

TRANSCRIPT

On Your Terms



Driven by Goals.
Guided by Strategy.
Powered by Intention.

Episode #: 186

If I Started Today, Here's How I'd Build My Business

Sam Vander Wielen:

So, over five years ago, when I set out to start my online legal business, I had no idea that it would end up being what it is today, and I am so glad that it is. But I had no clue what I was doing, and I am always thinking back about when I started and things that I did and things I would never do again, but also what I learned from that and what I would pass on to other people.

And that sparked an idea to create today's episode teaching you all about what I would do differently if I started my business today. And I'm hoping to pass on a lot of the nuggets and the experiences that I've gone through over the last five or six years in helping you to be a little bit kinder to yourself, to do things more on your terms, and to pay attention and put more of your time and energy into the things in your business that are going to pay dividends over time. And I'm definitely going to share with you those things that I don't think are helping you at all. So, I can't wait to get into this week's episode. I thought this was a really fun one to record and I hope that you'll like it too. With that, let's get into this week's episode.

You know, I always feel sort of funny filming any content related to what mistakes I made, what I would do differently, all that kind of stuff because I do so wholeheartedly believe that all of these things are so necessary that we go through, whether it's in our business and our life, whatever. I had some of the darkest days that I can remember as an attorney. And when I was an attorney, I was so miserable. I felt so trapped and like I was never going to get out. And I had no plan B, because being a lawyer was plan A, and there was only plan A, and it started and it ended there. And I never thought about what I would do next.

And so, I found myself in this situation where I was super miserable. I realized I had made a huge mistake in the sense that it wasn't the right

fit for me. Being a lawyer, going through that education, going to law school has turned out to be a huge blessing and it was an incredible education I was so fortunate to get to go and I learned so much and, obviously, I'm using those skills and that knowledge now. But in general, being a lawyer at that variety, a corporate lawyer, no less, was not the right fit for me. And I've talked about this many times, I was very much in victim mode and all of that kind of stuff.

And my mom who was the kind of mom that's not going to sit there and rub your back as you cry. I think a lot of us have those kinds of moms, hopefully I'm not alone. But I remember at the time, I would come home or I would meet her for dinner or something and I would be crying and I'd be so upset, "I hate being a lawyer. I hate being a lawyer. I hate the law firm. I hate everything that I do. I hate all of this. I hate that. I hate suits." I always have to throw in the suits. And she would look at me and she would just say, "Good. This is good for you. You need this. This is going to be the fuel that you need." And I was like, "What? What a bit?" I was like, "I just want you to tell me how awful this is." Usually when you're in a really bad place, you just want somebody to be like "That sucks." And at the time, I was really mad. I remember I was really upset that she didn't get it and she didn't see how victim-y I was, and how much of a victim I was in this situation, and all that.

But then as time went on, and especially once I left, I was like, "I totally see what she means." This was all a part of the experience that I needed. I needed to go through that and I needed to be miserable in order to be hungry enough to do it differently. And it really built me up. And I don't think we have to go through horrible experiences or abusive experiences in order to make positive change, but I didn't know that it was going to be like that. It just ended up being like that, and it was really bad, and it is what it is. And that experience, I think, really helped shape who I am as a person, who I am as a business person, what kind of business I ended up building, just so many things.

And so, I think so many times in life and in business, we go through things because they're a necessary step to going wherever we want to go, even when we don't know it at the time. So, I just wanted to share that with you

because I don't ever want someone to feel like they're silly or stupid for having gone through some of these periods that we're going to talk about today, about some of the things that people do when they're starting their businesses, and some of the things that are kind of silly or a waste of time. You don't know that when you're in it. And I really, truly believe that you have to do that sometimes to learn, like, "Oh. That didn't work."

I am just a huge believer in life and in business in general of the Goldilocks approach. If anything else, I feel like that's the thing I think about every day is, Goldilocks to me is experimental. It means whittling down, figuring out what works for you. Maybe something's too big, too hot, too cold for somebody else, but it's perfect for you, and so I just think it's such a great analogy. But in order to do that, like in the Goldilocks example, she had to try all the different kinds of porridge in order to understand which one was right. So, I do believe that we make these "mistakes" in business and they are part of something.

