



EPISODE 105: Practical Tips for Starting Your Hustle Today with Chris Guillebeau

TRANSCRIPT

- Hello, hello, hey there, hey there! It's Josh again, and we are back! Podcasting from home on Hustle From Home, and I'm dressed from the waist up.
- And we're all so grateful. Thank you, Josh. I'm Amy Anderson. I'm The Side Hustler columnist at SUCCESS and the founder of Anderson Content Consulting. Excited to be with you, here from my home office. And really looking forward to today's conversation with our wonderful guest. And talking about how, how do we get started with a side hustle? And if you've started one, how do you scale? How can you make some progress right now in today's climate?
- Yeah, today we are talking to anybody who's just kinda toying with the idea of going out with a side hustle. And to the current side hustlers who are thinkin' about makin' that their full-time thing. So the market shifts that we have all experienced, you know, over these past weeks and months have changed the game. And today we wanna, you know, help people, you know, answer those burning questions and capitalize on the way that the market, the economy, is going, right away.
- Right, and if you're feeling like, OK, I wonder if this is the right time, and, I wonder if this is even, if I should even think about this, right? I will say that one of the biggest things we've seen is how many businesses have actually been started during a recession, during a down time. And that, you know, you've got to really allow yourself to stay open minded to what's possible for you. And in today's episode, we're gonna talk a lot about different ways, some tactical tips, some hacks for getting started, some quick tips to get you started quickly too, so that you don't have to spend forever thinking about it.
- Yeah, and it's not that the recession shouldn't be of any notice to people. I mean, there are plenty of people scared by the downturn that we've experienced. I know at SUCCESS, I get pitched books by authors and a lot of them, in fact our cover guy for the May/June issue, Jay Shetty, his book was supposed to be out in May, it got pushed back to September. So a lot of authors are moving their book releases back. But I know one who isn't, and that's Amy Anderson. Amy, you got a new book comin' out, don't ya?



- I do, and actually, you know the interesting thing is, Josh, I'm self-publishing my book, and I moved my book release date up. I was going to release it later this summer, and have a launch and print books and all that fun stuff, and with everything going on right now and the great need that I see out there for people who really wanna know how do I get my expertise and my experience out there so people know that I have something of value to offer? I wanted my book to be available now, so I'm actually giving away my ebook for free. My book is called "Your Book Is the Answer" and it talks about how to put your experience and expertise into your very own book. It can be short, and as long as it shares with people what it is that you're about, and how they can begin to solve the problem that they come to you for. And this book really for me was an answer to a question that I get a lot, which is, "How do I get people to read my book "and then become my client?" Right, there was a big gap there, and people wanted to write a book, but they couldn't connect the dots to making money in their business from that book. So in "Your Book Is the Answer," I provide some really simple steps. And I connect those two dots: turning readers into clients. So I am excited to share that with you. In fact, as SUCCESS podcast Hustle From Home listeners, if you would like your free copy, just head on over to therightbookmastermind.com/book. That's The Right Book Mastermind, which is my book writing program, and I'll give you that free ebook, and you can explore that for yourself and see if maybe now is the right time for you to write a book. There's so many ways to get your name out there if you're starting your side hustle. If you're scaling, you could write a book. You can start a podcast. You could do a blog, a vlog even, and you know, today our guest even talks about sharing on social media some different ideas for really spreading the word. Yeah, he did, Amy. I'm super excited to introduce Chris Guillebeau, super excited for your book too, and I think that people are gonna love it. I know that we have a lot of listeners who are thinking about writing books themselves. You've been working on it for a while. I got to see a really early copy. And I think it's something that people can really get behind.
- Thanks so much, Josh. I'm excited for people to read it, and I'm excited to see how many people we can help.
- So, another author, Chris Guillebeau, is our guest today. He's New York Times best-seller of "The Money Tree," "Side Hustle," "The Happiness Pursuit," and a lot of other books. Been translated into more than 30 languages. Had a lifetime of self-employment, and you might be familiar with his daily podcast, Side Hustle School. It's been downloaded more than 2 million times a month.
- Yes, and he is the founder, if you've heard of The World Domination Summit, in Portland, Oregon. It's an annual event for cultural creatives. It just attracts people from all over the world. Of course, this year, we may see a little postponement. But I think that if you, a lot of people I know have that event actually on their bucket list. And he's a really inspirational guy in the sense that not only does he promote being creative and really following your passion and finding something that you resonate with as your side hustle, he also is so great at keeping it simple. You know, that's been a theme running through several of our episodes, Josh. And I think today he really expands on that. You can keep it simple. It doesn't have to be elaborate. It doesn't have to be costly. And you can get started pretty easily.
- Absolutely, I am super excited to talk to Chris. Let's get to it!



