

On Your Terms Podcast Episode 26: Should You Really Run Facebook Ads? (Yes, But Here's When)

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:09] I am so sick and tired of hearing people online talk about Facebook ads the way that they do. They're the devil. They're the answer to your prayers. Which is it? Luckily for you, I am breaking it all down in this episode of On Your Terms.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:26] Before we get into this week's episode, I want to read you one of the latest reviews of my podcast, On Your Terms, on Apple Podcasts. Carly Lana says, "Sam Vander Wielen's Podcast On Your Terms is an absolute must for all entrepreneurs. The episodes are not only interesting and inspiring, but you'll walk away with a step-by-step on what you need to know to operate as a small business owner or entrepreneur. This podcast and Sam's Ultimate Bundle takes all the guesswork and stress away from protecting your online business. This podcast is a total game-changer for anyone looking to start, grow or scale a business in 2022." Thank you so much, Carly. I really appreciate leaving that review of On Your Terms on Apple Podcasts.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:01:02] If you want to be featured on a future episode of On Your Terms, head on over to Apple Podcasts. Leave a review. Send me a screenshot on Instagram @samvanderweilen and let me know, and I'll be happy to give you a shout-out on a future episode.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:01:15] Until then, let's get into this week's episode all about what is the deal with Facebook ads. And so, I want to go over all of your questions today about Facebook ads and what the purpose is of Facebook ads I think, like some of the pros and cons. I'm going to bust up some of the myths that you might have heard. If you've heard all these, like, horror stories before about this person lost all this money or this was a total, like, tank for this person, I'm going to break some of those situations down, and I'm hoping that you'll leave today's episode with a bit more clarity on maybe why you've seen or heard some of these horror stories before. And, I'm also going to give you nine concrete tips and things that I would put into place if you ever want to run Facebook ads, whether it's tomorrow, a year from now, three years from now, it doesn't matter.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:01] I'm also hoping to just, like, make you feel a little bit better about whatever decision you make in your business in general, really about anything but in particular about Facebook ads today. Yet, there is no one way to do this, right? I call this podcast On Your Terms for a reason. I really strongly believe in this. It's like the ethos of my business. And so, there are so many ways to do this. I break down my own personal journey with Facebook ads, what's been great about it, what's been really hard about it, and how I got into it.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:32] And, I also share with you how I waited years and years before I got into Facebook Adland, right? And if I were to do it all over again, I would do every single thing that I tell you in this episode. I have learned a lot of things the hard way. I like to think that I've spent the money to help you figure stuff out and be more efficient with it. And so, today's episode is going to be really helpful for you, if you're just curious about Facebook ads, if you run them now, if you're thinking about it in the future. So with that, let's get into this episode of On Your Terms.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:04] So if I had a dollar for every time that somebody told me, like, "My business isn't working really well or I wish I was making more sales, I'm not working with enough people. You know, what I think I'll do? I'm going to start Facebook ads." Well, then I could take all those dollars and I could put them towards my own Facebook ads. I'll be here all week.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:22] All right. So, anyway, I can't tell you how many times I have heard from people, and you probably have to and maybe even thought this because I used to think this too, that if something's not working in your business, then the answer to your little business prayers might be Facebook ads, right? If something's not selling enough, you throw Facebook ads at it. If you want to create a passive product, you think, "How am I going to sell this? Oh, well, I'll just start Facebook ads," and then, like, somehow it'll magically sell.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:49] It's really similar to the logic that we all use when we start our businesses and we, you know, pop up our websites for the first time, and then

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we're like, "Okay, I hit publish on this blog post. Like, why aren't all the inquiries rolling in? Why has the New York Times not calling me for a quote? I don't understand. I hit publish on my website."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:04:06] I think there's just so much of this. Like, we don't - we sometimes think that the product that we create, and I don't mean like just the literal product that you sell but like your website or the actual product or a piece of content, will just somehow magnetically and naturally attract people to it. And we don't realize that creating that thing, whatever that end thing is, is really just the beginning of this process of figuring out even more steps of how to bring people to it, how to lead people naturally to the water to get them to drink. But we don't just put a glass of water out and everybody just starts drinking out of it.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:04:43] So, I see that a lot with Facebook ads in terms of people expecting it to just naturally attract people in or naturally work or something like this. And I also think that people think that even once they've got a successful business that you can just, like, turn on Facebook ads, right? So, maybe you've already started working with clients, you're already coaching people and you're like, "I don't feel like having to talk about this stuff on Instagram anymore. I'll just start Facebook ads and then everything will just happen naturally." No more sales, right? Or I don't have to be present in my business. I can take my foot off the gas.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:05:19] I'm so excited to have this conversation with you today because I feel like I've thought all of these things in the past. I've gone through all of these myself, and I've seen so many other people go through it too.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:05:30] I think overall when it comes to Facebook ads, there's just, like, two things going on. One is that people are throwing a lot of splashy things at you on Instagram, both from the ad side, right? Admittedly, people will be like, "Ads are the answer. The ads are amazing." And then, also from - I see it more, I guess, in the business coaching side where people use kind of like an anti-Facebook ads approach to get you to buy their thing instead. That's something that you see a lot in the online

