

On Your Terms Podcast Episode 25:
Creating Brand Loyalists & Future Buyers

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:10] Hey there, welcome to On Your Terms. I'm your host, Sam Vander Wielen. I'm here with another episode about how to create all different kinds of content in your business.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:19] If you're bored of talking about what you talk about in your business, if you're not sure what other areas that you can talk about, then today's episode is totally for you. This is a very popular topic that came up in a master class that I hosted back in November, where I talked about my umbrella content strategy. It's where we provide value to our customers in other areas other than the exact thing that we sell or do or talk about by providing value to our customers and showing them that we really, truly understand where they are, what they're going through, what they're confused about, what else they need from us other than just the very thing that we sell.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:53] So, I'm hoping that you're going to love this episode. I love recording it, and I particularly love the mattress conversation that we're going to have towards the end. So, send me a DM on Instagram as you're listening. Let me know if this episode was helpful.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:01:06] And, I said it last week, but starting now - starting last week, I guess, I'm going to start doing a little coffee talk segment before we get into the episode, where it's just a very quick catch up. So, if we were getting coffee now, what I would tell you is that I am planning for the business and hiring like crazy.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:01:26] I have been working a lot behind the scenes on my organizational chart, which is just really funny, like, bizarro world for me, because if you don't know, an organizational chart is essentially like - it's like literally a chart of bubbles that has the company's, like, the organizational structure of the company, right? So, it has a COO or a CEO with you, right? That's the main person, the founder. And then, there's a chief operating officer. Some companies have a chief marketing operator. Some people have a chief financial officer. Like, there are all these different, essentially, departments and there should be a head of each department. And then, there are people under them that might be managers or executors, executors of the people, like implementing.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:06] So, that's what I've been working on. And it's really bizarre for me because when I was an attorney, I was actually not only creating organizational charts for other companies, but I was always, like, referencing them, like when we would go to sue and when we were figuring out what to include in it. You would look at the organizational chart, and I remember being a young attorney and I just told my friend this the other day, like the first big law firm that I worked for, and the senior partner was like, "Go get me the organizational chart." And I was like, "Okay, cool, I will." And then I went, you know, a couple of doors down to my colleague's office who was like a youngish attorney, you know, older than me, but a lot younger than the senior partner. And I was like, "Gus, what's an organizational chart?" And he was like, "I'll show you."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:50] So, I remember not even knowing what it was to, you know, fast forward, like, I don't know, a little less than 10 years later, and I'm creating one for my own business. So, it's bizarro world over here. It's pretty weird, but at least I know how to make it. I guess that's the upside.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:04] So, yeah, I am looking for all the help over here at Sam Vander Wielen. You can always head to samvanderwielen.com/hiring to see if we're hiring for any positions within the company. I would love to work with you if you want to work for us, but I'll make sure I include that link below just in case anybody is looking for a job or, you know, somebody is looking for a job.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:23] With that, I want to give a shout-out to the reviewer of the week. So, in case you don't know already, if you leave a review for On Your Terms on Apple iTunes podcast, then I will give you a shout-out in a future episode by reading your review on air. And if you tell me what your IG handle is by screenshotting me your review and DMing it to me on Instagram, @samvanderwielen, then I can share about it on social media.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:49] So, Liz wrote, "I love this podcast. Sam knows her stuff, and it's obvious that she genuinely cares about her listener's success. She keeps

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it real and shares incredible insights that are so helpful for business owners like me. Thank you, Sam." Well, thank you, Liz. I really appreciate you for leaving a review. Thank you so much for listening to On Your Terms, and I'd love to give you a shout-out if you want to leave a review on Apple iTunes podcast, and I will read your review on air.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:04:15] So with that, let's get into my umbrella content strategy. This is a good one, and I can't wait to hear from you and what you took away from this episode.