- Chris, welcome to the program!
- Thank you so much, Josh, glad to be here!
- We're so excited you're here today.
- We're talking all about going to market. It's finally time. Our idea has come to fruition a little bit. And we're ready to push the start button, except there's not exactly a start button. How do we start? When do we start? What's the first big step?
- You know, it would be easier if there was a start button. But the thing about going to market is, you know, there are markets all around us. And I think a lot of people feel a little bit intimidated, or they think, oh, I don't know what to do because I'm not a "capital E entrepreneur." And my whole work, you know, for 20 years, has been with, you know, just regular people, who are not internet celebrities. They're not, you know, famous people on Shark Tank, or whatever other show. They're just real people who are trying to find a way to create something for themselves. They understand in these uncertain times, they have to build security for themselves. Because a lot of the things that we have believed to be true about job security and such in the past are no longer true. So as for how do we get to market? How do we get started? I think we start by looking around us. And you said something about like once your idea has come to fruition, well, I think first it's like, what is the idea? Where does that idea come from? And hopefully at that point, we have already kind of looked at our skills and tried to find a connection between something in our gut and something other people value. And that, to me, like that convergence point is everything, right? So I guess once you get there, you know, then it's just a question of how do I go from idea to offer? You know, like people are walking around on the street, everybody's got an idea. But if you just think about it from being a consumer, we don't buy ideas. You know, there's no idea store. We don't go to, like, ideas.com. We buy products and services. So I think the next step is, like, how can you go from your idea to making a product or a service? What is this thing? How do I buy it? You know, how much does it cost? Why should I buy it? And how do I actually buy it? Just making that really, really concrete. And it doesn't have to be a complicated thing. Doesn't need to be a huge website. Really, really simple. But getting to market as soon as possible.
- I think one of the challenging things about this for certain people, especially those maybe in the service industry, are wondering, OK, well, it seems maybe more straightforward, if you have an actual product. But what if you're wanting to market your services? How can you get really clear on that and specific?
- No, I'm glad you asked that. Because there's a lot of different expressions of things. Like something can be a product and a service. And some people who have a product business might wanna create a service around teaching people to use their products, and like vice-versa and such. So if it's a service, you think through a pretty similar process, of what is the thing that I am trying to show people or teach people or do for people? So essentially, we're talking about the knowledge economy for a lot of these kinds of things, you know? You have knowledge about a certain topic. It could be, like something you think is super random.



- You think it's, like, just the most niche topic. But there's probably other people out there that are interested in the same thing. I've seen that over and over with my podcasts. I've been doing this for 1,200 days in a row. Every day I'm telling a different story of somebody out there who finds a way to capitalize on this. So, you know, what is that knowledge? How can I then transfer that or impart that? And so if it's a service, it's through a coaching session or a consultation. But the same thing still holds in terms of, you know, people have to go and sign up for it somewhere. What do they get when they sign up? You know, how do they pay money for it? What do they then get in return? So just, again, thinking really, really practically. Not, you know, not pie in the sky. Nuts and bolts. How do I go from this thing that's in my head, or whatever I'm trying to do for somebody, to that person actually receiving it?
- You just mentioned your podcast, and you've done over 1,200 episodes. We listened to one just, you posted a couple weeks ago, on the idea of a side hustle sprint and going to market really fast. Sometimes, maybe it's better to just start, rather than wait and perfect everything, right?
- Mmm, I think most of the time it's better. Actually, I think most of the time it's better. Because the thing is, your idea's never going to be perfect. You know, first of all, like just accept that. Your product or your service is never going to be perfect. And second, even if you're waiting for it to get, you know, close to perfect, or whatever, your product is going to get better, your service, your product or your service is going to get better, based on interacting with real people, essentially. You're gonna get feedback that you won't get any other way. And it's just much more empowering for you. If you just think about it like as an individual. So I do these tours, at least when I'm able to tour, you know, going to different cities. And I always ask people, like, you know, "Who here has ever had any kind of side hustle, "where they've made, you know, any amount of money, "even like \$100 or something?" And so usually about half the people raise their hands. And then I ask, "Do you remember the first time "that you got paid by a stranger?" And almost all of those people remember. Like, they all remember the first time they got paid from something that's apart from their paycheck, because it feels so good. It feels really empowering. And just to be like, wow, a stranger online, you know, sent me a PayPal payment for something that I put up on Etsy. Or whatever it is, you know? And that just gives you the motivation to keep going. That gives you the motivation to be, like, OK, I made \$100. How can I make \$500 or \$1,000? And then, what can I do to turn this into recurring revenue so that I'm earning \$500 a month, you know. And that takes care of my car payment or some other bills, or whatever. Like, it's this positive, virtuous cycle. But if you just remain in the planning stage and you never get to the actual action stage, you're just gonna be frustrated. So I meet a lot of frustrated people too. And one of the reasons why they're frustrated is they never go from that planning stage to actually putting something out there and seeing what happens.
- And I think that procrastination that we all feel around that, going from that, that leap from planning to action, is really hard. And maybe there's some fear involved in that. What's your experience in terms of why are people putting that off?