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business industry in general, is this like don't - you don't need a website, buy my business coaching package, or like you don't need Facebook ads, buy a funnel thing. Like, it always seems people are always shitting on one thing in order to get you to buy their thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:11] And I just want you to keep that in mind when you're kind of consuming content of like, are they pooh-poohing one way of doing something just so that I get to buy their thing? Like, I think that's something that's helpful. Because the truth is that a lot of this stuff is helpful. Like, you need a website and it's great to run Facebook ads if you can, if you want to. We'll go over that today.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:31] You know, it's great to run a funnel or not run a funnel. Like, there's just not one way to do this stuff. It's not so black and white, and these things can't be discussed in such a vacuum, the way that they are on social media, and it just annoys the crap out of me, honestly.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:47] So, I think there's just like a lot of black and white thinking, either people are, like, hardcore against them. And then, you also see - you know, sometimes I see people being a little too flippant about it, right? And, there are a lot of people just being like, "Yeah, you just got to try. It's got to start somewhere. Like, just start running ads and we'll see how it goes. If it doesn't work, you can pause them." I don't think that's good advice either, right? And, I think when people are against them too, like - they again are kind of using it as somehow to draw you in to something that they're advertising for themselves.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:19] Can we all just take a moment by the way? I always talk to Ryan about this, my husband, Ryan. I always talked to him about this that, like, I find it so funny when I see so many people in the online business industry, shitting on Facebook ads because I'm like, "You guys realize, like, every business advertises, right?" Like, advertising is a normal way of running a business, right? Target runs commercials. Nordstrom runs commercials.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:45] We were in the Hamptons this summer. There was an entire bus, like a bus that people could take, I don't know, from somewhere, and Nordstrom had wrapped the entire bus in an advertisement to bring people to the Hamptons.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:56] And, you know, I'm just looking around that we're constantly hit with advertisements. Facebook ads are just one form of advertisement, and I don't understand, I've said this in previous episodes, like I don't understand. Sometimes I feel like the online business industry shoots itself in the foot of, like, why - we want to be taken seriously. We fight to, like, with our families or friends or former coworkers or something like this to be seen and felt as legitimate in their eyes. And then, we do stuff like this, where we're like crapping on Facebook, and I just don't get it. I'm like, "Why? It's advertising. What's so wrong about it?"

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:08:30] Now we can put aside all the issues on Facebook and, you know, watching the social network and people's addiction to social media. And, like, that would be 100 new podcast episodes for a different day. But I'm just saying in terms of advertising, I don't understand what the big deal is. If you don't want to run them, don't run them. If you want to run them, run them. So, I'm not here to tell you today that you should. I'm not here to tell you you shouldn't. I just wanted to kind of have a more open discussion as to, like, what really, you know, should be going on in your business in order to run them successfully.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:02] I've seen some real nightmare situations, so I'm going to share some of those with you today of just a little bit about my experience with Facebook ads and what I've seen in the industry, and I'm hoping that this episode will just kind of like cut through some of the noise and some of the motivated reasoning, to be honest, that's thrown your way to tell you to invest or not invest in them either way.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:23] So, basically, what we're going to be talking about today is that there are so many different ways and reasons to run Facebook ads. And what I'm hoping is that, in today's episode, that you'll, first of all, see, maybe get a little

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bit more clarity as to whether or not you even want them, whether it would be helpful to your business, but also if it is something that you're interested in, then what things do you need to have in place in your business in order to successfully run Facebook ads?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:50] There are many, many different ways to do this. You can run Facebook ads for anything, from things like awareness of your business, your brand, or your products. Familiarity. I can never say that word. So, to become aware of your brand and for people to be familiar with you and to hear about it constantly. Really, that top of mind sales situation. Also, to make sales, right? People just run Facebook ads to run sales all the time. And for things like opt-ins, right? Getting people to opt into your freebies, to listen to your podcast, to watch your webinar, whatever, and to nurture your audience, last but not least. But nurturing your audience is an important part of running Facebook ads. It's not a part that I hear a lot of people talking about, so I'll be really excited to chat with you about this today.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:10:35] So, there's also the all-of-the-above combined approach, which is the one that I take. So, I'll share openly throughout this episode about, you know, kind of what I do, what I have done to get things in place in terms of running ads because I've been running ads for now, like, for a year and a half-ish.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:10:50] So, basically ads need - Facebook ads need a pathway, right? They need a funnel. In my opinion, the main reason that Facebook ads don't work or the reason that you or haven't worked for certain people is that people don't run them with intention and they don't run them through a pathway. People think that if they just put these ads up, the people will come, kind of what I was talking about at the beginning of this episode. And, ads really need a pathway.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:11:19] For example, I had a friend years ago who, I mean, this was like a long time ago. She invested in Facebook ads to run Facebook ads to her free discovery calls. She was a coach. She would get on a sales call with someone, and then they would buy her program, and she just ran ads directly to the sales call. Now, imagine you being on Facebook or Instagram or whatever, you get hit with an ad from

