

On Your Terms Episode 55:
Blowing The Lid on The Biggest Online Coaching Secrets

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:10] Hey there, and welcome back to On Your Terms. I'm your host, Sam Vander Wielen, attorney turned entrepreneur who helps you legally protect your online business.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:18] And in doing so, I have seen a lot of nonsense, a lot of turkeys out there as my grandfather would say. I have seen so much stuff in the online business industry in the six years I have been involved in. Goodness knows this was happening way before I got into this industry.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:00:36] But, really, today, this episode, I sat down and chat with you about some of the things that I just want to kind of pull the film back on in the online business industry, whether it's some of the marketing tactics that are being used to get you to join people's programs, of the fear that I have that we're creating a little bit of a micro-economy, like you're only being encouraged to make monies, you can spend more of that money on the coaching economy and not on actually improving your life, on my thoughts and views on looking outside of your own industry.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:01:10] I talk a lot today about getting outside of this online coaching bubble and how that's actually where I've had the biggest business and marketing and mindset growth is stepping a little bit outside of this industry and not limiting myself by what people in this industry are doing already. And that's really what I'm here to encourage you to do today. This has nothing to do with, like, talking smack, or calling anybody out, or saying that all coaches are bad. I love coaches. I hire coaches. I have tons of amazing coaches as clients. My friends are incredible coaches. This has nothing to do with that.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:01:45] This has to do with a very small subset of this population that is using some weird stuff. You know it. I know it. You've seen it. We've all seen it. So, I feel like today I just kind of sat down and have the conversation with you that I have honestly and genuinely wanted to have. And I feel like it's the one that when I share it with friends, they're like, "Yeah. Why doesn't anybody ever talk about that? I felt that too." So, I'm hoping that you have some of those moments today too.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:11] Hopefully, you'll listen to this episode and send a DM on Instagram, I'm @samvanderwielen, and let me know what you thought. I can't wait to hear how this episode was for you. Enjoy and talk to you soon.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:26] So, I'm going to give you the same disclaimer that I gave you back on Episode 48 of the podcast where I shared with you about do you really need a business coach. Not because business coaches aren't valuable but because are you really clear on why you need somebody, who you really need, what you really want out of it, what your goals are. Not just falling into these traps of aspirational marketing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:02:51] And I said the same thing then and I'm going to tell you now, there are loads and loads of good business coaches out there. I know them. I've worked with them. I'm friends with them. I've hired them. I've had them in my programs. There are tons and tons of good ones. And if you're one of them, keep it up. Keep doing what you're doing. Keep being one of the good ones. And use this information that I'm about to talk about in this episode to differentiate yourself from the "bad ones" or some of the ones who might be falling

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into a couple of the traps themselves that we're going to talk about today.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:25] This is by no means a generalization. This is just one part of the industry - or one subset, I should say, of the part of the industry that I see that I want to help you navigate in a little bit a different way, because I wish that I had somebody who helped just cut to the chase and give me "Hey, here's what's actually going on. Here's what you're seeing."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:03:45] Because what's weird about our industry is that business coaches are selling to other coaches in our industry, and they're trying to get them to buy their programs and join their thing and whatever. And when you're a newer entrepreneur, you're not familiar with all of the marketing tactics, and the copy, and the funnels, and all the stuff that they're putting you through. And so, you think it's all just normal and kind of happening. And then, as you go on and you grow and start your business, you start saying, "Oh, okay. I understand. This is what they're actually doing or this is the way they actually are running their business." But you just don't know in the beginning.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:04:22] This is all a part of, I think, a theme that me and the team kind of decided to focus on this year was just part of helping you become a better consumer and encouraging people in our space to become a better consumer. Because there's always going to be these kinds of coaches, whether it's on the online business industry or scammy like people you see on T.V., anywhere you go. And so, we want to encourage people to become a better consumer where we're trying