- Oh, look, you know, I put stuff off all the time. I think we all procrastinate. So just to be real there, like, I don't think this is something that you eventually arrive at. I guess it's, like, you know, the pain of making the change has to be less than the pain of remaining in the situation, or that whole thing, you know. And right now, a lot of people are kind of looking, and saying, you know, what do I wanna do with my life? And what do I wanna do with my life, my career, my vocation, how can I make extra money to be in a better place? So that the next time something, you know, unexpected comes along, then I'm not as afraid, essentially. And so, in terms of procrastination, I like to think about regret. And so somebody out there who's listening or watching, and they've got this idea that they've had for a while but they haven't been able to move forward, what I would encourage them to do, something that's been helpful for me, is ask yourself, "OK, a year from now," you know, "if whatever else has happened in the world "and whatever else has happened in my life, "a year from now, if I don't take action "on this idea, if I don't actually try it, "how am I gonna feel?" Versus, "How am I gonna feel if I try?" And it's not so much even the outcome. Like, whether it works or not. It's like, if you try, if you actually, you know, take the step of putting it online or sharing it with your friends on a social network, or whatever it is. I think almost always, you're going to feel better. If you actually, you know, made some progress on it. So for me that's actually been quite helpful, is just thinking, "Hmm, I've got this idea. "If I keep coming back to it, "then there must be something to it. "And I don't know if it's gonna be "an amazing idea or not, but I know I'm not gonna be "happy with myself if I don't actually try it."
- I love that idea of looking out in advance on the calendar, and I think Amy and I can identify with this as writers and editors. We're used to deadlines. And in a lot of ways, the deadline is what makes you, you know, where you get the energy to do some of your best work.
- Yep.
- And so how do you feel about sort of putting self-imposed deadlines on projects like this when you're, when to go ahead and get out there?
- Yeah, great question. I, too, am a fan of deadlines. You know, it's one of the reasons why I work with a traditional publisher. Because, like, there's other people involved in that process, I can't. If it was just up to me, whenever I had a book coming out, I'd be, like, "Oh, how about next month?" You know, "Oh, let's push it back, let's push it back." But the deadline is my friend, just as it is for you, as you said. So yes, creating some kind of artificial deadline is good. And people are motivated in a couple different ways. So some people, you know, are really motivated to keep that internal commitment to themselves. Some people are, like, I told myself that I'm gonna do it on this day, therefore, I will. Other people benefit more from external accountability, essentially. So for those people, it's like, OK, you can get a friend, and you can say, "You know, this is gonna happen by this date." Or you can just start posting about it on your Facebook, or wherever it is that you share online. "Hey everybody, 14 days from now, "this project is gonna be out in the world." "Hey everyone, it's 10 days to go." "I'm not ready, but I have to have this done." "Oh, two days to go." That kind of thing can be positive. It can be scary, you know, but it can actually help you get over that, that fear or that hesitation.



