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Farrah Qureshi

Welcome to Side of the Desk podcast hosted by Fidelity Jobs and the Fidelity Women's Leadership Group. We're here today to have deep discussions on the authentic experience of being a working professional in today's ever changing workforce.

00;00;22;03 - 00;00;26;29

Farrah Qureshi

Today, we're joined by Brett Clancy. Brett, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

00;00;27;06 - 00;00;53;06

Bret Clancy

Yeah, hi. Thanks for having me. I've been able to associate for coming up on eight years next month. I started here after a stint at Citizens Bank in a leadership program out of college. Some clients had advertising and media moved over to Staples to their internal agency, and then landed at Fidelity back in 2015. So I'm taking the regulated experience I had at Citizens, the internal agency experience at Staples, and bringing the two of them together here and Elodie on the creative side of the house.

00;00;53;17 - 00;00;55;16

Bret Clancy

And today I work in the social product area.

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Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. Thanks so much, Brett. Can you tell us a little bit about what the social product area is?

00;01;01;16 - 00;01;17;18

Bret Clancy

Yeah. So, you know, a few years ago, we we were kind of putting out the same content on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. We'd pick a piece of content every day and there were just, you know, a few people as they joined the team. And today we're somewhere in the eighties in terms of associates. So it's really exciting to be a part of.

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Bret Clancy

And we put out content that's tailored to a variety of platforms across nine channels and 11 handles, believe it or not. So YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, you name it, we are there. We're a discord. We have activations in the Metaverse and the Decentraland platform. Roblox soon. So we have a lot of different things happening.

00;01;38;01 - 00;02;04;01

Bret Clancy

We post a great deal of educational content. So, so all those things make for a really exciting experience. And all the while we're, we're really focused most on a next gen investors. Lately we've leaned into service. So we're hoping to reach out to a variety of different customers right on

platform. So for example, if you're on YouTube and you have a question about the video you're watching or just a general fidelity question, we actually reply right there in line on the platform.

00;02;04;11 - 00;02;23;06

Bret Clancy

People don't necessarily have to call. They can do it really easily. They're on platform, so we're excited to keep those up. We talk about we call social service thing interactions. We want to do as much of that as possible to make it easy for people to not have to call and take the time out of their day. We know a lot of younger people in particular like to, you know, do a live chat or they like to ask their question.

00;02;23;06 - 00;02;26;25

Bret Clancy

In a place like Reddit and we're happy to answer, you know, digitally there.

00;02;27;05 - 00;02;52;03

Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. Thanks so much for sharing. That's a really robust part of the world, digital world and physical world. So thank you so much for telling us a little bit about that. But one of the things that's so interesting about you is that in addition to all of this work that you do on social media at Fidelity, you also have a gig outside of Fidelity and you're pretty well known for what you do.

00;02;52;12 - 00;02;56;16

Farrah Qureshi

Do you mind telling us a little bit about this side project that you have?

00;02;56;17 - 00;03;13;24

Bret Clancy

Yeah, certainly. So about 11 years ago, which seems like a long time ago, a new platform called Instagram was coming out and I had a roommate at the time and he said, You have to download this app. And we're sitting there on our, you know, iPhone four asses or whatever the device was at the time. And he said, you got to you got to check this thing out.

00;03;13;24 - 00;03;26;19

Bret Clancy

So I downloaded it. It kind of sat in my home screen and then a few weeks later, I kind of played with it and I posted a few things for the three or four friends I had on there. And then one day I did hashtag Boston. We were kind of taking pictures of, you know, somewhere in Back Bay.

00;03;26;19 - 00;03;46;22

Bret Clancy

And I posted a picture of Boston, wrote hashtag Boston, and I had some random person like it in this handle I didn't recognize. Okay. So I was confused at first, weirded out. And I'm like, I don't know. And then anyway, I realized it was kind of neat because at the time there were

limited tags and you could really find things easily when you would search a hashtag.

00;03;46;22 - 00;04;07;18

Bret Clancy

So if you search hashtag Boston or New York, you could find very specific things or pictures, square pictures of the time of those places or of food or a recipe. And it was really clean and the whole thing was nice. Then some of these sort of aggregator accounts came out where where they would take the best picture of the day in Boston and they would post it out to a broader following.