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to help avoid some of the most common earlier stage entrepreneur mistakes.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:04:57] A lot of people contact me and they say that they've run out of money because they spent it all on coaches and now they can't get started on their business. I have heard from people who don't have money left in their business to spend it on expenses or actual investments like, to be honest, legal and financial help. Like, getting an accountant and getting some of these foundational contract pieces or forming your business or something, that is a foundational necessary expense that you need to have when starting a business. And the fact that people just will say to me, "Oh, I can't do any of that because I spent it all on this coach who was promising me the moon and the stars," that's why I'm having this conversation with you today.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:05:45] So, I'm also just trying to have this conversation or encourage this conversation around some topics in the online business industry that just seem to be accepted. And I'll bring things up to friends or colleagues, they'll be like, "Oh, yeah. I've always thought that too." But nobody really says anything, right? I feel it's almost like nobody wants to poke the bear. Conversations are being held privately but not out loud. And I'm trying to have more of these conversations out loud.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:15] I've just always been this person in my life who's been like, "Does anybody else notice what I'm noticing?" And oftentimes when I've brought it up, people will be like, "Yeah. I actually have wondered about that. I don't ever hear anybody talk about that." So, today, we are.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:32] So, what are some of these things that are what I would consider to be the biggest online coaching secrets? The things that no one tells you about online coaching. It's really like what's actually happening behind the scenes.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:06:46] Well, I would say that the first thing that you need to know is that so much of what you see online in the business space is being rinsed and repeated. And this actually well beyond the business coaching space and into all kinds of coaching stuff. And you hear me talk about this a lot of this concept of like, "Don't just follow other people's way of doing things. Don't repeat other people's playbooks. Doing your own thing. Being on your terms. Following your own path."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:16] But so much of what you see is just a version of rinse and repeat, rinse and repeat. It's like a bad rumor that just keeps getting spread. And it's like the way that people are doing things in their businesses, offering services and products in one way, and then everybody just carbon copies that. That's not the only way to do things. It's just what you're seeing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:39] So, you might think like, "Well, this is how everyone does it. This is how every coach does it. I see all the coaches are doing that, therefore, that's the way to do it." It's not that. You're just seeing rinse and repeat. That's what you're seeing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:07:51] Somebody wants to be a coach, so they sign up for a mastermind with a successful coach who says she does this and that and the other thing. Maybe she inflates numbers or she tells you to inflate numbers. Like, "Oh, you can

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stretch the truth a little bit." I have straight up in masterminds and stuff where people were like, "Oh, they don't need to know that. You can just say a hundred thousand customers or something crazy." They'll tell you that you don't need legal.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:08:20] I mean, I've been in programs before where people are like, "You don't need legal stuff until later. Just buy my course. Just buy my course so you can learn how to be a coach. Then, later get legal stuff." How they are going to be coach if they don't have any contract? You're telling me to attract all these clients, what am I doing with the clients if I don't have a contract? So, they'll tell you that. They'll tell you to stretch the truth about clients, all this kind of thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:08:42] And then, I feel like people start to be like, "Oh, that's just how things are done in this industry." It's okay. It's normal. Everyone's doing it. It's like the everyone is doing it effect. It's like middle school sometimes out here. I swear, it just feels that way. And just like I was saying at the beginning of I, sometimes, feel like we're not having this conversation even though everyone is thinking it or people are having them privately.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:05] I also feel like people know that some of the stretching and mistruth stuff is going on but nobody says anything because they're just like, "Oh, that's how things are done around here." It's very strange. And I feel like it's so unique to our industry. I just don't see this in a lot of other industries. I've never seen it in any other industry, actually.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:09:29] The second thing that I feel like is kind of a little secret of the online coaching industry that no one is talking about is that we are kind of creating this strange insular microeconomy of coaching. It's like you're encouraged to become a coach so that you can make money so you can hire a more expensive business coach who then is just turning around and hiring their own expensive coach or consultant.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:10:00] And they're hiring coaches for mindset, who is then hiring someone for business coaching. The mindset coach is hiring a business coach, who is hiring a branding coach, who is hiring a speaking coach. And it's just a very insular thing. Like, it just sometimes feels like there's pressure on you to build a business just so that you can further support this little microeconomy.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:10:24] And this has nothing to do with the importance of hiring coaches in your space or getting support and all of that. It is super important. And just like I talked about in Episode 48 where I talk about hiring a business coach, it is important and it can be so helpful and there's so much that you can get out of it.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:10:43] My concern though is that sometimes it just feels like this very cyclical coaches will literally just -- I don't know. I've talked to friends about this. I was saying, "Yeah. I made more money working with that coach. But then, I was paying that coach so much that my bottom line didn't actually grow because my money was just going to pay for this coach." So, I went from being in the red to the black. But I was just even because I was just trying to keep up with paying. And then, every time you go to hire a new coach, it's