- Yeah, that all the good ideas aren't taken. And furthermore, it's not all about the idea. It's about the execution. You have the best idea in the world and not execute it and not understand how to present that to your customers, and you will fail. So I'd suggest there's a combination of things there, and yeah, there's plenty of things that emerge and inefficiencies that exist within, in the world that you can take advantage of through streamlining some process. And, or just because there's competition, doesn't mean that that's bad. That means that there's probably a big market there. And your challenge is to carve out what niche you want to own. And there's always a bigger part or a niche of a bigger market that you can go own and build a really good, successful business. I would also tell listeners there's this, I mean, I live in Silicon Valley. The dream here and the marketing message here is, if you don't build a billion, multi, actually, billion, it has to be multibillion now here, if you don't build a multibillion dollar company, you're not successful, and that's not true. My fishing business, I did make really good money, but I didn't have a G5 jet. But I'm still pretty happy and got a good exit and things like that. And I'm living in a Half Moon Bay and enjoying the beach. But I think that you as an entrepreneur have to, don't have to shoot for the moon to be successful. You can have a business that does \$1, \$2, \$3, \$7 million that throws off cash, and you are successful. And you can live a really good, good life that way.
- I think about, you know, like the beer industry, right? Ten years ago, it was Miller, Coors, Bud, and then all of a sudden, all these craft brewers came out of nowhere and none of them are competing with InBev by any stretch, but there's 10,000 of them all of a sudden, just within the last decade that they're making a living for themselves and creating jobs for other people.

Yeah, I mean, that's a great example. I mean, there's examples that happen every day. Who's gonna, who would ever think that the Dollar Shave Club was gonna take Gillette out. And they did. I mean literally, right. And we can keep going down the line. Who would ever think that you are gonna replace Coca-Cola soda? And now you've got 50 drink, I mean, Art Wallace started right here in Half Moon Bay. Who ever thought that you are gonna reinvent the camera and build GoPro? Which actually Nick built here in Half Moon Bay as well. Like, there's just so many things. And one of my professors in business school, he put a bottle of water on my desk, and I keep a bottle of water on my desk to this day, and he said, "Look at this water." It was a bottle of Voss Water. If you're familiar with Voss Water it comes in a glass thing and they charge like \$9 for it. And it's probably completely not environmentally friendly. But the bottom line and the message is, is if you can't figure out how to sell that water, if someone can figure out how to sell that water for \$8, and you're telling me that all the good ideas are taken, then you're just not being creative. And I, I would just suggest to people that, fix a problem that you have, that's big. I will tell you that every single business that I've ever started and/or invested in is because, in general, I have that problem, so I can relate to it. So I would think about that, but I'd also say that you've got to test that idea and you've got to test that idea really quickly and with a lot of people, not your friends and family. With people who are outside your circle. And the test is, they give you money. They don't tell you that they will buy it. Everyone will tell you they will buy it until you ask them to buy it. And until you have exchange of money for that product, you have not, you have not validated your idea.



- I've even seen people use this kind of created external deadline in order to kind of launch something, even sort of gently. Like, find a blogger who's interested in what you're launching. Talk to them, let them know you've got this coming out, or you're starting this service. And, "Hey, would you help me and do a guest blog, "and talk about the fact that that's coming out "on that date?" And therefore, it's not even just your platform, it's someone else's.
- Yeah. And then you also are spreading the word, while creating that external deadline for yourself. And it could be, of course, as many other people you wanna talk to about that as possible. But it could just be one person. And that even that little bit of pressure can really help.
- Yeah, no, I think that's great. I think that's great. I mean, I always say, like, you know, everybody's an expert at something, first of all. Like when people say, "There's nothing I know about." I'm like, there really is. We can figure it out in a two-minute conversation. And the second thing people think is, "Well, I don't know anybody." Like, "I don't know anybody famous." "I don't know that famous blogger, "where I can post that thing." But I'm, like, you know, you have friends on social networks. You have people you went to school with. You have people that you email with. Like, if one of those people is not the ideal customer, or the ideal person, they probably know someone who is. Like, somewhere within your networks, there's this thing about the strength of weak ties. You know, that through all the different people we're connected to, we can get to the ones that we need, essentially. So I think the real hesitation is being afraid to ask, or being afraid to move forward. Compared to, like, a lack of knowledge. I think a lack of knowledge is really easy to, kind of, overcome.
- So, let's talk to that person who feels that they have a lack of knowledge. They're the ultimate novice, first-timer. What do we really need to get started? Do we need a website? Do we need an email list? Where do we begin? Social media? How do we get going?
- Yeah, yeah, I mean, the thing is, if you start going down this road, you know, it's like there's so many different, you know, do I need to do this? Do I need to do a webinar? Do I need a podcast? Do I need, like, a vlog now? And like, how many social networks am I gonna be on, et cetera? It's just a dangerous thing. And I think people need to understand, even full-time entrepreneurs, you know, full-time business owners, they're not keepin' up with all that stuff, you know? Like, the question sometimes people ask me is, like, "How do you keep up with everything?" And the answer is, you don't. Like, it's not possible. So you have to choose what you're going to keep up with. So when you say for the person who's just getting started, you know, I like to simplify it as much as possible. Like, do you have an idea to create, like a publishing brand for ebooks or something. You got an idea, like eight ebooks. Just start with one. OK, one ebook, one topic, one thing. You know, one simple website. I do think a website is helpful. But that can be a one-page website. You can get free websites. You can pay \$10 for a website, you know. Not gonna be the most amazing website in the world, of course, but that's not the point, you know? You need some way to take, to accept money.