00;04;07;29 - 00;04;32;01

Bret Clancy

And I realized the more people that saw your work, the more people that would like it, the more people that would follow you. So I kind of built it up over time. And 11 years later, I'm approaching 40,000 followers, pretty highly engaged user base, a lot of people around the world, but primarily on the Boston market. So I've built up a pretty good following on the Instagram front, and it's exciting, it's cool, it's different, it's evolved over time into some video and carousels and stories and interactive units.

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Bret Clancy

And what I post today is a lot of, you know, urban landscapes, like I posted from the beginning in terms of photography, but I've lean more into timely content, new restaurants that are opening, events that are happening, things of that nature, travel stuff when I go other places. And it's been a nice, nice way to sort of learn the platform and learn engagement.

00;04;48;18 - 00;05;00;22

Bret Clancy

And candidly, it led me from my existing role, which was an advertising realm, into the social space that helped me kind of, you know, my side hustle helped me sort of transition professionally.

00;05;01;00 - 00;05;19;09

Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. And I'm sure it must be very different building a brand for a big company like Fidelity versus building a personal brand where you're posting about local content and building your brand as a photographer, as a local expert, how did that work for you?

00;05;19;19 - 00;05;40;24

Bret Clancy

Yeah, it's interesting how, you know, at first Instagram was highly curated and everything was meticulous and it was kind of the, you know, the fake world and everyone's going on the best vacation, has the best family and the best friends. And of course, it's not like that. Instagram, as a platform over time has moved from that into more authentic, more real, more lo fi.

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Bret Clancy

You know, here's what I'm up to sort of stuff. And that story's helped a lot with that. And Tik Tok has accelerated that. So I had a brand that was built, you know, primarily it's still this way, it's curated, it's high quality. Everything sort of looks and feels in the same vein and all that. It's been really good to, you know, to have that as part of my account.

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Bret Clancy

So people know what to expect. I don't lean into anything politically. I don't lean into controversial topics. Been there, done that doesn't work because you're always you have a very broad swath of people, particularly with almost 40,000 people. There's people with all different points of view. And what I heard from a lot of people is your account. Your work provides a good escape from the day to day, and that's what people appreciate about it.

00;06;21;23 - 00;06;36;06

Bret Clancy

So I said, okay, I'm going to lean into that. I'm going to take a positive tone, be really consistent. I only post things that I shoot. So if I have an influence or a paid opportunity, it's only things that I shoot. I never post stock photography provided photography, anything like that. It's been a really good way to do that.

00;06;36;12 - 00;07;03;20

Bret Clancy

Now you can post whatever you want on your own handle, but when you come to Fidelity or any corporate environment, there's going to be, you know, levels of reviews. RC Risk and compliance type reviews. There's a whole bunch of different things that we encounter here that are not quite as simple as me posting personally. So it's finding that balance and it's often a good one because what I'm learning in my personal time, I can apply here at work, you know, and learn those new tools and techniques outside of here and bring them to fidelity.

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Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. And then I'm sure it's a lot to manage with having both a day to day role and then also curating this brand. How do you feel like you've been able to balance and do you feel like you've been supported in balancing your personal brand as well as managing a corporate brand on social media?

00;07;25;14 - 00;07;45;05

Bret Clancy

Yeah, there's definitely balance is definitely, definitely the goal. Often it's just busy all the time and I like that. I like staying busy and interesting sort of a side is that it continues. I manage another account for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, which is local here in Boston, and as a result of being on Instagram, I was I'll just back up for a second.

00;07;45;05 - 00;08;00;08

Bret Clancy

I a lot of people came to me and they said this, I love these photos. Can you make prints of them? Can I buy them? So I said, okay, that would be interesting. So I opened up an Etsy store and I print them and I give them out for charity charitable purposes. If people are doing fundraisers or giveaways, I give them out all the time.

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Bret Clancy

Done that for hundreds of people over the last few years. So a woman who came to my door for a donation one day said, I do it for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. It's called the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge. We run the Boston Marathon every year and you should do it One of these times I said, I don't run marathons. I don't think so.

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Bret Clancy

So anyway, she got me involved in this. And and today I've now run the marathon three times, which all for Dana-Farber and raised a lot of money for charity, which is great. But you know, I today also run their handle I created that so that's more of a that's more of a running community that helps encourage people to fundraise and do charitable things.

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Bret Clancy

So that's good. I have my own personal handle, which is the big one. And then Fidelity's, which today we've taken from zero followers to nearly 100,000 as of as of early April 23. So really exciting stuff. But balance is probably better categorized as busy, right?

