



Episode 228:

The Surprising Shift That Took My Business From \$0 to 7-Figures

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When I started my business, I did pretty much everything I could to downplay just how much I cared about my business and about growing it when it couldn't have been any further from the truth of what I really wanted because on the inside, I had really big business dreams. I wanted at the time, as I used to say, to grow the biggest business ever, whatever that means. As I used to say back then, that was my real dream, even though I would tell everybody, on the outside like, my little business, it's nothing. Like I'm just trying something out. We'll see how it goes. Who knows?

It's so hard to build a business. Like most don't last, right? I would totally downplay it. And as much as I cared about growing it, or at least I said that I cared about growing it, I'd also do something that really, well, I would say it doesn't make sense to me except that now it makes a lot of sense. I would blow off pretty much the entire workday in the beginning, at least for the first several months, taking full advantage of my newfound freedom now that I had uncuffed myself from the chokehold that was lawyer life, right? I needed to get out of the four walls, the skyscrapers, staring out the window like I used to as a lawyer. And I was just like so excited.

I remember this one very random day where I went to the Cherry Hill Mall where I was from and I was just walking around, was like a Thursday, 2 p.m., walking around the mall, and I just felt like a kid who had broken out of school. I was literally walking around the mall creepily smiling at random strangers because I felt so happy to be free. And so I filled my day with, besides mall stuff, then I kind of transitioned into being like, okay, now it's time to work, right? So I filled my day with coffee chats.

I over consumed free content and if there had been an award for it at the time, I would have won something like most freebies downloaded of all time, which like now that I'm saying that, like, could you win a dorkier award? I'm not sure. And I pretty much doom scrolled on social media until my hands were going to fall off. I, I consumed so much content, you know, probably on Instagram at the time that was the most popular by far.

And the funny thing is that at the end of the day, I called it all work, right? This was me working because I was looking at content from other people who had businesses or I was getting coffee with other people who had businesses. And I was so exhausted at the end of every day. But the

weird thing about that kind of work is that my bank account didn't reflect how hard I was working at the time. I was sort of stuck in a bit of a cycle that I see a lot of other people working their way through now. Maybe you, I'm not sure. You'll have to let me know. But it's when you're sort of swirling around in your business or swirling around in your content, it's not really going anywhere. Nobody's biting. Your audience isn't growing. People aren't really responding, but yet you keep pumping it out, right? Or maybe you're actually upping it. Maybe you're creating even more content because you're like, this thing's not working. Let me create more, right?

What I eventually learned was that I needed to stop waiting for success to come to me and instead start to take steps towards building an actual successful business. And those steps were not going to be going, well, definitely not going to the mall and creepily smiling at random strangers because I was free from lawyer jail. But also not having coffee chats or randomly posting on Facebook, you know, groups at the time or just like randomly put like copying and pasting the same post or copy and then like spreading it across every single social channel all at once and being like, why isn't anybody liking this?

I really had to get down to like the foundation of what was actually going to grow a successful business. So successful businesses make sales, right? And in order to make those sales, you have to have leads and your leads have to be what we call qualified leads. Like they have to be people who need what you sell and have that problem and your thing solves the problem. And you're the person to solve that problem. And like you, your messaging speaks to them and all of those things. Right.

And it's not about creating a crap ton of content or about being in all places online at all times, but it's about making sure that that stuff you are putting out is really good and actually speaks to those people and actually solves a problem that they have. And so in order to get, you know, to really like embody that mentality and then start actually building a successful business, I had to get clear on what exactly I wanted. So instead of me saying, I want to have the biggest business ever, which is not measurable, not specific, just totally general and also very me because it's a, it's such a like lofty open-ended goal that it would keep me on a hamster wheel for eternity iif I was to actually say or embody that goal.

Instead, I had to create more measurable goals and I had to get really, really clear in my mind of what success looked like to me because the more time I spent in the online business industry, the more I realized that there's no objectively right or one way of what success looks like. For example, just the other day I was speaking to somebody who is a kind of the point person for a huge, huge conference for the online business industry. And she was saying that she has somebody who's giving a talk at this conference about how they just want to have a million dollar business, which might sound really huge to you right now from where your business is. But there are plenty of people who have businesses of my size where that's not enough. Like they want to keep going. It's like, it feels like it's never enough and it's a little bit of a bottomless pit in that respect.

But there are also people who feel really comfortable at certain ranges, whether that's 300,000, 500, a million, even a hundred thousand. I mean, doesn't the number doesn't matter. The point is, is that there are different like definitions of pictures of success for different people. And no one of them is objectively better than the other because really at the end of the day, all that matters is that you're building the kind of business that works for you and your lifestyle and your family and your goals. But first you have to be very clear about your goals, right?

