

On Your Terms Podcast Episode 1:
Community Over Competition is BS:
Tips to Navigate Your Competition in a Healthier Way

Sam Van Wielen: [00:00:08] Hey, guys. So, this is my very first episode of On Your Terms, and I am so excited to be here with you today. Thank you so much for taking the time out to listen. I chose this episode for our first one together because I want to give you a little bit of a feel for what's to come and, perhaps, a little bit of a feel for my personality here.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:00:28] Because I've got to be honest with you, as always, I am just a little sick of seeing things in our industry that don't really make sense and that everybody just accepts as gospel. I see all of these things in our industry that it's like people just repeat all the time because they think that it's the right thing, but yet nobody has ever stopped to question like, why? Why is this the way?

Sam Van Wielen: [00:00:48] So, I'm hoping to bring you a different perspective today on your competition, on how you should interact with your competition, whether you should do market research. And all that kind of stuff, I want you to question a couple of things about today. I'm hoping, too, that after today, you're going to see a couple of the things that you might be doing in your own business and wonder if that's perhaps what's been leaving you feel a little funny on social media, or in your business, or about how many clients you have, or anything like that.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:01:15] So, I'm so excited for you to listen to this episode. Because in this episode, I talk about one of the things that's really bugged me about our industry and how people want to be treated like "real business" but then we apply different standards to ourselves. I talk so much today about consumption, and how we spend our time, and being really intentional with who we're interacting with on social media, and how we're trying to build up our businesses.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:01:42] I talk with you about how, yes, of course, I think community over competition is bullshit, but not because you don't want your peers to

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succeed. And how this actually has nothing to do with you wanting other people who do what you do to do well. We can, like, bless them and want them to do super, super well.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:01:58] But today's episode is actually not about your competition, it's about you. And it's about you making sure you're doing what you need to do to protect your mental and emotional health and wellbeing, and not adopting this hashtag that has been promoted to kind of make you feel bad for not being abundant enough. So, you are going to be incredibly abundant after today, but you are also going to protect yourself, and that is what's most important to me.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:02:25] So, in this episode, I'm going to give you my best six tips of how to navigate your competition, following other people who do what you do, engaging with them, some of the legal issues that crop up for you when you do consume a lot of content from your competition or when they consume it from you, about whether or not you need to still be doing competition or market research, and how you should go about that, how you should spend your time on social, what to do when someone buys your program, and a little legal tip of what you can do to protect your program when people buy it.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:02:57] And then, I'm going to round out today's episode with a quick fire Q&A of some of the questions you guys submitted on Instagram when I told you I was recording this episode. So, with that, I'm so excited to dive into my first episode on On Your Terms. Let's get started.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:03:16] Okay. So, can I just be honest with you about something as I always am? I feel like community over competition has been promoted to make you feel bad about yourself and how you market your business. And whenever I talk about this on social media, it gets such a response. But it's almost like the secret response where everybody writes to me privately and I'm like, "Thank you so much for saying

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something about this. I've always wanted to hear this, but I don't hear anyone saying this." And I'm like, "Why isn't anybody else talking about this?"

Sam Van Wielen: [00:03:46] I feel like everybody is always teaching you that if you don't follow, and consume, and support, like rah, rah, rah, and refer to your peers, and all of that kind of stuff, then you're not abundant enough. And then, that means that you're not successful or you're not going to be successful, and yada, yada, yada.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:04:04] It's just one of those areas in business that, to me, gets treated so differently than if we were in the "real world." And something that bothers me a lot about online business is that everybody doesn't like the fact that people don't take us seriously enough or they don't treat you like you have a legitimate business, like as if you had a bakery or you were a lawyer or something like this. But then, we do stuff in our own industry that makes us not as serious. And this would be one of them.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:04:37] Now, we also have to get clear, though, on what this is not. Like, what I am not talking about. This episode, everything I'm talking about today, is not about wanting your peers to not succeed. You can still want your peers to succeed. You can still be incredibly abundant and believe that there is more than enough to go around. And that just because he or she is doing great doesn't mean that you cannot. It actually has no effect on it. There is a huge difference between us wanting the best for others and believing that there's more than enough room for all of us, and having to consume and support them all the time. There's just a huge difference.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:05:19] And so, you know, every once in a while, when I do talk about this, yes, I get that secret support in the background. But you'll also get a few people who are like, "It's very important to support people and we can all do well." And