However, when we can collapse time, when we can learn things, sometimes that can help to push us in a different direction to pivot. And I remember listening to other people when I was starting out my online business and I would hear other people share some tidbit of advice, I'd be like, "Oh. That's why that thing's not working for me." So, I'm glad that you've tried whatever you've tried, but maybe something in this episode will just illuminate an idea for you to do something a little bit different.

So, with that being said, I think we've all been there. We've all done the downloading all the things, how many of us have 9,000 freebies and PDFs and videos and webinars, and all kinds of things in our inbox that we either never used, or just weren't that helpful, or we signed up for and never followed through on. We might have even signed up for courses that we didn't really need or weren't that helpful or signing up for courses almost out of a place of desperation or searching for something. Like maybe I need Pinterest, but I also have to learn about YouTube, but this person's teaching me about Instagram, but this one's a Canva course, and this one's an Asana course. I remember being in that place where we're going all over the place. Some people do this with certifications, like keep layering on education as a means of not only delaying some things, but feeling maybe

like they won't be taken seriously enough, or people will judge them, or find them out for not knowing every single thing in the whole universe, so they keep gathering all these certifications or something. And some people spend their time consuming a bit too much of social media, me included.

So, I have a couple of tips today that I put together for you on things I would do differently if I were doing it all over again, or if I was more in the beginning stages of business now, this is what I personally would spend my time focusing on. I'm really hoping that this episode just helps you cut through the noise a little bit and also gives you some inspiration and ideas of maybe some things that you've been trying to figure out how to make it work, but it's not the right fit for you. Hopefully, today you will figure out what is the right fit for you and what you should do instead.

So, the very first thing that I would do differently if I started my business now versus in 2016, is that I would follow and consume way less and I would create and lead more. I wish I would have saw creating my own stuff as a means of practice. So, I think that a lot of times people will think if you start an Instagram account and you don't have 80 million followers off the bat - I don't know what they think - they think they have to keep engaging more, like I have to keep following people or I have to comment on people's posts or I have to do this or that or the other thing, and I don't think that they see that that's a beautiful opportunity and time to actually just create as a means of practicing, practicing creating, practicing reels, or writing captions, or shooting videos, shooting photos, whatever it is. It's just getting used to it.

I think anybody who's built a pretty successful online business will typically say that if you go back and look at their early content, it's not very good. And they might be just saying that, but I think what they're really saying is it's not the same level of maybe professionalism or high tech, high production value as what they would do now. But the point is that they did it at some point, and then they got to the high production high, whatever, when you see them. When you see famous online business people putting out content, you're seeing stuff that's taken years and probably tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars over time of building up a business that can afford to do those kinds of things. But they're often

the first ones to tell you, if you would go back and look at their other content, it's not great or it's funny looking graphics, or cheesy stuff, or it's kind of blurry, or it's not bright enough, or they were using Canva and doing it for free.

So, I think that it's important for you to see posting on social media and wherever else, whether it's writing emails to your list or posting on your blog or creating YouTube videos as practice. And it's an opportunity to get really comfortable with creating and with learning how to become a leader and learning how to, basically, grow and strengthen your own voice as opposed to just consuming and relying on everybody else's. So, we tend to in the beginning just follow a bunch of other people, engage with their content. And all you're doing is giving your energy to their content and not putting your energy into learning how to create your own and learning how to become a leader in your own space.

And I don't care, don't even tell me for one second, "Oh. But there are so many other people doing what I'm doing, and yada, yada, yada." If that's true, and it probably is true, but if that's true, then is going around to a bunch of other people's Instagram accounts and commenting on there's going to help you or is it time for you to just jump into the pool? It doesn't matter that you're a few years behind somebody else. I have seen all kinds of wacky stuff happen in this industry over the last five, six years, it does not matter. You have to jump in the pool at some point and it is better for you to jump in the pool and start swimming and learning your own than standing on the sidelines and watching everybody else.