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somebody you don't know. Right? It might be a picture of them. I mean, it depends on what they're using for creative. And this copy in the post is just like directing you to book a call and you're like, for what, about what? Why? Is this me? I don't even know. I don't know who you are. I don't know what you do. Why would I want to get on the phone with you?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:12:03] Not to mention the fact that running an ad to a free call is like a surefire way to get on free calls with a lot of people who are just seeking free calls. It shouldn't be that easy to get on the phone with you, and you can go back and listen to my sales call episode. Those are episodes 20 and 21 of On Your Terms. I talked about sales calls, but we don't want to just end up on the phone with just anybody, right? That's like a surefire way to waste your time and to not make very many sales and to not be able to grow your business because you're always on the phone with the wrong people. So we don't want to do that right, and we want to run Facebook ads with intention. So that's an example of where I saw that where it's just like it didn't really make sense.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:12:40] I had another friend, though, on the flip side, who already had a very successful business, so she wasn't - the first friend I was talking about was running this because she wanted to generate more sales. She wasn't happy with the amount of sales she was making.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:12:52] I had another friend, though, during that same time period who already was making a lot of money in her business, and she was like, "You know, I just don't feel like having to do all the work, to get people into my program all the time, so I'm just going to run ads to purchase this program." Right? And it was a total flop. The ads didn't work. Her program is super successful. She's an amazing coach. All of that stuff stayed the same. It's just that the ads don't work.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:17] And then, that's why you end up hearing all of these horror stories from people about like, "Oh, this person lost 20 grand. This person lost 10 grand." Like, it's throwing money down the toilet. That's why you hear all of these stories

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because these stories all have a reason behind why the ads didn't work. It's not that ads don't work, it's that their ads didn't have any purpose or intention, or there was something off, right, something in their funnel wasn't working. Something in the product wasn't working. Something in the creative, the ad stuff that you see, the visuals, the copy wasn't working. It's not usually because ads themselves don't work. Any ad expert will tell you that.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:00] So, the list can go on and on. I can tell you these stories all day long, and you'll hear horror stories left and right about people who've lost so much money with Facebook ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:08] I, on the other hand, am somebody who could tell you mostly just success stories from my business's perspective about how incredible ads have been. And that doesn't mean that my Facebook ads and my experience with Facebook ads has been without any bumps along the road.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:25] So, when I first started running Facebook ads about a year and a half ago, I started out by doing kind of a hybrid approach where I was making the creative myself. I was writing the copy, and the company that I was working with would at least just review them just to give some pointers and tips of like, "Oh, it's not good to say that in a Facebook ad because some things get rejected." And then, we would run these ads and they would help me to understand the audience and stuff like this.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:51] So, when I first started running them, Facebook kept shutting down my ads account because Facebook is just finicky, right? It's all like run on these, like, AI, you know, algorithm things so they would catch certain words and they would think that it was spam. And they don't allow Facebook ads for MLM-type stuff so if you use money-like terminology, sometimes that can get to be an issue. There are all kinds of things, and I remember immediately being like, "Oh, my God, this is why I never wanted to do this. Everyone was right. Facebook ads are horrible. This was a terrible

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mistake. I've wasted all of this money." And, I spiraled and went into all the mindset drama about it.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:28] Over the next couple of weeks, I would say like a month or two, into running the Facebook ads, everything, we kind of got that stuff all ironed out. I understood what words I couldn't say. I understood how to phrase things. I started to learn some of the - more like visual trends at that time, which are not even trends anymore. And, I got my feet under me with Facebook ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:50] Pretty quickly, because I already had a funnel in place that was selling really, really well, organically, pretty quickly, the ads worked. So, I was somebody who, like, I don't think you have to do this like me. You don't have to wait so long. But I was so scared and so resistant to it that I did wait a long time. But I think that because I did, my ads team tells me this all the time, my funnel was so, like, ironed out. It was successful. We knew it converted. We knew people loved the products, my Ultimate Bundle. And we also knew that the webinar was really good. That was the freebie that was kind of leading them in. We knew that it was good. We knew it converted. We knew that we hit people's questions and objections and all of these things, and we just had everything really well in place.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:16:38] So, for me, going into Facebook Adland was really like pouring gasoline on an already roaring fire, but it just kind of made it like, whoosh, go up, right? It was a lot. So, it has definitely amplified, I would say. And it grows more and more and more over time. And then, the algorithm gets better and you, like, you start to learn more about audiences and, like, all of these things. And, I would say that the more I've done Facebook ads, I've also realized that how much about it is about creative, so about the visuals, the video, the photos that you see, and then also the copy that you see. Because you have to remember this is being shown to people who have no idea who you are. It's also being shown intentionally to people who do know who you are or at least, like, follow you or on your email list or something like this.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:26] So, you have a lot of work to do with ads. I think that's why it's - that's why people are wrong when they think that it's just like slap up an ad and everything works out because there's a lot of - there's a lot to it, there's a lot to it. It's very complicated, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:42] So, ads have been great for me. They have also been a pain in the ass because you get nasty comments on your ads. And it's worth it. But it's just, I'm just being honest about some of the downsides. And it definitely increases the volume of your business. So, I think, like, I could also see a disaster for somebody who, you know, if I had done them any earlier, I don't think I would have had the infrastructure in place in my business on the back end, like the systems, the processes, the people, the team members to be able to deal with this level of volume.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:18:18] Now, of course, if you're starting out, you haven't and, you know, your funnel's maybe a little smaller, like my funnel already had sold thousands of products and stuff by the time I started selling ads. Again, you don't have to wait that long, but I did. So, I think the amplification was only going to be more because I had already sold it a lot. But if I had started it earlier, I think it would have been more of a drip situation. So, you might not have the volume problem for a while, right? But that's hopefully the goal. And so, as it grew, I definitely needed to have things tight on my end in order to deal with all the stuff that came from this.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:18:52] There are also times when things have changed. Like, algorithms have changed. All the privacy stuff has changed. The iOS changes. You know, there are - all of these things have changed. It's definitely an arena to go into if you're okay with things changing and with, like, being on your toes.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:09] I really like that. I really like evolving and pivoting. It doesn't bother me at all. But if you're somebody who's like, I need everything to be the same for the next three years in order to feel comfortable, this is not for you. So, it's exciting to me. I love the innovation. I love, like, getting to problem solve with the team