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more expensive and more expensive. So, it's just something to be aware of.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:11:19] It's why in Episode 48 - spoiler alert - I talk about a lot about of this idea of hiring for a clear purpose, having some intention behind it, knowing kind of what you generally would like to get out of it, but staying open you'll learn that you don't even know about, that kind of stuff. But not hiring because you just think like, "Oh. I'm going to hire this business coach because they're going to solve all my problems and they're going to create some shortcut for me that I can't figure out myself," which is probably just not true for you.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:11:50] And you do that, and then you don't ever implement. You don't ever take that time to just say, "Okay. Now, let me actually take that advice and trust it." And not just take it and actually implement word for word. If it turns out that what they say is the most helpful and best for you and it feels good to you, go for it. But just note, too, that when you get advice from coaches, it doesn't mean it's not gospel. It doesn't have to be so black and white. So, you can take something that they say and fit it and mold it to be what works for you.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:12:22] But because we don't take that time to implement, we're always kind of jumping to the next thing. I do get concerned about this very cyclical microeconomy that we have created amongst each other sometimes.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:12:36] The third thing, I think, is a little secret that they keep, is that, the best advice that I feel like a business coach could give you is to look outside of

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our own industry. Like, the coaching industry is not the ultimate industry. We don't have it all figured out. It's a relatively new industry, actually.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:01] Marketing has been around for a million years. It's however many years, I don't know. But a lot longer than the coaching industry it has been around. Copywriting has been around. Advertisements, people who study advertising, people who study sales psychology, these stuff has been around and talked about and digested a million different ways to Sunday for a long time before the coaching industry came around.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:24] Now, the cool thing about the coaching industry is that then you can take that advice that this solid foundational core topics on sales and copywriting and that kind of stuff, persuasion, you can take that and then coaches can tell you how that applies to our industry, and that's what's so helpful.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:13:46] But the problem is - going back to number one - is that so much of what you're seeing is being rinsed and repeated that people aren't truly experts. They're not crafting their own methodology. They're not reading this foundational stuff and then applying it to what you do. They're not putting it into practice themselves. They're just, for the most part, are starting a business and then it goes well for them, and then they just jump into teaching other people how to start a business. They don't actually know. This is what I harped on in Episode 48. It's like they don't actually know anything about business.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:20] I have gotten the greatest inspiration, ideas, growth out of looking outside of the online coaching industry. So, I stopped looking to people in my industry or even in the online coaching space for a lot of business advice. I want to go bigger and deeper outside of our industry and then I kind of think when I read something, I'll be like, "Hm. How does this apply to us? How does this apply to what we do?"

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:14:47] I'll link to it below, but I just sent the Ultimate Bundle members the other day this link to an article that was about marketing. And there was this really interesting article that, basically, gave the story of a fake diner. It created a fictional diner. And this diner was really popular, had a menu that was into the football field length diner menu classic. And they started losing customers when Sweetgreen opened across the street and then a Blaze Pizza opened across the street.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:21] And it's just this very interesting article that talks about not only focusing on your current customers and also figuring out why haven't the customers who are on the peripheral, like the people who are a little interested but doubtful, would come to your diner but haven't yet kind of thing. So, not people who hate diners but people who would come to diners but just haven't. Why are they not coming to the diner? Instead of just figuring out why did this people leave, or what do I need to keep doing to serve the people who are still coming to my diner.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:15:52] The point is, this was just a marketing article that was a big picture marketing. It had nothing to do with the coaching space. It was so fascinating to

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me and mind blowing. When you read this article, I hope you will walk away from something with it, too. But I was just thinking like, "Yeah. This is kind of what I mean." We need to get out of this little bubble. This bubble is so limiting in a way.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:16:16] And I think because there are so many people throwing business advice your way - and I would say, a relatively small percentage given the number of people who we are talking about this - actually knows something about business, actually have professional experience. It's really hard for you because you're getting hit with constant or some repeated small ball information.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:16:44] And the information that you get hit with about your business is often so tailored to a platform. It's platform specific. It's not a marketing principle or business principle. And so, you're just constantly running around. It's like guacamole, just trying to do this next trend, or do this next tip, or this next hack, or this next algorithm breaking thing. It keeps you very in this industry.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:08] Do you know what I mean? Hopefully, this makes sense. I hope this is making you think of where else can you look outside of your industry.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:08] I like to lean on marketing stuff from those doing it on a more national or global scale. Like, a lot of times I will watch commercials when I'm watching T.V. And I'll be like, "Oh, that's so interesting." You want to see it from the both the positive and the negative. Like, I'll see commercials sometimes and I'll be like, "Oh, that's so interesting. They went straight into addressing what the problem, what the pain point was from the customer." And I see