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:04:26] So, I don't know about you, but I need more than one thing to talk about my business or I think I would lose my mind. Like, pretty early on, I realized I do not just want to talk about legal stuff because it feels limiting and stifling, and I know that my ideal customer is struggling with other stuff. They're not just confused about how to legally protect their online business. They're not just looking for contracts. They're also trying to figure out, how do I build my email list? How do I build my audience on social media? How do I get more clients? When's the right time to raise my prices? People have the same questions in my community beyond just like what kind of contract do I need. And, I know that we can get bored of our straight-up content, like whatever it is that relates directly to what you do or like the very specific niche of the area of what you do. And, that was definitely the case for me.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:05:17] But we also are losing, I think, a big opportunity when we don't speak to other concerns and questions that our ideal client has. But there's a way to do it. I think there's a way to do this right so that you don't confuse people, so that you don't spend too much time talking about this other kind of content and so that you can still, at the end of the day, become known for something because that's really important when we're marketing our businesses that we become known, our name becomes synonymous with what we do, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:05:44] So in order for us to do that, we have to consistently show up and talk about the area in which we teach on, what we sell about. But you are not limited to talking in your business just about the very specific thing that you do. I

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think it's a great way to show that you really get your ideal clients and talking about your content in an umbrella method fashion. And, that's really what I'm going to focus on today, is teaching you what I call the umbrella method of content, talking about how I integrate this in my own business, what this looks like, how you can go about sketching this out in your own business.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:18] So, this is something that I actually brought up and taught in November from start-up to sold-out masterclass series. And, I felt like there was almost like a collective sigh of relief in the virtual room when people were like, "Oh, I don't just have to talk about exactly what I do." And it felt like such a sense of relief, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:40] So, I'm really glad that you might feel relieved. And, I hope that today after this episode, you'll walk away feeling like you at least have a strategy, right? You know me. I'm always thinking about the business strategy here, so everything has to make sense when it comes to your business. But there is a way to do this that actually supports your business not just like, "Oh, this isn't going to hurt my business." It will actually help your business.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:03] I don't, however, and I'm going to get into a second what the umbrella content method is and how you go about designing it and all that kind of stuff. But I want you to remember that when I'm talking about talking about other things in your business other than the very core, you know, offer that you have, like me not talking only about legal, for example, I don't want you to be interested in talking about other things because you feel like you're just saying the same thing over and over.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:31] You've probably heard people say this before, but it is true. So, bears repeating. If you're repeating yourself in your business, then you're doing something right. If you're saying the same thing over, it means you're being consistent. That's how we're really going to set the foundation for you in your business, for you to become known for something.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:47] And so, I remember a mentor of mine about a year or two ago had said, you know, you become synonymous enough with what you do in your community that people know that you sell legal stuff that that's what you're there to talk about. That if you want to do a training on, like, building your email list or a little, like, quick tip on Instagram Stories, it's not going to impact your business, the actual thing that you sell and that makes you money.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:08:11] So, it's really important that we spend the time actually cultivating and building and strengthening this foundation of really getting comfortable with repeating ourselves with becoming known for something and for really coming at it from so many different angles. So, I just wanted to be clear before we get into this today that, you know, this is not a way to get out of showing up and talking about your offer. This is for those of you who are doing the work, being consistent, showing up, building your foundation, becoming known for this area. But you also know that your clients have other interests and concerns, and you have other interests and concerns and maybe just want to spread your wings a little bit and show really what you know, the full depth of what you know.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:08:57] So, it means you're doing something right if you're sick of - if you're feeling like, "Oh, I'm repeating myself. You know, I'm saying the same thing over. I feel like I've already talked about this." That means you're doing something right. Keep going. Keep saying it. Teach it from a different angle. Look at what people's questions are still. Read a recent testimonial and then dig into that person's story about what they were struggling with. Because the truth is, someone else in your audience is also going to be still struggling with that. And keep doing that.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:27] This umbrella content method that we're going to talk about today is just an additional layer on top of all that. It's not a substitute. So, we are going to transition into talking about what is the umbrella method. What the heck am I talking about when I say the umbrella method of content?