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all the time about this and to come up with ideas. I feel really creative about it. I have a lot of fun filming the ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:32] So, that's kind of been my experience, both good and bad. It's helped the business a lot. There's definitely a lot to it, though. It's expensive, you know, yada yada. But the return is great, and so I deal with it. Again, it's a form of advertising. It's part of my advertising budget for the business. That's how I advertise because that's where my people are hanging out. I don't need a billboard on the highway, right? That wouldn't be very helpful for me. I don't need a commercial on TV. That's not going to be very helpful for me.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:59] So, that's, again, why I don't really understand why people freak out about this because I'm like, "We're just advertising to our people, where our people hang out." I don't know. It doesn't seem that crazy to me.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:20:08] So, with that all in mind, I would love to give you some of my best tips for how to approach Facebook ads, how to get certain things in place in your business if you want to run them, or maybe you're running them already, but you're not really seeing the results that you want. I think you would take a lot away from this.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:20:27] So, first and foremost, let's remember what the purpose is of Facebook ads. The purpose of Facebook ads, in my - this is just my opinion. So, in my opinion, the purpose of Facebook ads is to stay top of mind, right? This kind of omnipresent top-of-mind marketing strategy where we have to remember that people are not only inundated with your quote-unquote competitors or I guess there are other people who do what you do. But they're also just inundated with a billion other thoughts in their mind, let alone images and messages on social media. Right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:21:03] So, right after they see your latest post, they're getting hit with an ad from Olipop and then, you know, one for Branch Furniture and then another one for Grove Collaborative. Like, they're seeing so much. And, I think when we think about our businesses, you know, they're very big in our minds, but then we kind of

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forget how little it is in everybody else's mind because you're carrying this around. It's like your baby, or maybe you're your non-human baby if you have human babies. So, you know, you're carrying this around and you - it's very top of mind for you. And I think sometimes it can be hard to remember that you're not necessarily top of mind for everybody else, naturally.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:21:42] So, Facebook ads are just one way to kind of like basically reshuffle yourself back to the top of someone's inbox, right? You're kind of bumping your business all the time to the back of somebody or to the top of somebody's inbox and you're getting to the top of their mind, right? So, they're seeing your ads. It's repetitive. We know that things that are repetitive become more normal and accepted, right, and familiar. So, this person's name becomes familiar. Maybe the name of your product or your program becomes like second nature to them. They know who you are. Your name is synonymous. I've talked about this a lot, too. Like, getting to that place where your name is synonymous with the thing that you do is a really, really helpful thing in online business. So, one way we can do that is through Facebook ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:31] I also think they can be attention-grabbing because I always think about how we're targeting people with ads who may follow us already and maybe have some level. Like, they're a little bit familiar with us, but we also are landing in front of people who have never heard of you before at all.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:48] And, I always think about this, like with what I do in particular, because it's, you know, I get it. It's not like - it's boring and it's dry, right, typically speaking. I think I tried to make it as interesting as humanly possible.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:23:01] But, with something that I do, people might not want to follow somebody like me on social media. They might think I just want to get my contract and be done with it. Like, I don't need to hear about this, right, or, like, who wants to follow a lawyer? I've heard that one before.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:23:16] So, I think, you know, depending on what you do, you might face that kind of attitude from somebody. But I sometimes think that ads are a nice way that we can break those barriers. So, I very intentionally, and this is like hat tip right here, I very intentionally use playful and casual and fun ads as a way of getting people's attention, but also in breaking down that barrier because that is such a core part of my business anyway, right? It's such a core part of my business for people to realize like, "Oh, I thought you were going to be this like stuffy lawyer. And in fact, you're like pretty down to earth and you can break things down in a casual way." "Yeah, that's me. That's my brand. That's my actual product." That's what your experience is going to be like if you buy the Ultimate Bundle. You don't, like, all of a sudden come into and face the stuffy lawyer like you're with me.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:02] So, I think, I always think of the ads are kind of like the first time we meet at a party. And, you're like, "Oh, she's not that bad. I was kind of, you know, I came in with some, maybe some judgments and some preconceived notions. It's not that bad." So, that's one thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:15] The other thing is that you can grab their attention with maybe something that they didn't know or weren't aware of. Oftentimes, I think one of the best ways to grab somebody's attention is either by busting a myth or by telling them something that they didn't know they didn't even know, right? So, particularly in my industry, it can be really helpful to be like, "Hey, did you know that you even have to do this?" Or like, "Have you been having these thoughts? But you weren't sure where, you know, you could go to get them solved, like where to get your contract. I can help." So, just kind of, I think, breaking down some of those barriers can be a great way through Facebook ads to get their attention.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:51] I would also say that we can build new awareness. So, there might not be - there might be people on Instagram or Facebook who might not even know that someone like you exists. So, one thing that I hear a lot from people who get served with my ads, they'll send me a message and be like, you know, I had all of these questions, but I had no idea that somebody like you even existed, or I had all