So I, during that time, I worked on creating more measurable goals, painting a very clear picture in my mind of what my success actually looked like beyond just numbers and even what my day and my life looked like as the owner of that kind of business, of the business that I said was my successful business. Okay, here's the picture of my successful business. What does my day look like running that business? What does my day look like as the CEO of that business?

So I decided that I would stop the doom scrolling. would stop sitting around. I definitely stopped going to the mall during the day. Not to say that I didn't take advantage, full advantage of my newfound freedom. Honest to God, I still feel that same, like I could still go to the mall today and walk around smiling at people. For all of you who have ever worked a horrible, horrible corporate job, I just feel like you understand that. The appreciation or least for me, the appreciation has not worn off and I hope it never does. But I could legit still go to the mall today and smile at random people and not just because I stare because I love people watching. But I decided to stop doing all that stuff and stop waiting for the idea of success to come to me on a silver platter. And instead, I started taking action. I started designing my day and saying yes and no to things that future me would and wouldn't do. And I started doing that right now.

So instead of me waiting for, you know, if I said, okay, my dream business generates a million dollars a year in revenue and gross revenue. And in order to run that kind of business, my dream life would look like this. You know, my day would look like this. This is what my team would look like. This is how it feels, how much kind of interaction I would have with customers, yada yada, instead of then waiting for that thing to happen. And then I, as the CEO that I've just painted in my mind, don't -- like I would wait to take action and start designing my day like that. Instead, I just start doing that now. Sounds a little crazy because you're like, aren't we all pretending, right? It's a little fake it till you make it, if I'm being honest. But that's what I started doing. It's what's called future-proofing. It's the idea of starting to act now like what you want to become in the future.

So in 2025, since we're still at the beginning of the year, whether you're starting a new business or starting over in your business or just like you're revisiting and kind of hit and reset or something like that. And you're taking the one that maybe you're even just taking the one that you have to the next level. I feel like I keep hearing from a lot of friends who were just like, have been knocked around by the last couple of years, but now they're like this year, like this year I'm going in on my business. If legally legitimizing that, you know, business might be part of the equation, then you've got to do what you have to do in your business to really dress the part.

I do think that there's a bit of of like showing up in your business, like the the old adage of like dress for the job you want. I think that you kind of have to do that version of dressing for the job you want with acting like the business owner for the business that you want. Right. Acting like the CEO, acting like the coach, acting like the creator, whatever it is that you do. But you really have to do in your business what you want to ultimately to see in your business. Now for me in my legal business, when I really started to take it seriously and it kind of doubled down eight years ago, I thought, okay, well I want to go really seriously on branding and website. And you know, I essentially have an e-commerce or a digital commerce business. So it was really important to me that the customer experience be pretty fluid and it's easy for people to check out and to navigate my website.

I knew that my website was going to be so like my business would be so heavily dependent on my website. Plus I knew that the bulk of my marketing strategy, especially at that time was very SEO driven. And so I'm like, I'm asking people to click from this link going over to my website. It's gotta be good. And then the checkout experience has to be easy. have to reduce friction. So I took that stuff really, really seriously in the beginning and still now, but I also was able to do that because I spent a lot of time getting very clear on who my business was for, what problems they had, what solutions they were looking for, what that would do for them, you know, what little moments were trigger like little trigger moments were in their day.

And I was so clear on who I was designing that website for, who was I targeting with that branding? What was I doing with my branding? What messaging, what vibe, what feeling was I hoping to connote through all of that stuff? I was super clear. So I wasn't just randomly designing a website and hoping it stuck. I was so intentional. did start back then. I started actually getting dressed for work. I'm trying to do that now too. Most of the time, if I can like half the time not be an athleisure, I consider that a win. but yeah, actually getting dressed for work or for when I'm creating content at least, you know, paying attention to my language.

I think the way that I talked about my business, like, was I still calling my business a little business? Was I downplaying it was I not sharing it with people was I I don't know like disqualifying it when I'm talking to it and being like well I don't know it's probably not that big of deal or no it's not that serious or there's so many people who have coaching businesses it's not a big deal you know no I pay attention to my language I started thinking about how would the person who I say I want to become talk about her business it wouldn't be the downplaying a little business because it's not going to be a little business so I just started doing that now.