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how they overcame it and they showed why their product was the right fit to resolve that for them. And I kind of start to make the connection between how can I do that for my people.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:17:54] Other times I see commercials and I'm like, "That was such a bad commercial. They didn't even tell me who they were or what they do. I don't even understand who it's for. Why do I need this thing? Can I just use this?" And that then helps me to be like, "Where am I doing that in my marketing?" So, just thinking outside of the box. Looking elsewhere for some of this inspiration. That's also why I like going to conferences and things like that.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:18:18] I just had the episode last week about my recap from going to ConvertKit's Craft+Commerce conference. And I talked about how there were people who spoke at that conference who are artists, cinematographers, all kinds of coaches, public speaking experts, psychologists, bloggers, people who just sold businesses for hundreds and millions of dollars, like, I'm not sure what they're doing now. All kinds of things.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:18:44] And it's like you have to get, I think, good as an entrepreneur at hearing all kinds of things from all over the spectrum, and putting it through your filter and your lens, and knowing what that means for you, how it translates to your business, to your marketing, your messaging. I think that's when you start getting really good and also really unique.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:06] Because, otherwise, if you're just staying in this online coaching space only filter/bubble where you're only hearing it from them, it's all being rinsed and

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repeated, none of it is novel, none of it is very innovative, and, frankly, a lot of them just don't really have a lot of business experience, it's, I feel, very limiting for you. So, I want to encourage you to look elsewhere.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:30] The fourth thing is that - and this is an example of this rinse and repeat. I feel like this is an example of the rinse and repeat thing in real life in practice - the niche exercise that a lot of people are telling you to do is not only not helpful but it's limiting your business and your business's growth.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:19:51] So, the niche exercise I'm talking about is the one where people will tell you figure out where your ideal client shops and are they a peanut butter or jelly person. Are they chocolate or caramel? Are they this or that? Are they religious or not religious? Cat or dog person? That is demographic info. And it's super helpful to get demographic info. And all kinds of businesses use demographic information.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:20:19] I often look behind the data on the website and on Instagram, like, "What's the breakdown of who's watching my content? About what age group? What kind of demographic categories do they fall under?" It's helpful for me to understand, but I also don't want that to limit me in a way. I think it gets people too focused on trying to - I don't know, maybe this is because people in the marketing space sometimes who only focus on aspirational marketing as their primary vehicle to getting you to buy stuff from them.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:20:56] Like, they show you kinds of clothes they buy, and handbags, and where they go on vacation, and what kind of life they live. And so, when they do that, I

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guess they would need to know that you also like handbags, and you also like vacation, and you also want this or that.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:21:11] But if you're trying to market your business to consumers and not other business owners, if you're a health coach or a your career coach, a love life coach, you're trying to get people to hire you who are not perhaps in the online coaching space. You can't just market to their demographics. It's very limiting and it's keeping you also in only attracting that audience, when you could attract other people and build a wider audience.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:21:39] So, I don't think that it's necessarily this individual demographics that someone sees you love fancy handbags, therefore they love you kind of thing. I think what people are actually attracted to is when they see you living authentically. And I know that phrase is whatever use, it's kind of generic at this point. But what I mean by that is that you are comfortable being you and showing all parts of you or those parts of you that you're comfortable showing online. And that you speak from a place of authority. You know what you're talking about. You're passionate about what you're talking about.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:20] I mean, I think in general, people want to be around other people who have traits that they wish they had a little more of. So, if you're a little confident or you're a little further along in your journey with health or money or business or whatever, I think people want to be around that. And it's those qualities, it's by you expressing those qualities, those parts of yourself that people are like, "Oh, I want to be in that person's circle. I want to be in their energy."

