

## Agency for Change Podcast

### Untangling Spaghetti: KidGlov Dishes on Their New Branding Book



**Get your copy of Untangling Spaghetti: A Branding Fable now:** <https://amzn.to/3E04XpM>

**Announcer:** 0:02

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

**Lyn Wineman:** 0:33

Hey everyone, this is Lyn Wineman. Welcome to a very, very special episode of the Agency for Change podcast. You all know me, I am the President and Chief Strategist of KidGlov, and today we are going to do a first. This is the first time we are going to record an Agency for Change podcast while literally and figuratively untangling spaghetti, because, as you know, we have a little book coming out called Untangling Spaghetti.

It's a brand fable and my very special and fantastic guests today are the people who have been on the front lines and behind the scenes of creating that fable. So with us today we have Sam Sidner, copywriter, who brought the words and characters to life. We have Erin Clark, who untangled the spaghetti on the cover of the book, and we have Ashley Stuhr, creative director, who, behind the scenes and on the front lines, just made it all come together with the most helpful smiling attitude anyone could ever imagine in all of this chaos. Way to go. So, as I mentioned, we all have spaghetti and I'd love to start by having each of you tell us what kind of spaghetti you have. Who wants to go first?

**Erin Clark:** 1:59

Well, I first have to ask. I think I did the most wrong thing and came to this meeting very hungry so all I want to do is eat.

**Ashley Stuhr:** 2:10

So Erin wants to dig into her spaghetti.

**Lyn Wineman:** 2:13

I love it, Erin give us a good slurp. Can you like? Slurp and twirl that spaghetti right here while recording.

**Erin Clark:** 2:22

I'm definitely a twirler. I think I have angel hair or linguine, okay, and it has shrimp in it and little pepper. Oh, nice, all right.

**Lyn Wineman:** 2:34

I tell you what. You slip that on up while Sam tells us, for those of you that can't see Sam, because this is a podcast and many of you will be listening Sam came prepared. Tell us about what you're wearing, Sam, and then tell us about what you're eating.

**Sam Sidner: 2:49**

Well, because I'm eating spaghetti, I'm wearing a little bib and it's actually in the red, white and green of the Italian flag.

**Lyn Wineman: 2:57**

It looks very Italiano, Sam. I love it. And what kind of spaghetti do you have?

**Sam Sidner: 3:06**

Well, I've got a beautiful bowl of bucatini. I love bucatini because the noodles are nice and fat and there's a hole on the inside, so the sauce can get in there too. And it's got a Calabrian red sauce with Italian sausage.

**Lyn Wineman: 3:23**

Sam, who cooks spaghetti in your house, did you make this? Or did your lovely wife Anne make this?

**Sam Sidner: 3:30**

I did make this, but that was a real outlier, that was a real exception to the rule and I will say I'm not that hungry because I was snacking on it all the time.

**Lyn Wineman: 3:44**

I love it Well it sounds very, very delicious. Ashley, what do you have?

**Ashley Stuhr: 3:47**

I have a tiny, delicate little bowl of my lunch leftovers. It is a rigatoni, so not a traditional spaghetti noodle made of chickpeas, and then a classic bolognese sauce that I made last night.

**Lyn Wineman: 4:04**

Also sounds very healthy. Did you make that from scratch?

**Ashley Stuhr: 4:08**

Yes, I have, like a garlic, onion intolerance and so we, whenever we make spaghetti, we always make it from scratch so we can control the ingredients.

**Lyn Wineman: 4:24**

You know, we probably should have scheduled this recording closer to dinner time and not at the end of the afternoon while most of us are still working in some capacity. But all right, I got to tell you I've got classic marinara, I've got spaghetti from the box and I've got frozen meatballs plopped on top, because this is okay I admit in the very early part of the book that I am a terrible cook. It was actually my teenage rebellion was to refuse to learn to cook, and this is the dish that I attempted to make when I was dating my husband and said oh, I like this guy. I should make him a home cooked meal. The only problem is I don't know how to cook. So I had to call my cousin, Anne, and she literally talked me through taking spaghetti from the box, putting it in the pot, emptying the jar of sauce on top and warming up some meatballs. That is the state of my cooking experience.