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:43] So, I am super visual. I don't know about you. Are you a visual learner? I don't know. But for me, I have to, like, think of something. I'm the queen of analogies. I'm always thinking about those kinds of things in a visual way.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:55] So, here's the way that I think about creating content for your business.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:59] I think that your ideal customer is like a person standing holding an umbrella and your business is essentially the umbrella. And the spoke of the - sorry. The main handle of the umbrella, right, is really the core content pillar. So in my case, this would be legal for online businesses, for online coaches, and service providers. So, we'd be talking about contracts and website policies, registering your business, business insurance, taxes. All of that stuff would be under the main foundational handle type thing, you know, the strong wooden handle of the umbrella. And, the person that's standing there is my ideal client. I have a very, very good idea of who that person is and what they're struggling with and what they want instead and what their hopes and dreams and desires are, and all of that kind of stuff. And, I'm really there to be that umbrella, to be there and to cover them and to get them that foundational knowledge that they're primarily coming to me for. They probably have other problems in other areas of their life. They definitely have other problems in other areas of their business. But that's really what they're coming to me for. Right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:11:05] But the reason that I started thinking about and creating this umbrella content method is that I felt limited by that, by just talking about legal every single day because I am interested in so many other things, and I've learned a lot over the way, you know, during the time that I've built my own businesses. And, I also know that when my ideal client is standing there holding that umbrella, yes, they are holding that handle and I am that main pillar for them that hopefully, they're coming to for legal information about their business. But I know that there are other spokes on the umbrella that are covering them, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:11:38] And so, some of these other spokes, like I've alluded to, might be social media or like how to build on social media, how to get more clients

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from social media. It might be copywriting. It might be building an email list. It might be all different kinds of things, how to run group programs. Like, there are all different kinds of topics that are still under this umbrella that my ideal client is struggling with or has questions about or wants to learn more about that aren't related to anything that I offer, necessarily, but they are related to my ideal client. My ideal client is still struggling with that while also struggling with the legal piece, right? So, I like to think about related areas.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:12:19] Now, the closer the spokes are to the handle, I can like to consider that those are even maybe a little baby umbrella branches off of the main handle. So, for me, for example, being a legal educator for online entrepreneurs, maybe one of the spokes to the left or the right of me is taxes or money. I've started to talk a little bit about money and investment, and I can kind of relate that back to legal stuff too, right? Like, I could talk about investing in retirement as an entrepreneur and how you can put money in like a SEP IRA or individual 401(k) or something if you own your business and you set it up properly. And, what does that do for you legally? What do you have to have in place for you legally? And then, what does that do for your taxes? Those are, to me, the closest umbrella spokes.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:05] If I take one step out, one more notch over, then I might start to get into like, "Well, how do I build my email list?" So, I give little tips about, well, when you do build your email list, by the way, you can only put people on it who have legally signed up to be on it. But here are some tips as to how to get more people to sign up for your email lists. Like, I've got you covered on the legal side. But how do you get more people on your email list? So, I can start to teach about that.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:30] And so, it gives me this opportunity to step out a little bit and also show my ideal client that I've got them in other areas of what they're struggling with. This is not where you should spend the majority of your time. It shouldn't even be a high, high percentage of your time or your content amount if we were quantifying it. But I do think it's something that you can start to splice in once you're building that foundation that we talked about.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:55] Once you feel like you're really working and you're spending the majority of the time on setting that foundation and being the handle, you can start to kind of go out to what these other spokes are and start addressing what else your ideal client is struggling with. And I think that this is a really cool way to bring in other content and to mix things up, to look even to different purposes of this content.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:20] So, for example, maybe some of this content is merely meant to get people's attention and kind of bring them into the fold. I see this a lot in my business where somebody might not be necessarily super pumped about following somebody on Instagram who gives legal tips, you know, especially once they get their legal stuff in place and they're like, "Well, why would I continue to follow this person?" It's kind of like a one-and-done situation. But not only do I continue to give additional tips that they might not have thought of, and I showed that to them on Instagram or elsewhere, but I'm also then talking about this other stuff which keeps them in the community, which keeps them top - just keeps our company on top of mind, and then it keeps you top of mind for referrals to other people.