So, I want you to get in there. I want you to create more than you consume. I want you to learn to become a leader and see this all as a means of practice and see it as kind of getting your "bad content" out of the way. With every single post, with every single email, you're going to learn, you're going to get better, you're going to start seeing what works. The beautiful part of posting more, especially in the beginning, when you're kind of getting your feet under you is that you get data. And with that data, you can make a lot of informed decisions. So, if you start posting and you see, "Wow. Every time I post about this or every time I post in this way or phrase things this way, I get way more engagement when I post

about this,” or I see that reels do well for me, or I see that this does well for me. You will start to learn.

The other thing is that you’re going to start learning what you actually like doing. So, if you start showing up in different places and you start seeing what kind of community might exist there for your type of work, you might see that you like or don’t like showing up there. And that’s going to be really important feedback that we’ll talk about a little bit later in this episode.

Okay. So, the second thing that I would do if I were starting over or doing things differently from the start is to focus on fewer platforms, both social media platforms and marketing platforms in general, finding the one that I actually like and that I could show up on consistently, and then going deeper and more consistent with it.

So, what the heck am I talking about? Well, I remember when I started my business, Facebook was the primary platform at the time. In 2016, Facebook was king. I don’t even think there were Instagram Stories yet. Maybe they rolled out right afterwards. And Instagram was still very much just a photo sharing platform, but Facebook was where we were sharing educational content, we were doing Facebook Lives, we had Facebook Groups, we had a lot more going on, on Facebook. So, I was in Facebook because I felt like that was the primary platform. I was on Instagram because that was the one I liked and thought it was fun. And then, I thought YouTube and podcasts were just really intimidating, so I decided not to go anywhere near it. And I’ve never liked Twitter, so I just never had Twitter. There was no TikTok or anything like that, by the way. So, I remember just having this kind of spaghetti at the wall approach, doing a lot of consumption, just like I just talked about, and starting to get my feet under me, but focusing on these platforms.

And if I was doing it over again, I wish I would have put more of my energy and effort into being on a platform earlier and a marketing channel earlier that, two things, one, that I would have liked because then I would show up better and more often, and I’ll talk about that in a sec. But also one that would have built up basically a library, a bank of content that was

searchable, that was more SEO driven, or that gave me the opportunity to create it into an SEO driven piece of content, like a podcast that you can turn into a blog post or a YouTube episode that is searchable but also that you could turn into a blog post. So, I wish I would have focused on something like that more from the start and then just picked a social media channel to engage with my audience, to build a community, to get to know people, but then also, obviously, to share when I had a new episode or a new post or whatever.

I think when I started my business, it was very popular to have a lot of our content live on the social media platforms themselves, like you would write the Instagram caption like a blog post or the Facebook post like a big blog post. And instead, I wish that content would have just lived on my site or become a video. And I remember everybody talking at that time about podcasting is going to be huge and video is going to be the future. And I was like, "Oh. I don't know. We'll see. It's trendy." And obviously, that is what happened. That was right. And then, they're still are video is king, podcasts have exploded.

And I wish I would have tried some of these things a little bit earlier because, even for somebody who's very self-deprecating and pretty self-conscious, I don't love being on video because I never think I look great enough or I'm worried about what people are going to say or whatever. But ultimately, I don't really care and I don't mind at all about actually being on video like I feel very comfortable. I might even go so far as to say confident in the sense of what I'm talking about. I'm not afraid of public speaking or anything like that. And then, I really wish I would have tried podcasting because it's been super, super fun. I've really enjoyed doing it. And what's so important about enjoying those things is that when you enjoy something, it will come through in your content and you will stick to something.

And so, I think when you really focus on creating content on a platform that you actually love, you're going to show up. It's going to come through in your work. I've gotten more engagement from this podcast than any blog post or anything that I've ever written. And then, I think you're going to build up that snowball like effect of community, listenership, viewership,

whatever, a little bit faster because of all those things. Because if you're going to be more consistent and when you do show up, you're going to be a bit better, more energized in your content, that's going to attract the audience that you really want.