- But probably just about everybody listening or watching has a PayPal account or a Venmo account. You know, it's in like 180 countries. You can accept money with that. You can put that button on your website. So just thinking through, like, what is the bare minimum that I need? OK, I need to explain my offer. I need somewhere people can read that. And I need a way for them to click, you know, buy now, or sign up, or whatever it is. And then from there, it's that question of, like, iterating on that. OK, what would be helpful? OK, maybe it would be good for me to have, you know, a social media presence. Maybe at some point I do want to start a podcast. But I think if you start with the universe of everything that's available to you, then you do get overwhelmed. And by the way, I don't think that's a mistake that only beginners make. I think that's a mistake that a lot of people make. Just because they see what other people are doing, and they think, aww, you know, Amy's doing this thing, so I have to do it her way, you know? Or Josh, he's got this thing going, so I'm gonna follow his path. But what works, you know, for you might not work for someone else. So what is the simplest thing you can do today to get something out there within, you know, 30 days or less?
- I love that. And I talk a lot to the people, I help people write books that grow their businesses. And I talk a lot to people in terms of, they wanna do all the things, right? And sometimes they'll feel like, well, I can't do a book, or I can't do a podcast until I've got all these other things done. And we talk about how, you know, if you'll start with one thing. Start with one thing that produces some content, right? Maybe it's your blog, maybe it's a podcast, maybe it's a book, maybe it's just your website. And it's a place for people to go, or your social media page, right, your Instagram. And by putting content there, then you're building this library of information. You're building a library of stories. You're building a foundation that then you can go back to and dip into and pull for other things. You know, that Instagram post can become a solo podcast. It can become a chapter in your book. Whatever it is, start with one thing and get something out there. Because if you don't put it out there, people don't know. And then you don't know what, you don't know what they like, right? And one of the things I like that you talk about is putting things out there and then really listening to people and what adds value to them. Not just what you wanna produce.
- Mm-hmm, yeah, no I'm so glad you said that. And the other thing about publishing that first post, or the first episode, or whatever it is, is you're gonna get better in doing that. You know, you're going to get better yourself. And, like, if you look at any, you know, online personality, anybody who's been sharing, anybody who's been writing in any format. You know, we tend to look at people that we respect, because that work is popular. Maybe it's more evolved, et cetera. I always think it's helpful to go back to, like, the beginning of that person's work. And usually you're gonna see, oh it actually wasn't as good. Or there was this big transition. Or they were trying to figure themselves out, you know? They were trying to figure out what their message was. And so you often, I think people feel like they need to know everything when they're getting started. That's another reason why people don't start. Because they're like, I have to make this critical decision that's gonna affect the rest of my life. And whatever I decide to do tomorrow, I'm gonna be doing for 10 years. I really feel like people think this way. And if you can, you know, just kind of gently let them know, actually, you know, it's OK if you do something for a while, and that leads you to something different. That's actually how it works for most of us.