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these questions, and I wasn't sure if there was somebody who specifically focused on online business. And then, boom, there you were in my Instagram feed. So, there can just be this like new awareness and that people didn't even know they needed to know about or that you existed. And that's great.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:25] I also think the Facebook ads, one of the other lost purposes that I'll share with you, is that I think Facebook ads can be the closer. So, Facebook ads, I think, can also help you to close the deal. When people have been following you, they have been checking out your product or program for a million years and then now they're like, "You know what? I hear about this thing all the time." You hit them at the right moment when they actually need something, right, or when whatever it becomes available, or it's like, now's the time that works for them to need your product and they get served with your ad, and boom. Or maybe it's something's on sale or there's a promotion, and they see it at the right time.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:59] So, I think that those, to me, are the main purposes of running Facebook ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:26:09] 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.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:26:42] 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. And, you're not behind

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at all. We can get you set up in following the rules right away. In fact, we can even do it today.

[00:27:05] 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. 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: [00:27:49] So, when can Facebook ads be helpful in your business? In my opinion, controversial opinion alert, I think the Facebook ads are really only helpful to somebody once their business or product and program if they're running ads to it is proven. So, I think that you have to have created a product, sold that product, actually have, like, social feedback about that product, right? Have some social proof.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:28:16] And then, there has to be a pathway to that product other than you just directly selling it one-off because there's going to have to be, if you want to run ads, they're going to have to be additional steps. You're not just going to run ads to someone. They're going to be like, "Oh, I'll buy that." That really only works in the true e-commerce business, in my opinion, of somebody selling, you know, a shirt or a mug or whatever, and they hit you with the right ad and you're like, I always wanted this thing or you were talking about it and your phone was listening to you, and then they serve you with an ad about it. So, I think that works really well for them.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:28:48] I think for most of you, you're probably in the service industry and so I don't think it works very well for the service industries. So, with that, I would say a business or product that is proven a funnel or pathway that's been built to

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that product that's already converting, it's already working. And then, Facebook ads would basically just pour gasoline on it.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:29:08] I think that another great time if you're somebody who has that, if you have the product or program that's proven now, another great time to run Facebook ads, in my opinion, is when you don't want to be so ever-present on social media. But, please don't mistake me that by saying. Look, I am not saying that you do not need to be on social media once you run Facebook ads, it's just that it's not as bad. Let's just put it that way.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:29:34] So, it went from, for me, at least having to do kind of like a daily training on Instagram, you know daily posting, Facebook groups, Facebook Lives, Instagram, I was like, "Oh, my gosh, so much content." And that was like what I would call fast content, like content that goes down the toilet, like things that disappear, like stories. And so, it was a lot of that. And, I think what was really cool is seeing that Facebook ads took some of that pressure off. But hang in there and listen to the rest of this episode because there's a really big but to this one that you need to know about that's very, very crucial. And, you do not want to make this mistake. I have learned this, and so I'm going to share it with you in a couple of minutes. But, please don't misunderstand me that I'm saying you don't have to be on Facebook or on social media. It's just that you don't have to be quite as present and always on the app as you might be right now if you're not running ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:30:27] Okay. So, what things then do you need to have in place in order to successfully run Facebook ads now or in the future? So, even if you're not in the place right now to run Facebook ads, these are the things that I would be working on, if I were you, to do them in the future even if you don't end up doing it. None of these things are going to hurt you, so I would just do them anyway. But if you want to run Facebook ads, I would really do this.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:30:51] Okay. So, the first thing to have in place, like I just mentioned, is a proven product or program, which sounds really like, a very simple thing