So, I would encourage, just like I encourage anytime I do an extra training or something for my customers, I'm always talking about where can the hub of your content live. Not on Instagram, not on TikTok, not on Facebook. I'm talking YouTube, podcast, or blog. And if you could only pick one of those three, which one would you pick? YouTube, podcast, or blog, which one would you pick? And then, if and when possible, the best case scenario is that you pick YouTube or a podcast and you turn it into one of the others. So, you record a YouTube video, which you then have transcribed through Rev, for example, and you get a transcript and you have somebody clean it up or you clean it up, and you turn it into a blog post with very SEO optimized headings and keywords and you allow people to actually find this content who are already searching for it on Google anyway. That's what I wish.

I know that it's so tantalizing to be like, "But the latest TikTok trend, or this dance, or this reel, or this filter on stories, or this or that, or the sticker, and now people are doing collabs and lives and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." It's very enticing because it's loud. It's what's going on around you all the time. And it's really easy to get drawn into feeling like those are the things that deserve the bulk of your attention.

If I could do things differently and if I could pass anything on to you, it's that the more that you can focus your time, energy, and attention on these, what I call the big three, the YouTube, podcast, or blogs that you will be paid dividends over and over and over again, well beyond what you could ever get from an Instagram post.

Now, don't get me wrong, Instagram is a lot of fun. It's a place where we get to actually know people we can show different parts of our personality. I just don't want your content living there. You're going to be working your ass off basically sprinting uphill. It's like sprinting uphill against 50 mile an hour winds. That's what it feels like. And then, it's like you're also sprinting uphill with 50 mile an hour winds and the road keeps

dropping from under you and shifting under your feet. That's what Instagram feels like. We can't control it. We don't own it, yadda, yadda, yadda. You've heard all those things before. But what's most important about what people are saying when they say that is that your content needs to live somewhere else, it needs to have a home.

I want your content to work for you, not against you. I don't want you to be posting your best Instagram post ever and seven people see it. I want you to create a high quality piece of content, whether that's a podcast, a YouTube episode, or a blog post that people can be finding for years to come.

And keep in mind, when I started my business, I started with a core ten blog posts. I wrote ten blog posts that I heavily researched and optimized, and I made sure the titles were good and the headings were good and all this kind of stuff. I had no website traffic. I just started my business. I started my website myself. I started this business from scratch. And I put these ten blog posts up. And in the beginning, they actually were responsible for gathering the first little handful of customers and subscribers that I got. And five, six years later, those blog posts are still pulling in leads every single day. And of course, since then, I've written a billion more pieces of content and created more videos and more podcast episodes and all of these kinds of things that are also pulling people in every day. And so that stuff, over time, it just stacks and stacks and stacks.

So, I just wanted to share that because some people will say to me, like, "Well, what's the point of doing this blog post or this YouTube video when I only have 50 subscribers now? I only have 50 followers now?" It's like, "Yeah. Now." But the point is, if you're taking an SEO driven, evergreen content driven strategy, meaning that your content will be helpful to people down the line and pull people into a freebie that will always make sense and will always be helpful, then it doesn't matter how many you have now, the point is to get this brick layer going and just build this thing brick by brick by brick.

And one day, you'll be like me. You'll be looking back six years later and you'll be like, "Whoa. That dinky little blog post that I wrote that wasn't even any good is pulling in leads every single day and people are purchasing from it, that's wild." So, yeah, it might not feel like it now, but it will.

The third thing is that I would focus more on educational content that establishes you as an expert versus the sexier things that you might be seeing online. So, I often think about if I was starting my business now, I feel like it would be even harder than when I actually started back in 2016 because I feel like right now there aren't a lot of distractions for you of very flashy forms of content that aren't necessarily helpful for building your business. So, I could see it being really enticing to build a platform on TikTok or to do lots of different reels or these catchy little - I don't know - trendy things on Instagram. And I think that that stuff is a helpful part of your strategy.

I just don't like when people make it their strategy. I wouldn't build my business off of reels exclusively without creating that content that I was just talking about, because years from now, those reels aren't helpful anymore, reels aren't even a thing, or they've just fallen to the complete bottom of the reel shelf, then you're not getting anything for that content. So, it's going to be a great hit right now, but I'm just worried about you putting all your eggs in that basket. You're not really building up that brick by brick strategy.