- You're probably not gonna be doing the idea that you have right now, you know, 10 years from now. But you might not get to the better idea without going through this series of other ones first. So I'm so glad you said that.
- Along those lines, I wanna pitch this question to both of you. What are some of the pivots that you've made in your solopreneur journey?
- Amy?
- Oh, wow, well, you know, along the lines of figuring out my brand, and figuring out what it is I really wanna be about, it took me a while. I started actually helping freelancers to have a freelance business, a successful one. So I talked to a lot of freelance writers, friends, colleagues, freelance designers, and they were having a lot of trouble with actually creating a business, right? They were getting some clients and getting some money, but no actual business. So I created my first online course, actually to help freelancers. And I enjoyed it, but ultimately I figured out that my audience wasn't right. And so you may go a while, and realize, like, OK, you know what? I love working with freelancers, but it's bigger than that, you know? I also like helping consultants and coaches and small business owners. And for me it was more about let me help you get your message right, and less let me help you with the nitty-gritty. But it took me a while to feel that out for myself. So you can go back in the 'Wayback Machine' on the internet and see my old website about helping freelancers, and it'll look totally different than what I'm doing now. But within a few years, you know, I figured it out. And, I mean I made money with the freelance thing, too. But it's all about really trusting your people to tell you the truth about what they like and don't like. And sometimes they just tell you the truth with their money, right? They're either buying it or they're not. And then listening to yourself. What feels right to you? Because a lot of times, our instinct is right in terms of the value we have to offer.
- So good, I'm so glad what you said about the intuition at the end. Because I was gonna throw that in. But then you nailed it! That was good. So my answer, so I'll give you like a big picture, and then a specific. So big picture for me, like if I look back on, like, the past 11 years that I've been sharing online. I've started a lot of different projects and a lot of different things, and some have worked and some have not. And one thing I started to notice a couple years ago was like, what are the characteristics of each category, you know? And I think that the more I was trying to do something that was, you know, authentically me, that I really believed in, I was excited about. You know, obviously it had market value, like it was still, like, helpful to other people. It's not just my own private thing. But still it's like something that I'm really drawn to, that I feel like is a little bit different than what other people are doing. That's where I've had success. And where I have done something because I thought I should do it, because that's what somebody else is doing. Oh, this is how they're building their online course, so therefore I should do it, you know? Then that, those have been the projects that have been less successful.



- And so I've tried to pivot much more to, you know, following what I know to be true, based on experience, you know, based on intuition, based on my desire to challenge myself. And then the specific example is this new book that I have, "The Money Tree," this is a fiction book, so it's a novel that I'm actually trying to teach through. I've done six how-to books before. But, you know, this book essentially is like, I'm trying to teach people about financial security and financial independence but through the form of a story. So I've never done that before. And the reason I did it is because I felt like a lot of people out there who need this message are not going to read a business book. They're not gonna read a how-to book. But in this uncertain time, they, too, need to find a way to embrace this kind of entrepreneurship. So that was a pivot, or kind of a creative risk, you know, that I took, because I, because I believed in it.
- And I love, I've been online and seen how, actually right now if you're listening, you can go online and if you need a copy of that book, if you feel like you're in a place right now where you can't buy that book, Chris has actually set up this amazing exchange program where people are donating books and then you can go and request one. And I love that you're doing that. I think this is the perfect time for that kind of generosity. And also just the, it's kind of this meta-commentary on the book itself. It's this wonderful example of how do you add value, and then share that wealth, and then build something for yourself, truly meaningful.
- Yeah, thank you for mentioning that. So that's kind of a social experiment that we're trying. And we're not sure, you know, how it will all work out and how that's on and such, but we're already seeing people engage with it. So they can go to moneytreebook.com if they wanna check that out.
- Awesome.
- So back to our true beginner. Where do they go to find the first customer? Friends, networking, you know, if they don't have, if they're not set up with that email list? If, you know, the social channels, you know, are just not built out yet. They don't have much of a following, where do we start?
- Well, you know, there is no email list fairy. You know, there's no, like, nobody starts with an email list, you know? I started with an email list of five people, you know, that I kind of badgered, you know, to get. I was like, "I'm doing this thing, will you sign up?" You know, and one of them was my grandma. And just kind of, like, went from there basically. And so I'm just writing originally, and like, asking people to, "Hey, if you believe in this message, "will you kind of share it?" And so we're talking a little bit about, like blogging and building that kind of personality business. But if it's somebody who has a product, or, I think it's a similar process of, like, there is somebody who can help you, from your existing connections. So, you know, I would go, and, if you don't have a big social network, you still have something, like I said. So wherever you congregate online, make a post, and say, like, "Here's this project that I am starting." You know, "I've always really been into, "whatever this topic is, embroidery." "And now I'm actually selling my artwork." Or, "I made this thing to show people how to "pursue that craft better." And, you know, "Will you help me, will you pass it on "to your network if you know somebody like that?" And just building that grass roots, I think is, and while you're doing that, you can also be, like trying to build a website, and maybe listing it for sale on a platform that has more attention.