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to do but in fact it's very complicated. And, I broke this all down for you in episodes 13 and 14 of On Your Terms. So, I would definitely go back and listen to those episodes. But the gist of it is that you have to have a product or program that is actually helpful to people that people really like, that they get tangible results from, that you get social proof from, and that will be so clear to the right person that it will be helpful to them. So, I want you to go back and listen to episodes 13 and 14, if you haven't already, so you can learn more about creating that proven product or program because I teach you how in those episodes. But that is definitely the first thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:31:39] The second thing you have to have in place is that you have to have some sort of process in place of getting people to then buy that product or program. If you don't have that yet, if it's just like you're just going on social media and say, "Hey, buy my product. Hey, buy my program," And, that is, you know, kind of a little bit of a system, but there should be probably a few steps before that, like some sort of freebie that leads to some sort of nurturing that then pitches your product and program automatically so that your job actually becomes about promoting the freebie all the time and getting as many people into that top of funnel freebie, and then letting them float through and purchase your product automatically. Because that's what you're going to run ads to. You're going to run ads to the freebie. You're not going to run ads to the product until they've watched the freebie.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:32:23] So, it's like ad to the freebie. Someone watches the freebie or reads the freebie, engages with the freebie. Then, you serve them with what's called a sales ad, which is then when you say, hey, buy this product, only once they've been introduced to it through your freebie. Right? So, that's why it's really important to get this process down.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:32:40] So, you want to work on that. If it's a sales call, then you definitely want to download my free email templates from my Pre-Qualify Before They Buy freebie. I'll drop the link below in the description. That's a three email template series that I created for you for free that gets people on your sales call for the right reasons and gets the wrong ones to cancel or reschedule. Because you want to make

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sure that you're only getting on sales calls with people who you can actually help and who actually need and want your product or program. And if you're ever going to run Facebook ads to it, you definitely need this in place because you want to make sure you're not just booking a bunch of people who want a free 30 minutes or a pick-your-brain session.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:33:20] The third thing that you need in place is a free opt-in that starts to automate the purchases of that product or program that you have. Again, I'll refer you to episodes 13 and 14 of my podcast because it does help you to learn how to create that little baby funnel. This does not need to be complicated. Yes, my funnel is very complicated. It was not complicated when it started. So, you have to start somewhere and it can be very simple in the beginning.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:33:45] So, you want some sort of free opt-in, whether that's a webinar or a downloadable thing, a video series, whatever it is, it doesn't really matter, except that it has to be really highly valuable and highly convertible. So, it has to do a lot of very specific things, which I talk about in episodes 13 and 14, so you want to listen to that. But essentially, you want to start working on that before the product item. So, what is going to be the thing that we're going to lead people to through these ads?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:34:14] The fourth thing that you need is clear messaging and brand identity. This is essential for any business to do well no matter, whether you ever want to run Facebook ads or not. But if you want to run Facebook ads, this is going to become - like, if you don't have this down now, it's going to be one of those things that's going to be really obvious once you start to run Facebook ads. Because, first of all, a lot of people run Facebook ads and you're going to be competing with a lot of other different ads. But you're also going to get served to a lot of people who don't need what you're talking about and you're also going to get served to people who do need it. And so, your messaging and your brand identity has to be so clear that people can immediately, like, self-select essentially. It would be like, "Oh, that's for me," or "Oh, that's definitely not for me," because otherwise, you're going to get a ton of opt-ins to your stuff, and then they're not going to actually buy because it's not going to be for

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them, or you're not going to have opt-ins at all because people aren't going to understand whether or not what you have to offer is for them.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:35:11] So, it's really important that you get this down. The other reason is that because when you start running ads, a lot of people are going to move over to your pages, your Instagram account, your Facebook page, and they need to be able to see what you're all about when they land there. And people have the attention span, I don't even know if it's fair to goldfish anymore to, like, say that people have the attention span of goldfish because I don't even think it's that long, but it's pretty short. And so, if they end up over on your page and they're like, "What is she talking about?" "She's talking about this and that and the other thing." It needs to be very clear. You need to have a clear bio on Instagram, a clear link to get to your freebie, a clear - you know, I like to see kind of like quickly what people stand for, what they don't stand for, that kind of stuff. So, you want to be really clear with this.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:35:57] The fifth thing that you have to have in place is a consistent social media strategy because remember you're using social media to run ads. So, remember earlier when I said don't get it twisted, you cannot just stop doing stuff on social media just because you're running ads. Ads are not an out for you to be on social media. You're literally using social media to run ads.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:36:16] So, when we run Facebook ads or Instagram ads, in particular, you know, people are seeing this Instagram ad and then they're just tapping on your profile and they're going over to your profile. I notice I get consistent follower growth when our ads are running really well. That's always a good signal to me that I'm doing something right on social media, too, because they're not only getting served with my ad, but then they're clicking over and they're saying, like, "Oh, I see the content that she's sharing. I get what she stands for," going back to number four. They see my messaging. They see my identity and they want to follow.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:36:45] So, being consistent on social media is really important because you want to make sure that as people are getting served with these ads on