Obviously I got all the financial and legal pieces in place because you know, I'm a lawyer, but also I knew that businesses that are legitimate business, any legitimate business has their legal and their financial stuff in order. Like there's just a no pass go. It's not a business if you haven't registered it, if you haven't gotten a business bank account, you know, done all this kind of stuff. I also started to respect my time, but so, like as a business owner, it's not very respectful towards my time to blow off the day because it's not, it's not really honoring like the worth of what I've built and what I'm building again, honoring that future proof mindset.

You might be sitting here being like, I don't have anything right now, but you're headed there, right? So you've got to start to embody that mindset now, respect your time, respect your worth. When, you know, eventually when I would get a lot of requests for doing a lot of free appearances or like participating in every summit from here to Timbuktu. I started saying no to some things, some things that weren't in alignment, some things that were free, some things that just started to ask too much of me, right?

As my email list started to grow and everybody wanted access to it to promote their summit or whatever, it was like, hey, my email list is valuable. It's super valuable to me, right? And so I can't just keep giving it out for free. I got protective of what I was building. And I did that before it was really quote unquote worth protecting in terms of a financial sense. I believe that your stuff is always worth protecting, but I did start, you know, I was a little like ahead of my, ahead of my time, so to speak. And I did this ahead of time before my business really demanded it.

In a sense, I started dressing for the business I wanted to build, not the one that I had at that moment. Maybe not always literally dressing, like I said, because I do, I do love my cozy clothes, but we have this way of counting ourselves out of things before they even start. If you're listening to this wherever you're listening to it and it's safe, raise your hand. If you also count yourself out of things before they start. know that I do. I literally, I just ran a 10 K in September and for days leading up to it, was like, there's no way I'm going to be able to run this. There's no way. There's no way. Literally as I was running it, I was going, there's no way I'm going to be able to finish this. I finished it when I did the HYROX competition in Chicago in November, the whole time. Same thing all leading up to it. I was like, I can't do it. I can't do it. The whole time I'm actually running the race. I'm like, I can't do it. I can't do it. I did it. Right. So we have a way of counting ourselves out of things before they even happen.

It's like on the one hand, especially with our businesses, it's like we won't even let ourselves dream of what we actually want coming to fruition because the thought of it not happening is just too scary. In fact, I would actually say that like maybe you've dreamt about it happening, but you won't say it. You won't own it. That this is something that you really want because you're afraid it's not going to happen.

And so instead we hedge our bets and we hope that by doing that, it'll hurt a little bit less if things don't work out. And instead of planning for things, this is what I need you to do. Instead of planning for things not to work out and secretly crossing your fingers behind your back and just like hoping that they do and like on the deep inside, like you really, really want this business to be successful, but you just keep telling everybody that you don't really care or that it's just a little business or you're not sure or whatever, or you're hiding it.

I hope you take this as a sign that it's okay to claim what you really want. It's safe to say, I even if you just say it to me or you say it to a friend, like I actually really care about my business and I really want it to grow. And maybe you say, I'm bummed that it's not growing and I am taking it

more seriously. And I'm really hoping that these things I'm doing pays off or you just own that the business that you've just started, you hope it becomes something or this idea that you just had for a product becomes something. It's okay to say you want it to be successful or that you want it to be your full-time gig or that you want more customers or followers. And it's also okay that you don't really know how that's going to happen yet. You just have a really clear picture of what you want to happen and you start picturing that and you just take little steps, little steps every day, little baby steps towards that vision of what you're trying to create.

And if getting your legal stuff in order is a part of that, I've got very exciting news because I've got my first live legal training of 2025. I only host two all year and it's coming up for you in just a few weeks. So doors to register for my free legal training is actually, they're actually opening on Monday, January 27th, and they feel fast, super, super fast. So you don't want to miss this. It's going to be a free legal workshop to teach you how to legally protect your online business.

It's the best way to make sure that you don't miss the signups besides listening to my podcast, of course, is to get my weekly email newsletter, Sam's Sidebar. It's where you get weekly legal tips from me. I pull back the curtain on building a multi-seven figure business. I share online business news and updates, links that are helpful to you to build your online business. I'm going to link to Sam's Sidebar down in the show notes. It's my completely free weekly newsletter that over 45,000 of your online business peers get already.

So make sure you sign up for Sam's sidebar. So you're the first to know when doors open to my free legal workshop on January 27th. This is your chance to take that step in the direction that you want to go in. And we've got to act like the business that we want to become before we actually become it. So this is your sign. You've got this. I'm here to support you. Hit reply on my email or send me a DM on Instagram and let me know if this episode resonated. If it was helpful, if you want more episodes like this. I hope you liked it and I'll talk with you in two weeks.