**Erin Clark:** 5:29

Boxes didn't come with directions back then.

**Lyn Wineman:** 5:37

They might have, I don't know that there was directions of how to put it all together. I was stressed, it was 15 minutes before the arrival time and I was on the phone going can you help me? Can you help me? So, on that note, before we go further with this conversation, I did, for this occasion, find some very interesting spaghetti jokes. Would this be a good time to tell a spaghetti joke?

**Erin Clark:** 6:08

I'm going to take a bite.

**Lyn Wineman:** 6:10

You guys, take a bite, prepare yourselves. Why did the spaghetti get promoted? It pasta'd all the tests.

**Ashley Stuhr:** 6:24

You're going to have to say that again.

**Lyn Wineman:** 6:29

All right, yeah it pasta'd in all the tests. All right, all right, all right.

Well, on that note, why don't we talk about the book for a minute? The book is called Untangling Spaghetti. It's a brand fable, and it's really intended to help business leaders increase their impact by putting together the elements of their story into a cohesive brand, and I'd love you all were so intimately involved in creating the book. I'd love for you to share a highlight about your experience in working on it.

**Sam Sidner:** 7:30

At the beginning, when you and I first sat down to work on this, you know and it was here are the steps of the process and that was kind of the skeleton of our outline. Here are the people that need to be

involved in the process. So that was our cast of characters, basically. And then you shared so many good stories about many times I've done this, and here's what people are typically concerned about at this point. Here's where things start to turn a corner as far as engagement, that kind of thing, and you know that was our template for the characters, but I remember we got a few chapters into it and we got to a point where, you know, we started saying things like oh, I don't. Michelle and Diana, their relationship isn't so formal.

That's not the way they would speak to each other, or I think Sophia and Mitch would probably have a little more back and forth about that and it was kind of that realization. I remember there was one conversation where I think we had both realized at the same time that oh, these are real people now.

**Lyn Wineman: 8:25**

Yes, they're real people.

**Sam Sidner: 8:26**

And they will dictate to us a little bit what they're likely to say or not say.

**Lyn Wineman: 8:33**

Sam, you did such a beautiful job of bringing this story to life and I so appreciate your talent for dialogue and making it sound natural. I have to tell you you've distracted our proofreaders because I've had more than one proofreader say I got so engaged in the story I forgot to do the proofreading. But readers don't worry, the book is fully proofread.

Yeah, that's right if you see anything, send us a quiet little note. Don't put it in your Amazon review. Ashley, Erin, what was your experience? Like you, you were. You guys came in, uh, in different parts.

**Ashley Stuhr: 9:22**

I like the highlight for me was reading it for the first time, because, Lyn and Sam, you did so much like behind the scenes. You were like secretly working on this little project before you told any of us, and then it was practically a fully formed manuscript when you kind of brought us in and, you know, reading it for the first time, it was just like so fun to see how you really captured the spirit of the work that we do here at KidGlov, yeah, and especially how some of the client interactions played out. Um, like last week all of us were in a client meeting and we're there in person and one of them asked you know, what ideas do you have for a logo? And it was like quite literally a scene from the book in real life. You just did a great job capturing our process.

**Lyn Wineman: 10:18**

Even Sam and Erin, even to Erin's kind of well. I have actually been doing some sketches and we knew Erin in your notebook, we knew there were sketches, and it took great restraint for you not to share them with us. Erin, what was your takeaway from being on the book? And while you talk, I'm going to eat a meatball.

**Erin Clark: 10:41**

Yes, eat a meatball. I was going to propose we change the book name to Frozen Meatballs. No, I'm kidding.

**Lyn Wineman: 10:52**

I don't know how to tie branding to frozen meatballs, but if anybody could figure it out, it's the three of you.

**Erin Clark: 11:00**

Well, speaking of the name, I think my favorite part was when, you know we, Lyn, you put the list in front of Ashley and I with the names that you and Sam had come up with, and it was this long list and I think this just speaks so much to our collaboration with what we do you know, between copy and design and there were so many names and the name Untangling Spaghetti was like I think it was the second or third page.