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:22:47] I don't care if you drive the same car as me, if you vote the same way as me, if you go on vacation to the same place as me, but if you are exuding a lot of the qualities and values that I really respect and admire - which, now that I say it, a lot of those probably would have to do with voting or some basic principles - in general, if you're exuding those values, that means that you have to share them, then I want to be around that. That's what attracts me.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:23:19] I don't need you to be exactly like me. We don't need to shop at the same place. But maybe you and I share the common thread of wanting to protect the environment a little more and buy a little less. But when we do, we buy from different stores. So, I don't really care where you shop, I just want to know that maybe you're like me and you care about where you buy it from, something like that, I don't know.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:23:43] So, I want you to think about the niche thing just a little bit broader. Instead of focusing so much on where this person shops and if they're a cat person, I want you to focus on their pain point. I think that's the thing that just gets lost sometimes. And there's so many good coaches who do talk really, really well about this. But you want to focus on what their pain point really is.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:08] And what that means is not just what are they struggling with so you can agitate it even more, even though that's kind of a core copywriting principle. But it's really getting very clear on understanding what they're going through, where they're at, what they're struggling with, what they don't understand, what they wish was different.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:27] Because I think just if you were talking to a good friend, like you know the difference between talking to somebody who you're like, "Ah. They just get it." They get it. When I talk to them, they get it. And that makes you want to talk to that person more. I kind of think that's how it is here.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:24:43] So, I, for example, don't share the same pain points that you do when it comes to legally protecting your business. I was a lawyer at 23. I had the benefit and the privilege of always being a lawyer anytime I started a business. So, I have never had that. However, I am extremely clear on what you are struggling with, like which parts of it you don't get, what feels overwhelming, why it feels overwhelming, the fact that it feels intimidating and too expensive, and you're not even sure if you need it, and all these things.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:14] But at the same time, you want to make sure that yourself is protected because you want to sleep at night and you're afraid you're going to build a really good business and someone is going to pull it up from under you.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:23] So, I'm really clear on that even though I never went through it. That's why I don't like the niche thing of, "It should be someone just like you." Well, that's not like me. But I can still be really, really, really clear on what you're going through and what you wish was a little different, what you want instead.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:25:40] Like in my example, why my legal templates or why the Ultimate Bundle is the exact solution that you need to get you over the hump. And I could talk to you about

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that until the cows come home. And you and I can share all kinds of mutual values and we can respect one another because I tried to show up honestly and authentically just because I don't know how else to show up, frankly. And so, I'm just myself, vulnerable and sensitive and dorky sometimes, and all that kind of stuff. So, I personally think that that's much stronger than any niche exercise could do.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:26:16] So, show up authentically so that they "like you." That's not you trying to mold yourself to be something. It's that because you're authentic people like that you're just being you because it makes them feel like they can be them, and that's really all that people want at the end of the day.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:26:33] You also show up consistently and through content that lives, like evergreen content, like I'm always encouraging you to create so they "know you." They become familiar with you. And you position yourself as an authority or an expert on this topic so that they trust you. So, you have to talk about what you do, you have to teach, you have to be in a position of authority in that sense of showing somebody, "Hey, I know what I'm talking about, and I'm not only comfortable talking about this, but I love talking about it."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:27:03] 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

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trouble or your business is growing and you sort of forgot to take care of the legal pieces, I've got you.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:27:26] 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. As much as it just feels like an unregulated, wild, wild west online, that is very much not the case.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:27:42] 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.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:27:59] 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.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:28:29] 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.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:28:44] The fifth thing that I feel is a hidden secret of the online coaching industry is that people, sometimes they don't share honest statistics. Like, sometimes the stats or the money figures, or whatever, are just flat out made up. I'm sorry, but somebody has to say it. Sometimes they're just not true. Sometimes they're just inflated. And more times, they just don't offer very much context. Like, you don't know where that money came from or how much of it was profit, how much their expenses were related, all that kind of stuff. You don't want they had to do to get that, how long it's been taking them, who they have on their team, yada, yada.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:29:21] I also think that there is dishonesty in the industry of people making too rosy of promises of how everyone or anyone can do it. Like, if I can do it, you can do it. Everyone can be successful. Everyone can build a seven figure business. And I hate to say this, but I don't know that that is always true. Not because people aren't capable. It has nothing to do with that. People are capable.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:29:46] But, first of all, it's ignoring the fact that not everyone has the same access to resources, privilege, all kinds of things. So, there's that piece of it which is huge for me. And it just always feels a little maybe because you could do it, maybe you had a different situation. Not everybody has access to that. Or not everyone is starting at the same point and has access to the same context or resources, or whatever, privilege. So, that's one thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:30:14] And, again, this has nothing to do with your capability. You're more than capable of doing whatever the heck you want but maybe not in the way that they're describing. Because they're not teaching sometimes basic