00;08;51;14 - 00;09;19;29

Farrah Qureshi

Right. That's that's so interesting that your social media presence now has gotten you into a marathon three times, which I think more than one time is already a lot to watch. Too much, 26.2 miles, too much joking. Joking. Well, that's really awesome. And then do you feel like you've learned a lot of skills as you built up this Etsy community and as you've built up both the Dana-Farber and your own personal brand or.

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Bret Clancy

Yeah, and it's funny. It's you know, there's three of them that I that I sort of work on and, and with my personal one, you know, I feel like I've worked toward a certain sort of level, a level of quality that has to be there all the time. I know what the audience wants on the Dana-Farber. It's called Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge or at DFC Runners.

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Bret Clancy

That's more fun and that's celebrating what other people are doing and bringing humanity to a to a charitable team and showing it off for future participants. And then the one at Fidelity here, that's that's always

sort of thinking about the audience that we have, which is generating next gen and generating new business with next gen investors expanding any business we have with young people already, but also drawing them in and making fidelity look like a brand, you know, where young people would want to come do business.

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Bret Clancy

So yeah, so it's it's sort of a mix. It's fun to do kind of a few different things and, and then you learn a little bit from each one. So, you know, I don't do much in the way of Instagram live, for example, on my own handle, but I can do it on the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge handle and then apply that learning to fidelity and say, Hey, this is when when you go live, this is what happens when you're going to do a replay.

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Bret Clancy

This is what happens and you can come to anticipate things. So the outside sort of side hustles are helping inform work here, make things smoother, helping set up, you know, you know, details and see in advance setting expectations. All that really goes a long way.

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Farrah Qureshi

And how do you I think it's really interesting when you talk about all of these audiences that you have, because these are three very different audiences. You've got your enthusiastic runners, which are very different crowd than perhaps emerging investors or people who are interested in starting to save, spend, invest, and then people who are interested in learning about Boston.

00;11;05;03 - 00;11;17;28

Farrah Qureshi

How do you anticipate all of these audience needs and how do you start thinking about like as you're curating this content and as you're curating these digital worlds, how do you anticipate what people might be asking for?

00;11;18;07 - 00;11;39;22

Bret Clancy

Yeah, it's interesting to think about how it's interesting to think about what people want. And what I've learned the most is that timely content is what matters. So people are looking for obviously, you know, at the beginning of at the beginning of Instagram, the reason that's called Instagram is sort of like instant in the moment type, you know, type content and people stretch that and they would post a professional photo or they would post a photo from a week ago.

00;11;39;22 - 00;11;54;25

Bret Clancy

And and what has really happened is most people in social want timely content. They want to know what's happening in the moment. You know, in Fidelity's case, what's happening with the stock market or market

volatility. In the case of my account, you know, what's a new restaurant that's opening? What's an event that's happening? Who's a celebrity that's in town?

00;11;55;04 - 00;12;12;18

Bret Clancy

And in the case of, you know, my charitable work with Dana-Farber, you know, when's the next event? You know, let's celebrate something that a milestone a teammate have that sort of thing. So the overarching sentiment is that most people want timely content. They want to know what's happening right now. And that's why social is so, so different than than everything is so popular.

00;12;12;18 - 00;12;16;14

Bret Clancy

It's in the moment. It's in your hands right now. So that's the of the overall thought.

00;12;17;04 - 00;12;31;23

Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. And, you know, I think you talked about how you got on Instagram, but I'm curious, you sell prints. You are an incredible photographer. How exactly did you get into photography or what drew you to broadly photography?

00;12;31;23 - 00;12;47;05

Bret Clancy

Yeah. So it's funny, I've always sort of liked photography and my mom, you know, just casually good photographer of people and kind of taught me how to frame up a picture and which surprisingly, when you have someone take your picture, hey, take our photo, you know, you're on vacation. Most people can't take a good photo, right?

00;12;47;07 - 00;12;48;02

Farrah Qureshi

No, it's Yeah.

00;12;48;05 - 00;13;05;25

Bret Clancy

Yeah, it's crazy. It's just I just never, never thought much of it. But it's harder, easier said than done. And so, anyway, I don't own a camera. I've never owned a camera set. I think since high school I had a little digital point shoot, and that was the last time, which is odd. It was always cell phone photos are, you know, you're you're in you're in college.