And Ashley and I, I think we're both waiting for a name like this and we both were just like, yes, it is that one. And I think, just like visually the whole cover like I think, came to both of our design imaginations and I just think that really that moment speaks to the magic of what the whole fable is about.

**Ashley Stuhr: 12:02**

I think our eyes like lit up at the exact same time as we were reading through that list of names.

**Lyn Wineman: 12:08**

I don't know how you felt about it, Sam, because you and I did kind of have this little clandestine partnership I don't know if that's the right word, but we had the book kind of pretty well put together before we shared it with others and I, my mind was set on another name, Like we had the long list. My, my, my heart was set on another name. That would have been a fine name. Sam, did you feel the same way? Cause I think when I came back to you and said Erin and Ashley really like Untangling Spaghetti, I think you might've said I was thinking we'd go in a different direction.

**Sam Sidner: 12:46**

Yeah, now, at this point I can't recall what my top choice was. I was laughing when Erin mentioned the three pages of names because, as Erin and Ashley both know, I'm a firm believer that the best way to have good ideas is to have a lot of ideas.

**Lyn Wineman: 13:01**

I should introduce you to my friend Brandon Makudo, who's in the book, because I think he said the same thing, Sam. Well, hey, I think this is another good time. Let me try out another spaghetti joke on you

What do you call a fake spaghetti? An impasta. An imposter right, Like I got to say it again to make sure you heard me.

**Erin Clark:** 13:44

I knew the answer and I'm still laughing.

**Lyn Wineman:** 13:46

I think the funniest part about that is that I actually picked that as one of the better spaghetti jokes that I have in my repertoire. All right let's talk a little bit more about the book. I'd love to hear your take on. Why is branding, because the three of you, and actually the four of us together, have worked on a lot of branding projects, why do you think branding is like untangling spaghetti?

**Sam Sidner:** 14:20

Well, for one thing, and I should say, they actually had something at the store called long spaghetti. Long spaghetti. Because I felt like three foot long strands would be a better illustration, but I thought that would be too messy, I would love to see you swirl around. For one thing and this kind of speaks to what Ashley was saying I mean spaghetti sauce, pretty simple, but there are a million different kinds.

**Lyn Wineman:** 14:50

For some of us, Sam, spaghetti and sauce is simple, for some it's complicated.

**Sam Sidner:** 14:55

All righty, assuming a minimum threshold of culinary acumen, but you know, different people like different kinds. You said spaghetti and I thought, oh, I like bucatini better and it's. No one is right or wrong, but what suits you and branding is very much the same. We might have a process that we consistently follow, but it is literally custom work every time, because every company is the same, every business model, every culture, and it needs to be what clicks with all that. The other part of it is, you know, Ashley has said that they make pasta from scratch and there are people who can do that, and I'm smart enough to know that I'm not one of those people, so if I really want to get what I want, there are a lot of good choices that I can pick, but I prefer to have somebody make it who's really good at it, and I do think this book and the companion guide will help people figure out. Where do I rate on that spectrum and what do I need to be involved with myself? Where could I use help?

**Lyn Wineman:** 16:06

I love that, Sam. Of course you would give us a very thoughtful answer. I'm not calling on you first anymore.

**Erin Clark:** 16:14

Yeah, I think we're done with that question.

**Lyn Wineman:** 16:20

Ashley and Erin. What do you think? Why is branding like untangling spaghetti?

**Ashley Stuhr:** 16:26

I was going to say that in, you know, in the early stages of a project, we're presented with just loads and loads of information and it's kind of a mess, it's kind of like a tangled bowl of spaghetti. And you know we get current materials from the client and along the way they've added new things that are not in these materials but they come out in conversation and you know our job is to take all that information, kind of sift through it and find the noodle that we're going to twirl around our fork and then kind of twirl that, find the common thread and like kind of whittle it down to like a single nugget that becomes, you know, the tagline or the name or the logo and kind of the brand of that organization, it's kind of like problem solving.

**Lyn Wineman:** 17:21

I love that. Erin, what would you say?