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I'm like, "That is not what I'm talking about. That is not what I'm talking about at all." I don't think that these things are mutually exclusive. We can have both of these things.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:05:39] Because in reality, what I'm talking about today and the tips that I'm going to give you about how to navigate "competition" in a healthier way actually has nothing to do with them. It has nothing to do with your competition. And it has everything to do with protecting yourself and your own energy and mental health. Which, to me, is a lot more important than you seeming like a rah, rah cheerleader on Instagram trying to promote your "competitor". We can just assume for the rest of this episode that every time I say competitor, there are air quotes about it. I'm still getting used to this podcasting, so I'm thinking you guys can see me.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:06:16] So, I have to tell you a little story before we hop into today's tips about how to handle and navigate competition, competitor analysis, supporting people, yada, yada in a healthier way.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:06:30] When I started my health coaching business - so if you're new to my community, I was a corporate attorney for, like, five years. I left in 2016 to start my own health coaching business - and running that business, all I did was follow other health coaches and what I would call industry people. So, like, related people to the health coaching or wellness arena. And it was really cool in one way because in one way I was coming out of this very corporate-y environment, and had been all buttoned up, and in all these polyester suits and stuff like that. And it was cool to immerse myself in this world that I literally had no idea ever existed.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:07:13] It's always funny you're in this corporate world and you have no idea there's this big booming industry going on online, which I now am very familiar with. But it was a really cool experience just to hop in and get to learn the language, kind of learn what was going on in this space with some of the trends were in,

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all of that kind of stuff. And I wasn't following any of these people or engaging with these people to copy. Obviously, I think I'm probably your girl to go to for talking about not copying other people. But that's, at that time, who I thought I was supposed to be networking with.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:07:50] And maybe you can relate to this because I feel like whenever I talk about this, people always respond back of being like, "I thought that I was supposed to network with my peers. Like, I was supposed to get to know them." I think that would be another example, too, of something that's not mutually exclusive where you can network with your peers, and get to know people, and kind of integrate yourself into your community without spending all of your time or conflating that with marketing - we'll talk a lot about that today.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:08:18] But those people, the people I was networking with, the people I was following and consuming, they were not going to hire me as their health coach. They were not my ideal client. They were experts. They were better experts than me at what they were doing. I could learn from them and look up to them, but there's so much of what I'm going to share with you today that I feel like I took away from that experience because I wish someone would have told me then.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:08:41] And it's something that I feel so many of you relate to when you reach out to me and you share like, "I'm just so confused. I thought I was supposed to follow all these other people. Or, the only people following me are people who do what I do. And then, at the same time, I'm not getting the clients that I want." So, I'm really hoping that we break through some of these things today and we can shift a little bit about how you're marketing your business and how you're really spending your time.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:09:06] And that's what I did when I started my legal business in 2017. I couldn't have come at it any differently. I didn't look at anybody who was doing what I was doing. And at the time, I was the newbie. I was starting from the bottom. And so, I didn't have anything to my name, to my business, to nothing. And I just knew that I wanted to do it so differently than I did when I started my health coaching business. So, I went at it on my own, really trying to figure out exactly how I could build my own unique business. And you're going to hear a lot of those little tips and tricks today.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:09:46] So ,with that, why don't we get started. I've got six tips for you today on how to build a healthier relationship with your competition, with the feelings around how you have to support them or not support them, or whatever, or follow them, consume their information. But I'm hoping that these six tips today are going to set you free in a sense.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:10:06] So, tip number one - you can do with this what you want - I, personally, recommend not following other people who do what you do. I would say, unless your real life friends. But, to me, this is more of an out of sight, out of mind issue. Again, not a lack of support. First of all, you're not ever going to buy anything from them and you're not going to support their business in that way, unless you plan on stealing from them. So, it really doesn't make sense.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:10:36] I kind of think of this as, like, stepping out of the way and letting their ideal clients be there in their community. This is not about me. It's not about me supporting them or sending "Hey, Girl" DMs. It's about letting them go off and running their own business. And if you follow, you will then see their content, and then they will be in your head, and then they will be in a lot of the other things that we're going to talk about today.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:10:59] But the reason I really started out with this tip and one of the reasons I think it's the most important is because of how much it relates to what I do for you online. I get so many DMs and emails and all kinds of things telling me that you're really freaked out about putting out a product, a course, a program, whatever, because you're so afraid that it might be interpreted as being too close to what so-and-so does. Or you follow so-and-so on social media and then you created a program that looks a lot like hers, and you're not sure if there's going to be a problem with that. I get a lot of those kinds of questions and comments.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:11:39] And whenever I see that stuff, I have the same thought like, "If you didn't follow, you wouldn't know." And so, it is possible in this universe that two people or two or more people could create a similar product, or program, or whatever. But the reason - and I know this is hard to hear - is probably causing you some concern is because you have a question in your mind as to whether or not you actually did consume it or come up with it from consuming their information.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:12:11] So, I think it's really important because it gives you, not only this incredible sense of freedom from not seeing their stuff and being able to truly just drive your own boat here, but it will also give you a really nice sense of legal protection. Because how can you be accused of copying someone who you don't even know, or see, or consume, or whatever? In that case, it would be more of a coincidental thing. You could work something out or whatever. But I just think that there are even subconscious ways that we take in information from other people.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:12:48] And so, even when you think like, "No. This is totally original. I came up with this on my own." It is possible that it's built upon layers and layers and layers of information that you've consumed from other people over time. And so, I'm not saying that you're being a bad person, and you're trying to steal, and you're a