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:02] So, I think that that can be a really, really helpful tool in growing and deepening this connection with your community, which I actually talked about last week in last week's episode about continuing to nurture your customers. This is another way that you can continue to nurture your customers by talking about other things.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:22] 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. 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 in place in order to legally and safely run your business online.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:55] As much as it just feels like an unregulated Wild Wild West online, that is very much not the case. 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.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:16:11] And you're not behind at all. We can get you set up in 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. 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.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:16:38] 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. 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 Vander Wielen: [00:17:01] One of the best examples that I love about this, too, is that, you know, if you're ever feeling a little dry on content, you're having writer's block, you feel like you've explored something from every angle, I like to take a look at what other companies are doing. Overall, in general, I would like highly recommend for you to, as much as possible, absorb business knowledge and information from people outside the coaching space.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:25] For one, there are way more highly qualified and skilled people operating in other ways. Like, they are actually focused on business, not just like, "Oh, I did a launch that was successful and now I have a business." So, we want to actually, like, take stuff from people who are way, you know, doing this on a larger scale. But the other thing is that sometimes this is helpful to get out of this bubble, you know, and kind of see that things are done a bit differently.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:51] So, I read this article once that, and if I can find it, I will link it, I swear, but I read this article, and so it was super helpful, that was talking about one of the mattress companies. I don't recall if it was like Avocado or Purple or whatever, but it was one of these mattress companies that send you the mattress all rolled up in a box, and they were talking about how brilliant their content strategy was. Because nobody wants to be on an email list for a mattress company. Like, if I bought a mattress and I got the mattress and then I was just sleeping on the mattress, I would unsubscribe from all their future emails because it's like, this is kind of my point about somebody having bought and then like moving on and be like, I got my mattress. I don't need to hear about more. Like, how many mattresses can you buy, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:18:33] But the cool thing about this company that was featured in this article was that they were saying that what this company does is that they have - this is not the term that they used, but when I read it, I was like, "Oh, they're following an umbrella content strategy." So, what they're doing is that they're talking about issues that are related to sleep without talking about mattresses. Or, I should say, issues that come from that are related to somebody who would need or want a mattress or maybe who just upgraded their mattress, but not the mattress.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:05] So, instead of sending out content about like, "Our mattress has six springs instead of nine and it has a 3-inch gel instead of a 2-inch gel. Buy our mattress." It was super boring, right? Nobody wants to read that content. But what you do like to read is the kind of content that this company was sending out, which was more like, "Here are the top five Spotify playlists to have on your nightstand for a good night's sleep." "Here are six ways that meditating before you go to sleep helps you have a deeper sleep." They would have interviews with sleep experts about how to get better sleep. They would answer the age-old question of, can you sleep in on the weekends? They would have articles featuring the best bed sheets. They would talk about the best pillows for you based on how you sleep. "Are you a side sleeper? Are you a back sleeper? Here's the best pillow for you." They talked about, with interior designers, about cleaning up your room and your space and rehabbing your sleep space so that it's more of, as my mom calls it, a sleep sanctuary. It sounds insane but true.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:20:08] So, you know, that's like what I'm talking about. It's like as soon as I saw this article, I was like, "That's it. That's exactly right." Because maybe somebody, for example, doesn't want to get, you know, just hear about legal stuff all the time, or maybe they don't want to get your email about your widget constantly. You know, in law, for some reason in law school, whenever they talk about goods like products, they call them widgets. And, like, every case that we talked about was like widgets. So, for some reason, that's still in my head.