And what I'm interested in for you is you putting in the work now. It's kind of like investing. It's putting in the money now and letting it grow over time, collect that interest over time, instead of just tossing it all out the window. Don't get me wrong, I think reels can be a great strategy. I have a whole podcast episode about easy reels tips in the way that I would do reels, which is in a way that more where they could live over time, because I do have reels now that are, like, eight months old that are still pulling in leads at this point, and that's really cool. So, if I were you and I was going to do something like reels or TikToks, I would do them on things that are a bit more evergreen and that are constantly pointing people to your top of funnel or to your freebie to your opt in, whatever it

is, so that these things are actually working for you. And every once in a while, it's fun just to do a fun one or a behind the scenes one or allow your audience to get to know you. But I really think if I could do this all over again, I would focus less on the kitschy stuff and just do more of the solid foundational let's build this thing kind of content.

So, the next thing I would have done differently is not to worry nearly as much about using the perfect tech tool or platform or making sure that I'm using the "right platform," like the one that everybody else is using or something like that. And I'm talking whether it's whatever you use for your email service provider, what you use to house your courses, sell your products, for productivity, if you're team Asana or team ClickUp, it doesn't really matter. I think people just put way too much time and energy into picking the perfect tech tool or platform for them and I think that you can waste a lot of time in the early stages of your business.

As I think it's funny, in the earlier stages of our business, it's not nearly as consequential to change platforms. If you decide to try out Asana now, and a year from now, you decide you want to do ClickUp, if your business isn't gigantic, it'll be fine. You can transfer it over. There are people you can hire to transfer it over. There are softwares that you can use to transfer these things over. And things you can just download and re-upload. So, it's not super consequential. It's actually a bigger deal once your business gets further down the line. Like when I moved my courses from Teachable to Kajabi, it was like this whole big thing. We had to hire people to help and we, for months, dealt with certain login issues and people not knowing where things were, and all that kind of stuff, it was much more consequential at that point.

But I remember in the beginning being like, "Ah. Should I use Teachable or should I use Thinkific?" I don't even remember what else existed at that time. But I was looking all around, I just remember being like, "Screw it. I'm going with Teachable." And I'm so glad that I did because I just got started. No one bought or didn't buy my course because it was on Teachable. Just like no one buys or doesn't buy my course now because it's on Kajabi. Because nobody even knows what it's on until they get inside. And even once

they're inside, I bet you, most people wouldn't even be able to tell you what kind of platform it's on.

So, focus more on the actual content of your offerings or your products or the content on social media or whatever than the platform or the tools that you're going to use. And if something doesn't work for you, you're not married to it. Just back out and try something new. I would commit to things for, like, at least 90 days so that you're not hopping around because the startup and re-startup cost can be kind of high. But I think as long as you've kind of tried something and you've tried to make it your own, then it's really no big deal, you can switch down the line.

So, the next thing I would do differently if I was starting over again is such a big one for me. I really wish that I wouldn't have wasted so much time worrying that I must be doing something wrong because I didn't see other people doing it the way that I was doing it. Or I saw people doing it differently and assumed that they were right. So, I remember pretty early on kind of coming to this conclusion about I want to focus on SEO content and I want to focus on really writing evergreen content that's going to be drawing my ideal client for years to come. And this was an idea that I had that's definitely, by the way, it's not a novel idea in business in general. It's just that I didn't see a lot of people around me doing that.

I primarily was surrounded by coaches and other online creatives who were using social media to build audiences and to talk about how many followers they had and how much money they were making. And to be on Facebook and building a Facebook Group and how many people they had in their Facebook Group. And I remember I just felt so bad that I probably had a few hundred Instagram followers at the time. And my business was starting to get up to six figures, I had only a few hundred Instagram followers, it really didn't take much time.

And I remember thinking, like, "How is this happening to me? Because this person who's talking about making a lot of money or doing really well in her business, she has tons and tons of followers." And I think looking back on it, I wish I could just release some of that confusion and judgment and whatever of just do your thing. Keep your blinders on. Keep your head down.