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copycat, or anything like that. This could be just happening in the background in the back of your mind without you even knowing it.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:13:12] So, for me, what helps me to sleep tight at night and know that everything I'm coming up with is original on my end, not that anything I'm doing is so uniquely original or whatever, but the fact that my thoughts, and my promos, and my strategy is all driven by things that I see that are going on, not only in my own head, but also they're just being driven by my clients or what I see in my ideal client community or whatever, not my competition.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:13:41] So, I really encourage this about not following other people who do what you do. As to what you do about when people follow you who do what you do, that's up to you. I have shared my bold and brazen approach of not - I don't want to say not allowing, but if there's something big, like if somebody does exactly what I do or they're trying to do exactly what I do, I don't allow them to follow me, at least from my perspective, because I don't understand why they would need to follow me. Like, what are you following me for other than "inspiration"? I don't understand what it's really for. Because we can connect privately and stuff like that.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:14:15] But what I see is that all that happens - and I did this in the beginning of my business - I try to be the nice girl and I try to allow people to follow me. And what do you know? Those exact people were the ones who copied from me. One of those exact people was the one who went and stole my entire website. So, I've just had my own personal experiences. It's not a right or wrong thing. It's not like you have to do it this way or else it's bad. It's just what works for me. So, you can find your balance in that.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:14:15] Tip number two, if you see what everybody else is doing, so if you're are following all these people who do what you do, not only will it lead to

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analysis paralysis, imposter syndrome, comparison trap, and whatever else, it'll always cause you to question whether what you're creating is different enough than what she's or he's already created. So, it's this thing where we want to make sure that all of your ideas are actually original. And it's not coming as a response, or an inspiration, or something like this to those other people.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:15:18] Of course, it's always going to create that analysis paralysis, too, because you're going to be overthinking, you're going to be thinking about all the minute details, you're going to be wondering whether or not there's any space for you in this industry. Still, if you see somebody else doing something similar, you're going to think that she's already bigger or better or has more followers or is making more money, so what's the point? Or she's more of an expert or has this extra degree or something.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:15:42] If you didn't see it, then you wouldn't know. And then, you would just create kind of in a blissful, ignorant way. You could just create something because you're really passionate about it and you think it'll help people without having to have anything to do with what your competition is doing.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:16:03] Have you ever felt lost about where to begin with the legal side of protecting your online business? Some people say you can just wing it at the beginning and get officially set up later. Not a good idea, by the way. Whether you're afraid to even start working with clients because you don't want to do something wrong legally and then get in trouble or your business is growing and you sort of forgot to take care of the legal pieces, I've got you.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:16:25] I don't want you to live in fear of the internet police coming after you and your business, but you do have to do certain things and get certain things