**Erin Clark:** 17:23

Okay, I think, since Ashley spoke to the untangling part, I really think that brands like spaghetti is a lot better when shared and I think that you know leave it to an Enneagram Four to come up with an emotional answer. But I really think like the magic behind what we do. It's like we do the really hard pieces but untangling, and then it's like we get to deliver this beautiful end product to our clients and that makes them excited to share what they're passionate about.

**Lyn Wineman:** 18:11

Erin, I'm so glad that you said that, because we also had another client recently where we were embarking upon their branding process and they admitted that they hated sending people to their website because they were so embarrassed by their brand. And your website's your biggest, you know, your biggest credibility builder, your biggest information source. In many cases, that's where a lot of those activations happen, right? People make purchases or donations or they contact you or they fill out a form, whatever it is. And if you're embarrassed to share your brand just like if you're scared to cook and you're embarrassed to share your spaghetti, that's not a good thing, right.

But what I was even going to say is, I think, kind of like spaghetti or kind of like any of your favorite pasta dishes, like when it all comes together in that one delicious bite, it's really spectacular. And that's my favorite part of branding is to see an organization whether they're a startup or whether they're rebranding or even if they're just doing a refresh to see them set out in the world, doing their work, armed with a brand that gives them confidence and courage and helps them make connections. That's a really, really magical thing and it's really satisfying for me. So, speaking of satisfying, this will be the worst transition ever. I only have one more spaghetti joke.

So please, listeners, please, don't leave us after this. This is the last one. All right, here we go. Why didn't the meatball show up for the spaghetti date? Because it got grounded.

**Ashley Stuhr:** 20:15

That one took me a minute.

**Lyn Wineman:** 20:21

I know I'm sorry.

**Erin Clark:** 20:24

I was still thinking about it. I was like did the meatball fall on the floor?

**Lyn Wineman:** 20:34

I, if we ever do this again, I'll work harder on the joke writing. I think the joke telling is exceptional.

**Erin Clark:** 20:46

Enthusiasm, right, I was going to say listeners, please send in your spaghetti jokes.

**Lyn Wineman:** 20:56

Drop your spaghetti jokes in the comments. That would be fantastic, All right. Last question for the four of you as you eat, I think your spaghetti is getting cold because you all have been. You haven't been eating, so take a bite while I ask this question. But the last question is why should somebody read this book *Untangling Spaghetti* and Ashley you might be the only one without your mouth full, so I guess you get to answer. Oh, no, wait. I tell you all to eat and then I ask you a question. It's quite cruel, okay, is anybody ready to answer?

**Erin Clark:** 21:33

Oh, I could answer. Oh, except for now I'm like, wait, my answer just left my head. I think that anybody could read this book and should read this book, because it really kind of opens the veil to a process that could be kind of daunting and, you know, for anybody who is trying to market either their passion project or it's like their business or something that they are super excited about. You know, a lot of these steps can be hard to dive into and I really think that this book helps, you know, make that a lot easier. It untangles that spaghetti.

**Lyn Wineman:** 22:31

That's awesome, great answer. All right, Sam, Ashley. What do you guys think?

**Sam Sidner:** 22:35

One of the things that I think surprises a lot of people. They start out you think that you know your brand is your logo and the language you use to describe yourself, and when you go through this process you realize it's much more holistic than that. It's really about your whole business offering.



It depends on who your competitors are, or your partners are, and your culture comes through a lot too and I think KidGlov has a very good process for the brand advancement, but there's also the particular way in which you do it, and I think reading a fable gives somebody the opportunity to really kind of say this is a much more human thing. We're going to be using a different part of our brains than we thought we were, and there's going to be a lot of feelings involved, not just logic, you know. I think on one hand you have the companion guide that gives you the ABCD opportunity to look at it that way. But this allows you to kind of put yourself in the shoes of fellow human beings, watch the conversations they have, think about what the process is going to be like for you.

**Lyn Wineman:** 23:44

Yeah, Sam, I'm going to say too. You articulated that so beautifully in the book. Like my experience with branding, there's only been one time when I've been on the side of the table where somebody's been presenting to me. As somebody who's had a long career in advertising agencies, I've many times like a hundred times or more been on the presenter side, right. What I remember was when we rebranded to KidGlov and the KidGlov team, who went through the same process, presented the names to me. I was nervous. I was nervous even though I knew it was a great talented team and a great process.