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social media that they're then getting brought over to an active and engaged place. They see that you're active. It's not an old account. They can see what you've been up to. I like to have something always in stories so that people can kind of feel connected right away with, like, what's going on right now, not a post that you've made three months ago. So, that's kind of my general approach to this in terms of making sure I have a consistent social media strategy.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:37:20] You also have to start thinking of your social media strategy as more of like a nurturing place because people are going to get served with your ads and they are going to click over to your profile and your ads are going to be constantly going out to all these new and different people. It might even go out to the same person a couple of times who hasn't decided to follow or hasn't decided to opt-in to your funnel. And, I like to think of my social media strategy as being the second piece. It's like the second layer that steps in and nurtures them so that when they do click over, they see all this different stuff that's going on in my world, whether it's podcast episodes or a live legal workshop, or something like that. So, it's really important for number five to have that consistent social media strategy.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:38:04] Number six is that it is crucial. If you ever want to be successful with Facebook ads, that you invest in creatives and visuals and good copy for the ads themselves. So, This is not something that I would necessarily recommend doing yourself and the copy, in particular, I would not recommend writing yourself. A lot of copywriters will write Facebook ad copy so you can ask them if that's a service that they offer.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:38:28] But it's really, really helpful because the language is so like - the amount of copy is so short most of the time that you really need to get to the point. Like, we even run short ads and then long-form ads because sometimes people are just reading the first line or second line. Sometimes it's just like a little quick hit. Other times it's like we want to tell them a story. So, there's a lot of strategy behind all of this. It's not random. Nothing that you see is random, at least in my business. And so,

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it's really important that you have somebody who understands that nuance and can really, like, pack a punch with their words, even if it's only in a few sentences.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:39:06] The other part of that is the creatives and the visuals. That's where it's - I think a lot of people try to DIY this, and that tends to be where it goes a little bit wrong. So, first of all, at least in my opinion and in my business, videos are performing better overall than things like a static image, right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:39:26] So, I think for any of us who have been in online business for a little while, we were kind of used to the Canva era of just creating, you know, a tile-looking thing that's just like free workshop, five steps to legally protecting and growing on them. Like, it was just kind of flat, right? And, I think that now we're really - we have been experimenting for a long time now with a bit more playful strategy, video, music, like all different kinds of stuff, moving - things that are moving, attention-grabbing. Refer back to everything I've said in this entire episode about not only people's attention span being not that amazing, but also to them getting hit with all these different ads, having a million things on their mind, you know global pandemics. There's just a lot going on.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:40:09] So, we have to do what we can to stand out but to also show parts of our personality. So, again, I like to show that you might pre-judge me as thinking I'm like dorky and stuffy, and I'm, you know, relatively dorky, but I can actually throw it out.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:40:24] So, I think that, you know, it's important to show the parts of your personality through the ads and show people what you're about. Maybe break some of those stereotypes about your industry, about your business, about who you are, or whatever, and just show a little bit of your uniqueness. And I think you can do that, in particular, in the creatives and the visuals.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:40:44] Number seven. Have a clear vision in mind of what you are here to use ads for. So, it's really important that you are clear about what your

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ads are for. So, I talked a little bit earlier about the different kinds of ads and the reasons that you can run ads. But are you doing this for visibility, for nurturing your current audience? Are you trying to build up opt-ins or are you trying to build your email list? Are you trying to make more sales? Are you trying to just grow your audience for some other reason? I think it's really important to get very clear in any good Facebook ads team or manager that you speak with is going to, like, spend most of their time getting really, really clear on your goals and your vision first and before creating any sorts of campaigns. But that is, for sure, a very important part of this process.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:41:29] Number eight. I highly recommend, when you can, to work with a professional, a Facebook ads expert. Because, first of all, I hope that they would help you with copy and visuals if they have more of an agency or a team, but also because the landscape of Facebook ads is constantly changing and evolving. Again, I don't mind this so much. I like things being kind of, like, diverse and fun and, like, switching things up, and I feel like I'm always on my toes with ads. That doesn't really bother me. Don't get me wrong. I have my days where I complain to all my friends. But overall, I think that's why if you tried to DIY this yourself, I would be a little nervous.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:42:05] I'm also very nervous in general in our line of work of, like, you're just trying to be too many things at once, right? You're already going to be a million things at once. You're going to be your copywriter and your part-time web designer and you're, like, you're the coach, right, or you're the creative. And so, you're already so many different things. I get worried about you trying to be your own lawyer and your own accountant and your own Facebook ad specialist and your own this and that and the other thing. It's a lot, right, especially with something that's constantly changing, something that's highly specialized. And there are people who spend their whole day and their whole careers doing this.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:42:42] And so, I get that that is a luxury and a privilege. It is not one that I could have swung for a very long time. And so, that was another reason why I waited. I never wanted to do it myself. I didn't want to take on learning how to do Facebook ads because I knew if I did, I would never stop because it would be so