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:20:37] But point being like I still get all these emails, you know, from different places. Like, there's this place I love to buy tea towels from. I got a love of tea towels from my mother. I don't know why. So, I get their emails every month and every month or every week or whatever, however often it comes, it's just like, here's a new tea towel. Here's a new tea towel. Here's a new tea towel. And you ignore them, right? I just ignore it, and I don't ever look at their emails. I delete them. I think I might have just even unsubscribed, and I love their tea towels. But the point is like, that's like straight-up e-commerce content, right? But we could do better in terms of providing this kind of umbrella content to keep people interested in the fold.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:21:15] I feel like if you're listening to this episode after listening to episode 24 last week, then I would definitely pair this together by, you know, thinking about how even the strategy could nurture and further and deepen that relationship with your customers, right? I could see, like, if you're kind of stuck on like, well, if I create some sort of specific content for my customers after they've purchased for me, what kind of content do I send? And I feel like umbrella content would be a great thing to do.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:21:46] So, the mattress company sending out emails to people who have already purchased from them to say here's the top Spotify playlist, you should have to have great sleep. That's just a bonus ad. It's like additional content, valuable content to a customer who's already paid them, and they can use this content elsewhere.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:03] First of all, it's going to drive traffic to their site, which is smart, right? Because otherwise, they're just competing against people searching for mattress companies. But now they can also capture people and get brand recognition and brand loyalty, people having positive associations with this brand by posting this valuable content that's not directly related to their actual product but it is, right, because we need good sleep and a mattress is just like one element to a good sleep.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:29] There are many other elements to it. And so, they're kind of hitting all of these elements, just like in whatever you do. So, you might be able to think of this from your perspective in your business. Like, whatever you do, you might not use all mattresses, but what are the other elements to having a good night's sleep? You talk to people about food, but what are the other elements to living a healthy lifestyle? Movement, mindfulness, their work-life balance, stress, you know, nutrition, vitamins. I don't know, all kinds of things, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:58] So, there are many different spokes under your umbrella of what you're helping clients learn more about, get in touch with, improve upon that you can talk about that still help them, right? Because you understand. If you truly understand really where they are and what they're struggling with, then you're also going to be able to be like I know what else they're struggling with, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:23:19] I have lived my customer's shoes, not from the legal perspective, but I know what it's like to start your own business and I know what it's like to be Googling everything, to be collecting all the freebies, to feel like is this ever going to work? Should I invest in a business coach? Should I focus on my email list? But everybody's saying that reels are really important. It's confusing and it's overwhelming, and I understand all of the different aspects as best as I can this, you know, now that people are struggling with. So, those are my spokes and that's what else I talk about.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:23:52] So, I want to give you the freedom to create other content that still makes sense for your business that doesn't dilute your messaging, your branding, what you're known for. I really want you to be known for whatever it is that you do and have your name be like, you know, Sam, that legal templates woman, right? So,

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I want - that's what I'm working towards, that's what my hope and my goal is. And, I want the fact that I offer other stuff to be a bonus.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:17] So, I want your name to be synonymous with what you do, but I also want you to be seen as a real expert in your field. Somebody who's like, "Man, she can, like - she can help me with all kinds of stuff." And, also somebody who they see as a trust, you know, a trusted leader in the space, in what you do because there are a lot of people - the truth is, there are probably a lot of people who do what we all do, right, but not everybody does it like you do.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:41] So, I want you to lean into this umbrella method as much as possible, and I would love for you to send me a DM on Instagram and let me know that after listening to this episode, what do you think some of the spokes on your umbrella could be? Did this episode illuminate anything for you? Did it help you to just get permission to be able to talk about other things? Did it make you realize that you've got to work harder to be known for what you do so that you will be able to talk about these other things? Do you see a place in your business where you could add value to your customers, to your potential customers, by talking about these other things that they are experiencing, struggling, confused about? So, think about it.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:22] Send me a DM on Instagram. Let me know what you're thinking. Let me know what this episode brought up for you. Until then, thank you so much for listening to On Your Terms, and I'll see you next week.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:34] 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.