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business principles, like supply and demand, for example. Like, is there demand for what you're offering? So, when they say, "You can create a course on any topic and you can be seven figures too." Is that true? I don't know.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:30:43] I guess what I mean is, it's not that you can't create a course and build to seven figures. You can. You're capable. The thing is that because they're not teaching you this foundational business principles, they're not teaching you how you have to design a course in a way and then market it so that it actually has enough demand for it. And it's desirable enough to make that.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:31:04] But a lot of times people enter into this programs thinking, "I have this idea for this and that." And she's saying anyone with any course idea, people are just making seven figures left and right. I can't tell you how many people enter into the online space thinking that. So, they're not teaching you that. They're not teaching you to be in touch because they're not in touch with your market or your ideal client.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:31:29] Like, a business coach just cannot possibly have their finger on the pulse of every single, like, the beauty market, and the health and fitness, and love life, and life coaching, business coaching, career coaching, all kinds of things. They don't know what's going on in those industries. They don't know who the competition is. They don't know what's being offered already to say how are we positioning this, how is this uniquely different, how are we differentiating this from what's being offered already, what's innovative about this.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:32:02] And I think the last piece of this for me is that when people make big, broad promises like this, they don't know if you're really helping people or if your offer or product really works. So, they can't really give you the promise upfront.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:32:18] One of the biggest things I have learned in building a business that has, eventually, become a multi-seven figure business, I've build this product that's made millions and millions of dollars in revenue, is that the product itself has to be really, really good.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:32:37]I can't give you an exact figure on when my business probably would have stopped or hit a roadblock if the Ultimate Bundle sucked, for example. If the Bundle sucked and it wasn't helping people, people didn't like it, I don't know, I would have sold however many of it and then it probably just would have stopped. Or it would have just like, I don't know, dripped in.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:32:56] But instead, it was drip, drip, drip, flow, flow, flow, water gush. And so, it was over time as people got in the Ultimate Bundle started using it, really liked it, start talking about, start telling other people about it, start sharing about it, that's when something started to grow. But that's because the product is really, really good.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:33:18]And so, sometimes I cringe a little when people will say this where I'm like, "Wait. We don't even know is this product even good? Are people going to like it? Are you teaching them even to create a good product that actually helps people, that people like, that's delivered in a way that people like?"

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:33:34] How can they tell you upfront that anyone can make seven figures on an online course or whatever other product. I'm not trying to pick on courses. But how can they tell you this without knowing these things, without knowing what the demand really is, without knowing what your market really looks like, without knowing if what you're thinking of designing is desired by other people, not just you wanting to put it out there, but it's desired other people, and it's actually good, and going to offer a transformational experience or benefit or takeaway or whatever, that then they're going to want to share with other people.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:34:12] So, that's just kind of my issue with some what I would consider to be less than contextual, honest promises that are made to you in the marketing engine that is online coaching.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:34:29] The sixth thing, this is something I've just recently started thinking about, is that, a lot of times we will see people in marketing use manipulating tactics, mindset tactics to guilt you into purchasing from them or buying their thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:34:43] I'm actually going to talk with Jen Diaz about this next week on the podcast, so you can look forward to Episode 56 of On Your Terms. Jen is a mindset expert and I've heard her talk about this, about how people - and I want to let her speak for it because she is the expert on this and I don't want to misquote - who will sometimes use things to be like, "Oh, you have a bad mindset around that." Or, "You have a mindset block. You have this issue. There's something wrong