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in place in order to legally and safely run your business online. As much as it just feels like an unregulated Wild Wild West online, that is very much not the case.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:16:42] As an attorney turned entrepreneur and former corporate litigator, I can assure you that there are rules. There are real steps that everybody who runs or starts an online business needs to take. And you're not behind at all. We can get you set up and following the rules right away. In fact, we can even do it today. I want to teach you the five very simple steps to take to legally protect and grow your online business. You don't need an MBA to be a successful entrepreneur and stay out of legal hot water, but you do need to dot your legal I's and cross your T's in a few key areas that can't be skipped.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:17:13] That's exactly what I'll teach you in my free one hour legal workshop called Five Steps to Legally Protect and Grow your Online Business. Just head to mylegalworkshop.com, drop in your email address, pick the time, and I'll send you a link to watch the workshop video whenever you have time.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:17:28] This is the best place to begin if you're just getting started legally legitimizing your business, so head on over to mylegalworkshop.com and sign up to watch Five Steps to Legally Protect and Grow your Online Business now.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:17:46] Tip number three is that when you follow and consume a lot of content from people who are doing what you're doing, it really limits what you create because then you only create things in response to what they're creating. And I also think that, actually, it limits you in a way because you only create things in the way, and the form, and the mode that you already see happening.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:18:13] One thing I feel like I always notice as a casual observer of the coaching industry is, everybody is packaging their services, their programs, their

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courses the same exact way. When's the last time you saw somebody come out with something, like a program of some sort, and you were like, "Wow, it's really unique. She's offering that in a really different way." No. Everybody offers it in the same exact way.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:18:36] I felt like when I was coming up in the online business industry, when I was starting out, it was like everyone was creating a group program and they're all styled exactly the same, the same length of time, even the same prices half the time, saying that they would give you the same outcome. It was just so monotonous. And so, I find it really limiting.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:18:56] And I want to invite you to start thinking about this in a way of when you see somebody who does what you do online, just because they're offering something in a certain way, like in a course, in a program, whatever, product of some sort, it doesn't mean that that's the endpoint. It doesn't mean that that's the only way that those services can be delivered or those products can be delivered. What if there's something that you could create that's totally different, and out there, and unique to either you or to your business, something that's not being done that would help.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:19:30] And I think sometimes what happens when we only follow people who do what we do or we consume a lot of their information is that we start to accept their way of doing things as the right way. So, this was probably one of the most pivotal parts of creating my legal business for me because stuff started to come across my desk. I would see people or other people would talk about certain people, or they've reached out to me themselves or whatever. And I did look around and say, "I don't see anybody doing anything like the Ultimate Bundle. I don't see anything like that."

Sam Van Wielen: [00:20:08] And I didn't take that as a sign that that wasn't a good idea. I took it as a sign that there was opportunity. And I turned around and I created the

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Ultimate Bundle, which was my signature program that gives you a package of legal templates and trainings and all this stuff bundled together. And it was really meant to teach people beyond just legal templates. Because there were people selling legal templates, but I didn't see people actually giving you the information that you needed to run your business online because it's not just found in a legal template.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:20:35] So, if I had only consumed, or if I had consumed at all, the information of the people around me, it would have really limited me. I never would have come up with this idea for creating a really different kind of product. So, take that for what it's worth, but I think that can be really helpful.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:20:54] Before we move on from this point, I just want you to spend more time figuring out your differentiating factor and then actually showing your audience what that factor is. Lean into it. So, if it's a differentiating factor of your actual product, your program, your services, you can highlight that. If it's of your personality, you can highlight that. If you've got both, I would highlight both.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:21:18] But I'd rather see you spend more time figuring out and actually highlighting those differentiating factors of you or your stuff, than just consuming all of their information and trying to be more like them. Because they already exist, but you don't or maybe you're not allowing the world to see it, but you need to allow the world to know that you exist. The world knows that they exist. And if somebody wants to go work with them, they can. But you're trying to get people to work with you. And so, we need to know who you are.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:21:48] Tip number four is all about the fact that competition and market research are very valuable. So, don't get me wrong, sometimes when I'll talk about this, people will say to me, "But aren't we supposed to do competition research or market research?" Yes. But when you can, as soon as you can, you don't have to do