Keep going. Do your own thing. Just because somebody else is or isn't doing something doesn't make it the right way. It definitely doesn't make it the right way for you. It might be the right way for them. It might be the right way for their business. They might be completely full of shit, by the way, and not be doing nearly as well as they tell you. They could be doing amazing, too. Who the hell knows?

So, the point is I just wouldn't listen to it. And if something's working for you and you like it, go for it. Don't worry about the fact that you don't see any other people doing it that way.

In fact, I think looking back on it, if I could pass myself a little message back in 2016, I'd be like, "Hey, Sam. The fact that you don't see other people doing it this way, that's going to be your secret sauce. You're ahead of the pack. You're doing this SEO stuff. You're doing this, you're doing that. That's working for you and your business." It's not that you're better than anybody else or that other people are wrong, it's just that it's working for you.

And I think all of this has to come from a place of you knowing your customers best. When you really feel confident about the person that you are meant to work with, the person that you want to help, the person that you see yourself having the best relationship and results with, you will know what's best for them. And it will allow you to start tuning out a lot of the rest of you should be doing this, you should be doing that, you should be doing it this way, because you'll be able to say, "Nuh-uh. Not my customer. My customer likes this."

And so, I remember a lot of people telling me back in the day when I wanted to start a podcast, people were like, "No one would ever listen to a legal podcast." I was like, two things. One, my customer most often is the kind of person who likes to know a little bit about most things. They like to do things the right way. They are a little bit freaked out that they could potentially not be doing something the right way. And they're also the kind of person that doesn't just hand things off. I always say to my friends, they're not my mother who hands things off to other people and is like,

just tell me when it's done. That's not you guys. That's not my ideal client.

My ideal client is usually the kind of person who's like, "I need to understand this a little bit," because that level of understanding is going to make me feel confident. You don't need to become a lawyer or anything, but you need to at least understand Why do I need an LLC? Why do I need these website policies? How exactly do I use this contract to protect myself? Once you know that stuff, I think that my ideal client feels so empowered that she can go on and build her business and she can get back to the stuff that she wants to be focused on, which is not contracts.

And so, when I thought of it from that perspective, and I thought about how my ideal client is the kind of person that likes to know that stuff, then having a podcast with bite-sized legal tips and just trying to get down to brass tacks is not that crazy. Because I understand that he or she is the kind of person who wants to hear this stuff. And so, I have to sometimes just keep that in mind and block out all of the like, "Well, no one's going to want to listen to that. Well, if you're going to talk about that, well, then you should also talk about this." I'm like, "No. My ideal client's going to be okay with this. That's going to be okay with the way that I talk about it and all of that kind of stuff." And I also understand that my people like to walk or they travel or they're out with their kids, and so they want to have content in a way that's easily digestible and on the go. And so many of you have shared with me that that's how you listen to the podcast, so that's just an example of how you really have to come at this from a perspective of knowing who your client is and what would be best for them, how do they consume content, how do they want to hear of things.

And with what you're talking about, the kind of content you're talking about and the way that you're presenting it, what's the best medium for you to do that? Like if I was trying to teach people how to cook, I wouldn't have a podcast necessarily - maybe I would - to talk about cooking tips and things like that. But you bet your butt I would have a YouTube channel. And when I was on Reels or on Instagram, there'd be clips from those that would be showing people because it's so visual, so people need to see it. So, I often think about not only is it about what platform you like and where

your clients hang out and all that kind of stuff, but it's also what is the medium in which this content will be most impactful, how do they need to see it or hear it or experience it. That's something to think about when you're deciding all this.

Okay. Last but not least, and you have to tell me if this is you, too, but I remember wasting a lot of time, wasting time thinking that there was some mystical secret or magic bullet that I must be missing that was going to make this all easier and that was going to make my business really successful. And I would often blame the lack of this magic bullet, the lack of this little piece of information that I must be missing. Like, How are they doing that? I don't understand. I thought that because I was missing that, that was why I wasn't "doing well."