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interesting to me. But I can't do that, right? As a CEO, I have to work on my products and I have to serve my customers and I have to be the marketing person.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:43:07] So, it's really important that, you know, you remember this and that. If that means that you wait and do it right, in my opinion, it would be worth it. That's what I did. I waited until I could.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:43:21] Now, I just want to give you one little note about that, because I remembered this as I was saying it. I did not start running Facebook ads when I was, like, super jazzed about throwing thousands of dollars out the window. That was never - I don't know that I still am but, you know - or taking a gamble. I felt like it was a gamble at that point. And so, one of the reasons that I waited, this is actually a very important point. Very important. Okay, listen up. Let's listen up. Okay.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:43:48] You want to invest in Facebook ads when it's an experiment that you can afford to experiment in. It is not going to sink your business. It's not going to harm you financially. Will it be a hit if you lost the money? Of course, I'm not - no, I mean, like, who's at - and other than like Apple, I don't know who's that like a place that no one cares about that. So, of course, I thought about when I was investing a few thousand dollars in the beginning, I was like, "Oh man, this would hurt." It also wouldn't have derailed me one little moment. I would have kept going.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:44:17] So, it would have been like, that sucks. I would have shed some tears. I would have complained about it. I would have been upset. But it would not have impacted my business. I would have been able to continue operating. I did not dip into operating expenses. I was able to pay my taxes. I was able to pay my team members. So, like, all those things were true. And I think that's a really important thing to remember because a lot of times these horror stories that you do hear about people, it's because they kind of took a bet on Facebook ads and lost. And so, you don't want to go to the casino with your last dollar and hope to turn it into a million, right? So, that's not a strategy. That's desperation. And so, we don't want to be there. If that is the place that you're at where, like, this would crush your business or it would really

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financially harm your business, we want to work on strengthening the foundation of your business first. Then, you're not in a place for Facebook ads yet, which is okay.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:45:14] I also just want to normalize this more that I waited, I don't know what, four, almost four years to invest in Facebook ads. So, and again, it was a choice. It's not mandatory. It's like I just decided because I was interested. I knew my funnel was working really well. And so I thought, I guess I could get this to more people, right? Like, Facebook can get this to more people than I could, standing here on Instagram every day.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:45:39] My dad was also sick and I was half the time in the hospital with him and sitting there with him at chemo. And I was like, I don't feel like, you know, having to be like, "Hey, guys, here are three things you need to know about your website policies every single day." I wanted to do that. I love what I do, and I love talking about what I teach about. But it wasn't possible for me. It still is not possible for me to do that every day. I'm not in the mood half the time.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:46:04] So, I wanted to see if Facebook ads could help alleviate some of that, and that is exactly what it did for me. But it's a choice. It's just a form of advertisement. Like, I kind of want to take away some of the power from all of this. You know, it's a choice. It's an experiment. And it's okay. It's going to be okay. If you don't do it, you're still going to be okay. It's okay. Right?

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:46:27] So, last but not least, the very end, this kind of goes to what I'm - what I was just saying. The ninth thing that you need to have in place, last but not least, is a scientist attitude. I talk about this so often. I think having a scientist attitude as an online business person, in general, is so important. But having a scientist attitude is essential if you ever want to run Facebook ads or are running Facebook ads because this shit is going to be experimental, my friend. It's experimental.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:46:58] Ads take time. Sometimes they don't work great in the beginning, but then they start to work great, sometimes they work great, and then they

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slow down and then they work great again. There are bumps along the way, right? And it's okay. It's okay. It's all an experiment, and it's also an optional experiment. You don't need to. If the stress of doing this doesn't work for you, don't do it. Build up your business in another way. You know, build up your SEO, build up the foundation of your business, build up your SEO, have an SEO-driven, evergreen-driven content strategy, and work on your funnel.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:47:29] I mean, I could have been very happy just running my business the way that I was. I was making plenty. I was very comfortable. Things were very simple. It was fine, right? I just have, like, really large ambition for this business. That's not totally possible with me just screaming about it every day on Instagram. So, that was why I went into it. I waited until it wasn't going to wreck my business. I'm so glad that I did. I have had this experimental attitude the whole way. And, I think it served me really well.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:47:59] So, those are the nine things that I would have in place if I were to run Facebook ads now or in the future.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:48:05] I'm so curious what you took away from this episode. I'm curious if, like, I changed your mind about something, if I brought something to your attention that you hadn't thought of before. Maybe if you even came to some sort of decision in this episode, I hope you'll send me a DM on Instagram, @samvanderwielen on Instagram, and you'll let me know what that was. I would love to know what your takeaway was from this episode. But until then, until I hear from you and my DMs, I will chat with you next week. Thank you so much for listening to this episode of On Your Terms.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:48:39] 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

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