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this yourself. I actually don't think it's a good idea for you to do it yourself because it's a pretty emotional process. Also, I learned pretty quickly, it takes you out of the game. Mentally, it just takes you out of the game. And so, I actually think it's very helpful that when you hire someone, you ask if this is part of their work for you.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:22:28] So, like a copywriter, for example. If you hire a copywriter to write you a sales sequence, or a welcome sequence, or a sales page, or something like this, they're going to ask you a ton of information about you, and what you do, and your clients, and your ideal clients, and all of that. And then, they're probably going to ask you if they're pretty good at what they do, who else is in your space that's similar to you. And then, they will go check them out.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:22:53] This is not to be sneaky and steal the original recipe to the Coca-Cola thing or something like this. But this is about differentiating. And so, I want to encourage you - and I'm hoping that this episode is doing it already - to start seeing the competition thing or shifting the community over competition thing in the narrative around that to one more of you leaning into who you really are and differentiating yourself versus having to support them and consume their content. So, your copywriters, or your funnel specialist, or you're automation specialist, or whoever you hire for different tasks and projects in your business will typically include that as part of it.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:23:38] Now, just like I mentioned a couple of minutes ago, in the beginning, yes, you might have to do a little bit of this yourself. You just want to make sure to keep it in check and remember what the purpose is of doing it. You're not checking out and doing market research of your competition because you're just creating a carbon copy but slightly different version of their business. You're doing it to figure out how and why you're so different. And then, how you're going to actually communicate that to your audience, like why should they care about you being so

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different. Or are you creating content that would attract the kind of person that would appreciate those differences. So, that's how you really should be spending your time.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:24:18] So, in tip number five, you might be thinking like, "Well, okay. You've told me how to not spend my time, essentially, on social media. So, who should I be then spending time with?" So, I don't think it's the best use of your time to be networking on social media with other health, business, money coaches, whatever it is that you do. But I really think you should be spending that time on social, engaging with, and looking for your ideal clients.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:24:45] And you might think like, "What's the big deal? I follow a couple of people who do what I do. I leave some comments. I'm friends with them, yada, yada, yada." Well, if you only have 15 minutes every day to make really targeted social media engagement, like leaving comments, finding ideal clients, watching their stories, doing all of the things, any time, really, that you take away from that is lost in terms of finding your ideal clients.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:25:11] And so, those people who you're just trying to be nice to, which, again, is not mutually exclusive, you can still be nice to people and you could do this on your own time. But if you are sitting down and you have 15 minutes to market your business on social media, it shouldn't be by leaving comments on other people's stuff who do what you do or DM-ing with them. That's personal time. That's fun networking, having a support system. That is the community part of community over competition. It's just that this whole thing gets conflated with the fact that you feel like you're supposed to be spending all of your time doing that.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:25:44] So, tip number six, if somebody buys your program who does what you do - so a lot of people ask me about this when I shared that I was recording this episode with you today and they said, "What am I supposed to do if

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somebody buys my program who does what I do? Or what if somebody starts following me, or whatever, or buys my product, or asks me to be their client, or to coach them? - what I said in this one is, when it comes to other people who do what you do, starting to buy or consume your stuff, I would just be curious. I would lead with curiosity. Admittedly, it's easy to lead with a lot of fear and just worried that somebody is out to get you.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:26:28] But I would lead with curiosity, and I would say that this would really only be something you do if someone buys something from you. Just following you is not a crime. But if someone buys something from you who does the exact same thing as you, I would be curious and I would chat with them and I'd ask them what they're hoping to get out of it. And I think you can be friendly and curious, again, not mutually exclusive. I think you can do both. I think it's smart when somebody does exactly what you do if they buy your stuff to ask because why would they need it?

