels tailor-made for them. And don't underestimate the power of a regular check-in. Just asking about their goals or challenges can go a long way in showing you care and are invested in their success.
- This is the year to Create small, meaningful experiences like a workshop or roundtable specifically designed for your ideal clients and current clients. These gatherings provide a unique space for idea-sharing, collaboration, and relationship-building. They don't have to be grand—a simple, focused session where clients feel heard and engaged can make a lasting impression. Use these opportunities to showcase your expertise while having authentic interactions that deepen trust and loyalty.

Now, while AI is making everything faster and more efficient, it also reminds us of something important: trust. In this evolving market, where automation is everywhere, trust has become a crucial differentiator. Clients aren't just looking for results—they're looking for relationships they can count on, which is the perfect lead-in to our next trend

With so much information bombarding us every day, it's no wonder people are more skeptical than ever. Think about it—customers are constantly second-guessing claims, scrutinizing reviews, and questioning brand messaging. It's what we're calling the Misinformation Economy. And here's the thing: while this environment makes it harder to gain trust, it also creates an incredible opportunity. For agencies, this is a chance to stand out by becoming that trusted partner clients and collaborators can rely on. When you focus on authenticity and align with credible connections, you bridge that trust gap in a way that sets you apart from the noise.

The biggest opportunity? Building trust through strategic connections and partnerships. Trust isn't earned overnight—it's built when your name comes up in the right circles and is backed by credible referrals or aligned collaborations. Think about it: when someone hears about you from a source they already trust, it starts to break down skepticism. That introduction carries more weight than any marketing message ever could, setting the stage for deeper, more meaningful relationships.

Here's how you can take action:

- Let's talk about building partnerships that align with your values. If your agency is all about sustainability, for example, why not team up with eco-conscious brands or agencies that share that mission? These kinds of partnerships don't just amplify your message—they show your clients that you practice what you preach. Imagine co-hosting a panel on sustainable marketing or working together on a joint campaign that highlights your shared goals.
- These collaborations don't just help you stand out—they create trust. When clients see consistency between what you say and what you actually do, it reinforces their belief in your authenticity. Long-term partnerships like this not only give you opportunities to connect with like-minded clients but also position your agency as a trusted, values-driven resource.

Trust doesn't just happen—it's built through consistency and showing up where it matters most. In today's crowded market, it's not about making your message louder, it's about making your message more meaningful. That means doubling down on what sets you apart, whether it's your niche, your values, or your partnerships. And that's exactly what we'll explore next, the trend that will create more noise and how to turn it into an opportunity.

It's no secret—the agency space is more crowded than ever. The rise of fractional marketers, directors, and operations leads has added a fresh wave of competition. These professionals, are often experts in their fields, have stepped into the gaps left by mergers and downsizing over the past year. And this trend isn't slowing down—we're likely to see even more fractional providers entering the market in 2025, offering niche expertise and flexible solutions that challenge traditional agency models.

Here's the good news: one of the biggest opportunities lies in finding and owning your niche. When your agency focuses on a specific industry, solves targeted problems, or offers specialized services, you create a clear, undeniable edge. It's like waving a flag that says, "This is what we do best," making it easy for clients to recognize your unique value and trust your expertise. Niching isn't about narrowing your options—it's about amplifying your impact in the areas where you can shine the brightest.

Let's talk about another big opportunity—offering Fractional Chief Marketing Officer services. This is something more and more businesses are looking for, especially those that need high-level expertise but aren't ready to commit to a full-time hire. By providing fractional services, your agency can step into a strategic role, offering clients the flexibility they need while delivering targeted expertise.

What's great about this approach is that it's not just about filling a gap; it's about becoming a trusted partner who helps clients tackle specific challenges like scaling up or navigating tighter budgets. When you position yourself as an agile, go-to resource, you're showing clients that your agency is invested in their success, and that builds loyalty and long-term relationships.

Here's how to stand out:

1. Take time to really pinpoint what your agency does best and how it aligns with what your clients need most. What industry are you uniquely positioned to serve? What specific problem can you solve better than anyone else? Explore a niche, and if you're hesitating, listen to episode 116 titled "*Are You Hesitant to Niche? Let's Talk About Why (and How to Overcome It)*". I'll link it in the show note.
2. You can also Join a community that cares about helping your create high-value connections that can lead to consistent referrals and trusted partnerships. These spaces are where you can collaborate with like-minded people, exchange valuable insights, and align with others who can amplify your impact. If I may suggest, check out Agency Together, it's not just about networking—it's about building a reliable ecosystem of relationships so that agency owners can prosper together.
3. Instead of trying to do it all, channel your energy into a few high-impact initiatives. It's tempting to chase every new trend, but focusing on what delivers the most value will not only streamline your efforts but also build deeper trust with your clients and collaborators.

The key takeaway? By clearly identifying what you do best, connecting in communities that elevate your agency, and channeling your efforts into high-value initiatives, you can stand out, build meaningful relationships and rise above the noise. Ok, let's wrap this up with a quick recap and final tips.

To recap:

- AI may be transforming workflows by making processes faster and more efficient, but it's also highlighting a critical truth: the more we automate, the more people value authentic, human connection. It's a reminder that technology can enhance

operations, but trust and relationships remain at the core of what drives agency success.

- Let's talk about the Misinformation Economy—a market where noise and skepticism are at an all-time high. With so much misinformation floating around, it's harder than ever for clients to know who to trust. But that's where the opportunity lies. By forming authentic partnerships with credible collaborators, consistently living your values, and confidently owning your agency's positioning, you can rise above the doubt and become a trusted go-to for your clients. It's all about showing you're reliable and transparent when others are just adding to the noise.
- Speaking of noise, let's talk about the rise of fractional providers and how that adds to the power of niching down. It's not just another strategy—it's how you rise above the chaos and make your value crystal clear. When you focus on what you do best and connect with a specific audience, you're not just showing what you offer—you're showing exactly why you're the right choice for your clients. It's all about making it easy for them to say, "Yes, this is who I need."

If today's episode resonated with you, I hope you'll take an idea or two and carry it into 2025. Maybe it's leaning into your niche, building trust through strategic connections, or finding ways to create more meaningful, human-centred relationships in response to an increasingly automated world. Whatever it is, take that next step—I'll be rooting for you.

And if you don't want to take this journey alone, I'd love to see you at our *Agency Together Strategic Partnership Mixer*. This event is more than just networking—it's a chance to collaborate with like-minded agency owners, share ideas, and start building referral-ready relationships that can truly transform your agency in 2025.

Head to agencytogether.com/mixer-event or click the link in the show notes to register. Thanks for tuning in today—here's to taking bold steps, creating meaningful connections, and making 2025 your most impactful year yet. Until next time, stay small but mighty!

Audrey Joy Kwan:

Hey, thanks for hanging out with me at the Small but Mighty Agency Podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, it would mean the world to me if you hit the follow or subscribe button in your podcast app and share it with a friend. I'll see you on the next one.