- You know, that already has a lot of traffic. So there's different things you can do. But ultimately I think for me, the interest has always been like this organic, grass-roots strategy, as opposed to, like, here's \$1,000 that I'm gonna spend on online ads that probably aren't going to work.
- So do think there is a place, I'm sorry Josh, do you wanna ask?
- Well, I was just gonna say that I know a lot of people feel like they're going to have to dump some money into social media or banner ads somewhere. But it's great to hear that it's not necessarily needed at the start.
- I think the time
- You know, I was just gonna to do that if there was a Oh go ahead, Amy, sorry.
- I was just gonna ask if there's a place for that down the line, maybe for the person who's not the beginner, right? Someone who's trying to scale?
- Yes, and that, down the line is the right way to think of it. The time to, you know people always say, like it takes money to make money. But I think if you're spending a lot of money, you're often wasting money on the front end. And that's why I have so many stories of people who started for \$100 or less and end up growing that business. The time to invest in your business is when your business is successful. Like when your business is profitable, you know, even at a low level, and you can see, oh there is a connection between if I spend this \$1,000, then it's probably going to help me, you know, generate more clients or bring more people into the funnel, or whatever it is. But it's not when it's an unproven thing, you know? Otherwise, if you don't have something that converts, then you're just buying, you know, visitors that are going to come and then go away, and you're gonna pay a lot of money to Google or Facebook or whoever. And then nothing's gonna come of it. So the time to do that is when it's actually, you know, up and running and doing well.
- And I think that leads to the idea, too, of, we were talking about, you know, is it the, basically is it your offer, like the product or service? Or is it the community that needs to come first? And the thing is, you know, if you don't have an offer to sell to this community, well then you're just sort of out there spinning your wheels on social media. We could post all day, right? But if you don't have anything to sell to anyone, you know, that really does seem to be the place to start. Would you agree? - Yeah, I think it depends on your goal. It depends on what you're trying to do. And some people who are trying to build like a community oriented thing, which still has a profit element to it, I'm not talking like a nonprofit, then I think, you know, maybe the initial focus is more on like that offer, and then adding products later. But not everybody has to do that. I mean, you can just come out with a product. Like, I've got a product. I wanna share it! I did this story on this woman who was doing like digital paintbrushes. You know, with the iPad, they have that iPad pencil and all that?