Sam Van Wielen: [00:27:00] Like, if a lawyer bought the Ultimate Bundle - which by the way, I've had a lot of lawyers buy the Ultimate Bundle, and I have led with curiosity and asked them, unless it was obvious, "Hey, I'm just curious. I saw you're a lawyer, too. So, what are you up to?" And they're doing vastly different things. They're not building a legal templates business or they're not building a legal business at all.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:27:21] And what's actually been really kind of funny and has, I guess, checked me sometimes is that when I have checked in with them, they'll be like, "Yeah. I was a lawyer just like you. But I don't know any of this stuff. And I'm so glad that you're doing this." So, it's actually kind of funny that I would be a little paranoid thinking that they wanted to steal it or recreate it. And then, it turns out that they actually really are excited about it and want to learn from it, and they really appreciate it. So, I do check with anybody who I see is directly a lawyer, I think, that perks the ears a little bit. But beyond that, if it's following or whatever, I let it go.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:27:58] So, I wanted to give you a quick legal tip here before we leave. I feel like you should have something in your terms of use saying that they can't reuse your information or use your program as a learning opportunity or to get inspiration. Maybe you put that in real quotes, I don't know. Or to create the same thing as whatever you're offering.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:28:18] So, your terms of use are the things that someone would agree to when they would check out from your program. So, they buy like your course, for example, and they would have to agree to your terms of use. You would add in a provision in there that would tell them exactly what they can and can't use. So, you're giving somebody essentially what's called a limited license when they buy your program. They don't have a complete license. They can't do whatever they want with it, but they have a license to use it in the way that you prescribe.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:28:46] And so, to that effect, you have to tell them what's okay, what's not okay. And so, one of the ways that it's okay is to consume the information for themselves, for their own business, for personal reasons, whatever. But you can say that the purpose of this course or of purchasing this course is not to be able to just reuse it for your own, or to have inspiration to create your own program, or to do market research, or whatever it is that you want to say.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:29:13] So, that's definitely something that you could slide into your terms of use that would give you some legal coverage. So that if there ever was an issue and somebody who does what you do bought your program, you could actually look back at those terms of use and show them how they agreed to that when they purchased the program and they agreed to not use this as inspiration.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:29:35] Okay. So, those were our six tips. I'm going to hop into our Q&A now. I'm so excited. I asked everybody on Instagram what were some questions that you had about community over competition or how to navigate your competition in general, and I got a lot of really good questions so I'm going to go over a couple now.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:29:56] So, a lot of people actually submitted questions asking if they even needed to be on social media. And I thought that was so funny, I guess in response to my prompt about like, what do you feel about with competition and yada, yada. And so many people said to me like, "Do I even need to be on social? Do I have to?" And the first thing that came up for me was wondering whether you're trying to avoid being on social media because of the feelings and the issues that it brings up that I'm talking about in this episode.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:30:28] So, first of all, I am the first one to understand why somebody would not want to be on social media or not be on social media as much. But if the reason that you're asking - maybe you can spend some time reflecting on this - is because of all the feelings that it brings up. Like, it makes you feel like there's no point of you running this business because there are already all these other people running the business. Or it makes you feel like you're too late, you know you're behind. Or somebody's doing it so much better, or you're not smart enough, or articulate enough, or cool enough, or whatever. If that's why you're asking, then I would say to go back and implement the tips in this episode.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:31:06] I'd be really curious with those of you who submitted this question, whether this had anything to do with it. And I think sometimes people, because they come onto social media and they do follow people who do what they do and they consume all their information, they then are like, "Oh, do I even need to be on here? Because, like, there are already all these other people doing this." But there's nobody doing it exactly like you're doing it if you actually do it. And if you actually do it in

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a unique way. And I know you have a uniqueness about you, and it's probably really incredible. But if you don't ever let us see it, how are we supposed to know?