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with you." It's a lot of the there's something wrong with you language because you won't buy this thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:35:18] And I think about this a lot when I hear money advice. Like, "If you don't buy my program it's because you have a money mindset block. You won't invest in yourself. That's the one I like. So, that's very interesting to me, and just a little too simplistic. Maybe you're not investing in yourself, maybe also you don't see the value in the program. Maybe the program is not the right fit for you, that could be the other thing.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:35:41] In my case, I always think of this bad experience that I had with a really popular webinar, like, funnel builder person. And I had this call with her team because she offered this program about building webinar funnels. And she has one of these businesses where you meet with the sales person and all that. And I couldn't figure out from looking at her stuff on social media and her website, I'm like, "What does this include?" That was the main thing to me that I wasn't getting a really good feeling for and I also didn't know how much it costs.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:36:20] This must have been two, three years ago, so the business wasn't making nearly as much. And so, I was very contentious about how it was spending and investing and all of that. And so, I had this call with them and on the call I didn't feel any better. I had no clarity around what this program included. It really felt, to me, like I was paying to just be part of a group. And it was like the space of a group where I could ask questions and I could watch a bunch of videos.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:36:47] But it was, for me, what I was really looking for at that time was some more diagnosis of a current funnel. Like, I wanted somebody who's going to help me build this out. So, maybe this program wasn't the good fit for me. I was just looking for something that was different than what they offered. And so, when they explained to me what was included, that didn't sound valuable to me.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:37:10] And maybe to you, if you would have been on this call at that point in your business, you would have been like, "That is exactly what I need. That is so worth it." It was several thousands of dollars a month. I think it was, like, \$15,000 for maybe six months. I'm not even sure if it was a year. I remember it felt like an insane amount of money to me at the time, and it still is a ton of money.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:37:31] So, this was something that, to me, I just didn't see the value in it. And that doesn't make the program wrong. It just was wrong for me at that time. It just didn't work for me. Well, that's not where it ended because I, basically, got to the end of the call. There's a lot of pressure - a lot of pressure - to buy, which also just didn't feel like it fit. Because I was like, "If this is part of your funnel, that's not what I'm trying to do to my people. So, this just doesn't feel right."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:37:57] And the woman proceeded to tell me on the call that I was not investing in myself. I had a bad money attitude. I had money mindset block that was preventing me from investing in myself. And when people don't invest in themselves, they never make money in their businesses. That I will always be capped by this.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:38:18] And I was like, "No. I don't have -" let's back up. Of course, I have money mindset - I don't want to call them issue but you know what I mean. I'm not saying that I have this great perfect mindset around it. I just felt very clear in this moment that I was like, "No. I just don't see the value in this program. I don't understand why I would pay thousands of dollars a month to be posting questions on a Facebook Group. That's just, for me, right now for what I'm looking for help with, it's just not what I'm looking for. I'm looking for support in a different way. And I wanted some more one to one stuff."

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:38:54] She just kept going back and back and back to this about this was how they see time and time again. People won't invest themselves and they never become anything. It was awful. It's like this bad fear tactic. And part of their stick, too, is that they take your phone number when you fill out the form, and so then she start calling me afterwards and was like, "I want to see if you changed your mind. If you're ready to invest in yourself." Even that was like pitching as if this is my fault that I don't see this and that there was something wrong with me. There was nothing wrong with me. I just didn't think it was a good program.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:39:27] And guess what? I did not join it. I didn't join any other program. And I ended up blowing up my funnel on my own with team support. I hired great team members. A marketing expert, Margot, who is so good with helping with funnel stuff. And so, we blew this up. And, sure, there is probably a program out there that could help me, I just hadn't heard of it at the time. But that was my situation.

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Sam Vander Wielen: [00:39:51] And it was just at that time that I realized how much of this is being used to make you feel like there's something wrong with you. Like, you're doing something wrong. Like, you're bad.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:40:01] And that goes to my last point here, is that, you don't always need a program, a course, a coach. I like to get coached, to get feedback, take a course, watch a webinar, do whatever. But then, I implement it and I adjust, and I see how it's going. And you have to implement things for a certain period of time in order to be able to gather enough data to then see what's working and what's not working.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:40:23] And I wish that more people, too, would go back and listen to Episode 48 and just get really clear on what exactly are you actually struggling with. Because if you're looking at data and not feelings, you can be like what's actually not working and what is working so we can do more of that. Then, you could hire somebody or buy something or join a group, or whatever, that truly is supportive and nurturing. Not based on promises and hopeful outcomes, but based on data and purpose. So, that's really what I hope and want for you.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:41:00] I hope that this episode was helpful. If you think that a friend of yours would like to listen to this, I would love for you to go ahead and text them a link to listen to this episode. If you listen on Apple Podcast, make sure you leave a review of the show so you can enter to win a \$20 Starbucks gift card. Or if you listen on Spotify, just go ahead and hit the rating button. It would mean so much to me in keeping this podcast accessible and in the pockets and ears of

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entrepreneurs trying to build and legally protect their online businesses. With that, I can't wait to chat with you next week.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:41:35] 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.

Sam Vander Wielen: [00:41:49] 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.