Looking back on it, I realized, wow, things were building. That's all you can ask for. I was making mistakes and learning. I was making connections. I was building genuine connections and an audience and a community with my audience and with my customers. I was creating and improving my products and I was just getting better every time. That's all you can really ask for. And there's nothing that you're missing. You're not missing anything. I think a lot of the marketing that you're getting - it's so much to do with it, actually. I can't tell you how many times I purchased courses or purchased - I don't know - guides or sessions with people thinking like, this is it, this is the answer. Once this person or once I get access to this person's course, everything's just going to flow from there.

And you can probably agree or tell me if you've ever experienced this because I hear this so often from friends and clients and all that kind of stuff, that oftentimes when you buy somebody's course that's about those kinds of magic bullet-y type of things, like this lady has a secret to Pinterest or YouTube or Instagram or whatever, every time people say the same thing, "I got in and it was just so obvious. Everything she said was so obvious." That's what everybody says. And so, there could be a lot to that and why people say that. But I think a big part of it is that there was a part of you that was hoping that there was going to be that magic bullet in there. And when you realize that you already have access to so much of this information, it's disappointing. And I think that certain

people can package information in a certain way and tell you certain things and give you tips and shortcuts and collapse time for you, and that's all so, so helpful. But nobody has a magic bullet, because so much of building your own online business is just practicing getting better at content, being a better marketer.

I've spent my entire day today filming three YouTube videos and a podcast episode. I'm like a fulltime content creator. So, you have to get good at creating content. That is your job. And that content has to speak to your ideal client. It has to speak to their pain points. You have to speak to what they're going through and where they want to go. And your offer has to make sense for what they want. It has to make sense. It has to be valuable. And I don't mean in the pieces that you include, like, ten calls and three PDFs. I mean, in the transformational benefits, it has to be helpful. People have to understand why this is for them, why now. You have to overcome their objections.

That's what business is all about is while being real human and letting certain parts of your life down, the walls down around your life so that people feel connected to you, truly being genuine and not being a vulnerable for vulnerability sake, but actually being genuine and open and honest, actually doing a good job, that is so much of it. It's like creating good products that actually help people. I can't tell you how helpful it has been to have created a product that actually is just a really good product that people enjoy and get a lot out of because that has paid me back a million times over because people tell other people about the product or they share about it or they feel more excited about it because they experience good results from it. And the more you can create that kind of experience for your people, the more that that snowball effect is going to happen for you too.

There is no magic bullet. No one's coming to save us. No one's going to give us any sort of plan or shortcut. Everything that is happening to you is happening for you in the long run. And it's all a really important part of the process. I think the biggest key is just figuring out what was I meant to learn from that? What am I to take away from that? What is the data telling me about what I'm doing? And what can I take away from that

and do differently, double down on all that kind of stuff? That's what I would lean more into if I was doing things differently. If I was starting over, and I would not beat myself up for having experienced any of these things, I wouldn't shame myself for feeling like I was far behind or there were other people who are already doing it and doing it better, bigger, more money, whatever.

I would say, you're on your way. Your time will come. And by the way, what do you really want? Because you don't need to want what she's having. You can want what you want. And you have to be clear about that because otherwise you're going to spend your whole time here building your business, chasing after what other people have only to find out that it might not be what you want anyway. You might not want her life and you probably don't even know what her life looks like because she's definitely not sharing about it openly, because nobody is. We're not all sharing our worst moments. I'm not, you're not, nobody is. So, just keep that in mind.

I hope that something in this episode sparked a little idea for you or made you feel better in some way about building your business. I would love, love, love for you to send me a DM on Instagram. Let me know what that was for you. What was your number one takeaway? Just send me a DM on Instagram, @samvanderwielen. And until then, I will see you next week on On Your Terms.

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

Just remember that although I am an attorney, I am not your attorney and I am not offering you legal advice in today's episode. This episode and all of my episodes are informational and educational only. It is not a

substitute for seeking out your own advice from your own lawyer. And please keep in mind that I can't offer you legal advice. I don't ever offer any legal services. But I think I offer some pretty good information.