Sam Van Wielen: [00:31:41] So, somebody else asked, "Can we be friends with people who do what we do?" -asked so frequently. Yes, you can be friends with people who do what you do. You could be friends with anybody you want. It doesn't matter. You could be friends with your number one "competitor". That is not what I'm talking about.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:31:59] What I'm talking about is checking yourself as to how you're spending your time, on whom you are spending that time, who you're consuming the content of. And I really believe that we are our thoughts. We are what we see, and what we consume and take in, and the energy around that. And so, what I would recommend is spending your time on social media acting like a business, which means that you're there to find people who can support your business, and who are going to purchase from you, and want to work with you, and love what you're doing.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:32:33] And the time that you would spend hanging out with or communicating with other people who do what you do, that's just fun time. That's personal time. And you have to kind of get used to switching these two hats. Like, sometimes you're there to run your business and sometimes you're there for fun. And so, I think who you follow becomes more about what you want to do for fun.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:32:53] Personally, I don't feel like looking at or reading about legal tips. Like, I don't need to read other people's legal tips. I'm a lawyer, and if there's something that I don't understand, I'm going to go research it myself. But I don't want to follow other lawyers who do what I do for many, many different reasons. But that's also not the kind of stuff I want to consume.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:33:10] So, for me, the consumption part is more about fun. Like, what helps me to feel more creative, what helps me to feel in the flow, what gets me out of my head. Which is primarily anything to do with cooking and food, puppy videos, and some home stuff now because we're moving, and probably travel and vacation stuff. So, that's what I want to consume. But yeah, of course, you can be friends and no one's saying that you can't be friends.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:33:36] One of the other Q&A's that I got was how this person doesn't like to see what other people are doing who do what they do, because she was saying that imposter syndrome immediately kicks in whenever she sees her stuff. So, absolutely, I totally understand that. And that's why I'm such a big proponent of not seeing it. Like, I would ask yourself what really the purpose is of following these people. What are you getting out of it? What positive stuff is coming out of it? And if it's your friends, that's fine. By the way, there are other tech tools that you can use on platforms like Instagram. You can still be friends or follow somebody and not see their stuff, so you can do that.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:34:19] But I would really ask yourself, Why am I doing this? Am I doing this out of some sort of sense of obligation, out of feeling like I'm not being abundant enough like I'm supposed to? Am I following them because I think that their way of having created this business is now the limit and the definition of what it is to run this kind of business? Or can I create something totally unique of my own?

Sam Van Wielen: [00:34:42] So, if imposter syndrome is kicking in, I would say to you that that makes total sense to me and I've been there with you. And that's also why I find it really important for you to control your environment better and only see those things that are really pushing you in a healthier and better direction.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:35:00] So, the last question I got was from someone saying to me that when they see their competitor's content, I wonder if I should be doing it too. And I thought that this was such a good place to end this episode because this kind of encapsulates everything that we've talked about today.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:35:18] First of all, if you feel like when you see your competitors content, you wonder if you should be doing it too. Again, we're going back to this idea that the way that your competitor is doing it must be the right way of doing it or the best way or the only way. When in reality, you actually have no idea how things are going for your competitor. They could be killing it. They could be selling one dollar off something. You know, you just have no idea. They could have a "wildly successful group program", but it could be leaving them feeling empty and totally drained because it's so much time and it's so poorly set up. You really have no idea what's going on in someone else's business. So, that's one part of what I want to say to this comment.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:35:58] The second part is the legal part - which, of course, I've got to end on this note. But if you are seeing their content and then wondering if you should be doing it, too, that is how we go down this path of legal trouble. Whether it's that you actually get in trouble because you do it and it's too close, and it is totally based off of, it's "inspired" by their content or their program or whatever. Or you create it, but then you always hold back and you keep it small and keep it pretty quiet because you're constantly worried that it is based off of that person's program or content.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:36:38] And so, what I want for you is to get to more of a place where that's not even a concern for you because you haven't been consuming it, like you wouldn't know any better. So, I really want to encourage you to integrate some of these tips. I would love for you to send me a DM on Instagram and let me know which one of the six tips we went over today spoke most to you, and which one you're going to try to integrate.

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Sam Van Wielen: [00:37:03] And, of course, it would mean so much to me if you would share about this episode on Instagram, tag me @samvanderwielen on Instagram, so that your friends can listen to it as well, maybe even your competitors or your followers if they're following you and not listening to this advice.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:37:18] Because I really do want to allow people in our industry to feel freer, to not feel like you have to do this, like you have to be number one community hype girl in order to succeed in this industry. Because you don't, and that has nothing to do with how well you want everyone to do. You can want everybody to do the best in the whole wide world, and we all become billionaires, and you can support your mental health, and you can support your emotional health, and do what's best for you.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:37:46] So, with that, thank you for listening to On Your Terms, and I want to keep encouraging you to do your business on your terms.

Sam Van Wielen: [00:37:58] Thanks so much for listening to the On Your Terms podcast. Make sure to follow on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you like to listen to podcasts. You can also check out all of our podcast episodes, show notes, links, and more at samvanderwielen.com/podcast. You can learn more about legally protecting your business and take my free legal workshop, Five Steps to Legally Protect and Grow your Online Business, at samvanderwielen.com. And to stay connected and follow along, follow me on Instagram @samvanderwielen, and send me a DM to say hi.

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