00;13;05;28 - 00;13;21;08

Bret Clancy

Everything's on your phone. So. So anyway, I get the new iPhone on the first day every year. This is like Geek Squad talking. I get the new iPhone every year on the first day, and I use that as sort of my tool to have the highest quality mobile photography. You know, always have the best tool in your pocket.

00;13;21;08 - 00;13;42;02

Bret Clancy

I think maybe I'll get a real camera when I retire. That might be like a fun little thing down the road to play with. But for now, I don't like the idea of carrying a camera, having something, equipment. I kind of just like having something in my pocket. And the quality today is pretty solid. So anyway, so that was sort of my my entrance was, was the iPhone, I think the iPhone four s and I've gone through all the pro models up until today and 2023.

00;13;42;16 - 00;13;49;13

Bret Clancy

So yeah, so it's fun and the quality and the the editing that's there, editing opportunities are fantastic.

00;13;49;13 - 00;13;56;28

Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. So it sounds like you can get started with a side gig with maybe something that you carry around on your day to day basis.

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Bret Clancy

Certainly.

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Farrah Qureshi

That's awesome. For someone who might be interested in trying out something new, like a side gig, maybe on top of what they do on their day to day or maybe if someone's looking to start their career journey, but they also have these passions. I know you mentioned life is busy. Life is really busy for right. But do you have any guidance or do you have any tips for how people might be able to manage their passions as well as their day to day work?

00;14;26;07 - 00;14;46;11

Bret Clancy

Yeah, I mean, we have there's all different approaches you can take. So if it's something you're really into, like I love the charitable approach. I think that's really cool. I also like the sort of demonstrating your expertise for the role that you want. So in my case, I had taken an interest in social media from 2005 when Facebook was kind of the only game in town when it became available.

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Bret Clancy

You know, that was what, 6000 something days ago. So ever since then I've taken a really heavy interest in social. So that was always there from the beginning. But for people who are newer to the game, someone who is like, you know, I'm in a certain job, I work at Fidelity or elsewhere and they're interested in social, demonstrate the expertise via a side hustle.

00;15;04;12 - 00;15;21;03

Bret Clancy



So we had a woman who was the different part of the company who was doing a great job and said, I'm really interested in coming over to the social product area. And she said, and she said, I do this really cool thing on the side, I'm just going to show you. And I was like, What is this? And she did subscription home kits for decor.

00;15;21;03 - 00;15;37;06

Bret Clancy

So imagine like, you know, Trunk Club or something like that where every month Nordstrom or name that brand send you some kind of some kind of kit and you can pull out the things you want, send the rest back and you only pay for what you kept. And she did something sort of similar with home decor. It's like you can refresh your space on a regular basis.

00;15;37;20 - 00;15;54;02

Bret Clancy

And I'm like, First of all, that's an awesome idea. You shouldn't be working a fidelity. You should go make this a thing because people would love it, right? Like new throw pillows, new decor, whatever, every month and but what she did was she set up a really cool social presence for it and she showed how, you know, she would promote the product, how she would display it, how she would drive engagement.

00;15;54;02 - 00;16;09;05

Bret Clancy

And all of that taught her social. And it was a really cool thing to talk about in an interview. And I said, we have we have to bring her in. She's awesome. You're right. She clearly has an interest. Claire has worked here before, but she demonstrate it'd outside of work the expertise in the area that she wanted to go to.

00;16;09;05 - 00;16;26;19

Bret Clancy

So I think that's the best way to do it. Same goes if you're in college, if you're, you know, you're 19, 20 years old and you're like, I don't know. I don't have an internship at a big company this summer. Go make your own internship, make your own thing. Right. I'm the leader of X and then put that in a resume because that's that's going to be just as much of a leg up as have someone else.

00;16;26;24 - 00;16;27;17

Bret Clancy

So pretty nature.

00;16;27;21 - 00;16;40;14

Farrah Qureshi

That's great advice for anyone who is looking to build in their career and really lean into their passions and make that their day to day role. Brett, thank you so much for your time today. It was a pleasure having you on side of the desk.

00;16;40;16 - 00;16;41;10

Bret Clancy

Thanks for having me.

00;16;41;16 - 00;17;07;02

Farrah Qureshi

Yeah, of course. Thank you for listening to this side of the desk episode and thank you to our recording studio and editors who made our episodes possible. For more information about working at Fidelity, check out Fidelity Careers dot com.