As the person who's receiving the presentation, you're kind of not sure what to expect, and you've invested a lot of hopes and time and money into this. And I think the other thing is it's hard to know what decision to make. And what I love about the process that's in the book is it really helps the organization that's getting the new brand or the refresh have the things they need, to be confident in the decision they're making. So thank you for that. Ashley, what do you think? Why do you think people should read the book?

**Ashley Stuhr:** 25:11

Oh my gosh, how am I supposed to follow that?

**Lyn Wineman:** 25:15

I know we said we were going to make Sam go last and I didn't. I didn't stay true to that word.

**Ashley Stuhr:** 25:20

I just think you know the book is, it's such a quick and easy read that if you are considering rebranding, if you've ever had that thought where you've just wondered if you should embark down that path, I think you should take the time to read this to just see you know what our, our process is like. Because, like what you were just saying, Lyn, you know our process brings to light a lot of information that can help you make that decision.

**Ashley Stuhr:** 25:53

So if you're unsure whether you even want to in the first place, but it's crossed your mind, you know it's it. This would be a great place to start and kind of consider your options.

**Lyn Wineman:** 26:06

That's so great, Ashley. You're right, yeah, for the simple price of a book or a download, simple price of a book, you can get a pretty complete understanding and then, honestly, with the companion guide that you can download, there are so many tools. I have to admit, being the agency owner, it makes me a little bit nervous just giving the tools away, but I think that's the best way to demonstrate the process. And you know, I have people every month who call, who are their small businesses, their startups. They're doing a passion project, they need a brand. They don't have the resources to do the whole agency thing, or maybe they do have the resources but they're a little bit unsure if that's how they should invest them. I do think the book and particularly the companion guide are going to do that.

**Erin Clark: 27:10**

I know I was just gonna say I love thinking about that, so I just what you all were saying. I just feel like it makes it so accessible to so many people. It's accessible to so many different dreams and helping bring to life.

**Lyn Wineman: 27:33**

Brands are tied up into dreams. You've all said it dreams humans success, and so you know. I'm going to untangle this by just saying you know, writing a book, I've said many times, has always been a dream of mine. But I obviously didn't write this book by myself, it was a whole project. I mean, Sam, you brought the characters to life and wrote the words. Erin, you designed the cover. Ashley, you were up to your eyeballs in creative strategy and directing and making it happen. And so many other people on the KidGlov team were involved. Just, not everybody wanted to be on camera or on the microphone eating their spaghetti today.

I have to say you all are the inspiration for the book and the creators both, and I have to thank you for the role that you played. I really, really really do appreciate that. So much gratitude. So, anyway, the book is available on Amazon. We'll have a link in the show notes. We hope everybody goes and looks at it. You can get it on Kindle, paperbook, hardcover, and when we have a free minute, there will be an audio book to go along with it. So give it a look, let us know what you think. And I promised you I don't have any more jokes, but I did want to do one more thing to wrap this up. Did any of you guys sing the spaghetti song in grade school?

**Erin Clark: 29:07**

Are you going to make us sing?

**Lyn Wineman: 29:12**

I don't know, I can't make you do anything.

**Ashley Stuhr: 29:18**

On top of spaghetti.

**Erin Clark: 29:20**

All covered with cheese.

**Lyn Wineman:** 29:26

Who knows the next part? I lost my poor meatball when somebody sneezes.

**Erin Clark:** 29:34

I think if somebody is sneezing on your spaghetti. You have other problems. Let that plate go, get a whole new one.

**Lyn Wineman:** 29:49

Sam Ashley Erin, thanks for joining me today. Everyone Thanks for joining us on the Agency for Change. Have a great day.

**Announcer:** 29:59

We hope you enjoyed today's Agency for Change podcast. To hear all our interviews with those who are making a positive change in our communities or to nominate a changemaker you'd love to hear from. Visit [kidglov.com](http://kidglov.com) at [K-I-D-G-L-O-V.com](http://K-I-D-G-L-O-V.com) to get in touch. As always. If you like what you've heard today, be sure to rate, review, subscribe and share. Thanks for listening and we'll see you next time.