- So there's all these artists, and she was making like digital paintbrushes that people can buy online, you know, to use through this software. It's a weird, interesting thing, and she's making like \$70,000 a year doing it. She had no community when she started doing this, you know? She just started making that, found a way to offer that through the system. So it really depends on what you're trying to do, what your objective is, and what the product or the service is, I think.
- You know, what about if we already are up and running, and we're trying, you know that person who's trying to boost growth? This is a scary time for that, in the current economy. What are some ways to, maybe make that happen, even despite everything.
- Yeah, well, I mean, this is a scary time, for sure. But it's also a time that presents opportunity. It's a time when people are thinking about a lot of different things. And, you know, so many things, like the world is turned upside down, and whenever that happens, there are negative consequences, which we're all aware of. But then there are also, you know, some possibilities, you know. All of a sudden you've got millions of people that are working remotely, who never did that before. That presents a whole lot of things. I don't think that all these people are gonna go back, you know, to their corporate jobs in the same way, once all this is over. Like, a lot of them are, like, actually this kind of works, you know, like this. So the point there is, like, it's a scary time, but at the same time, these are times of opportunity. So for that person who actually has the foresight and has already built something, first of all, good for them, like they were thinking ahead. I think what they do is, you know, they look and say, "OK, what is working," you know, "what is working in my business right now? And what is not working?" And usually the best answer, I mean it's a lot of case by case, but usually the best answer is not so much let me fix what isn't working, but let me just try to do more and more of what is working. And you know, if I have four products, probably one or two of those are selling disproportionately. So what is the next version of that product? What is, you know we mentioned earlier, what's the service that I can create based off of this product? How can I, you know, either reach more customers or sell more to my existing customers? And these are really fun things to ask. This is like a fun process when you get to that point, because I think it's a lot easier to grow a business, you know, from like the \$1,000 a month to the \$5,000 a month through \$10,000 or whatever, than it is to get to that first \$1,000. So once you get there, it's like, all right, there's a lot of stuff we can do, because I know that there's a demand for what I'm offering. It's just a question of how do I do it better, essentially.
- Now, Amy, I know that we are, we're five episodes in, but there are still people who are on the ledge, don't you think, that aren't sure if now's the right time to jump in full time?
- Absolutely, and I think that one of the things that Chris just said about how, you know, they may be looking at other people who have already started, and thought, "Well, they've got it easier." "This is not the time to take a risk." "There are too many people who don't have money to spend." That kind of thing. And I wonder if, I don't know, Chris, I'd like to hear your thoughts on it. I wonder if people are assuming too much, right? That maybe people aren't going to invest in something new or try something new, or take a class? Or whatever it is, simply because we are where we are right now. Or maybe is this actually the time when people are inspired to try something new?



- Yeah, well I mean there's a lot we could say about that. It's like, there are some things that people are not willing to invest in right now. Like, if your aspiration is to be like a travel agent for cruises, that's really not a great business to be in right now, you know? But if your aspiration is to be like a home office consultant and help people get set up with, like, their web cam and learn how to use Zoom and stuff like that, then this is a tremendous time. You know, so you use that word risk, and what I always encourage people to think about is, what is the real risk? Because to me, I think the real risk is entrusting your well-being and your security to somebody else, or to some externality, or to, you know, market forces, or the corporate structure, or to the government, or whatever. Like that's what really is risky, versus, you know, choosing to invest in yourself and saying, "What is this thing that I can do "to provide better protection for myself, "and for my family, so that again, "like, if something like this ever happens again, "or it could be something totally different, "whatever it is, you know, then I am gonna be protected." So I think it's actually a safe choice. It's not so much, my message is never like, "Hey, go and take a risk!" It's more just like, like for me, I feel like what I'm doing is the safe, conservative choice in working for myself. So I think people should really think about what that is for them.
- Great point.
- You've been doing this a while. You've worked with people and seen a lot of people who are at these, this very early and crucial stage in their side hustle or solopreneurship venture, full-on company, whatever. What do you love most about what you do, Chris?
- That's a really good question, thank you for asking that. What I love most is I often hear stories from people. I get a lot of emails from my readers and listeners. And I often hear, like what they're doing, what they have done. And sometimes there's some intersection between my work, whether it's the podcast or one of the books, that has, like, tipped them a little bit or gave them, like, some kind of idea. And so they're usually writing to say thank you to me. And I appreciate that. But for me, what I always say to them, is like, well they're the ones who did the work, you know? Like they're the ones who actually made it happen. Because for every 100 people who read my books, probably 99 of them don't do much with it, you know? Like I wish the odds were better. But a lot of people just kind of don't do stuff. So I'm always encouraged when people actually, you know, take action and follow up on something. And I'm like, yeah, it's great that we had this little moment of convergence or intersection there. So I just wanna reach more people that are, you know, interested in taking that action.



- That's awesome. This has been really inspiring to talk to you about this. And I think that a lot of people will really benefit from your approach to things, in the sense that you really try to keep things simple. You talk about starting small. You talk about starting with very little money. And right now, that's the perfect message. So I really encourage people to learn more about you, to visit your site, to get your book, and really look into how can they just start something small? Or if they've already started something, how can they make some incremental steps towards growth right now?
- Yeah, thank you so much, Amy.
- Chris, we greatly appreciate it. We greatly appreciate all of you coming back once again for Hustle From Home. We'll do it again next week. So long everybody!
- Bye y'all!