



SuperFastBusiness Presents

Get Paid To Travel The World

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Get Paid To Travel The World

by SuperFastBusiness



James: James Schramko here, welcome to SuperFastBusiness.com, I have with me a wonderful guest, Jarrod Robinson. How are you?

Jarrod: Very good James, thanks for having me.

James: Now, you're in Mexico at the moment.

Jarrod: Yes, I am, unfortunately. I'm not in Australia, but I am somewhere just as beautiful, in Mexico.

James: Why do you say "unfortunately"?

Jarrod: Sometimes I miss being back home. But yeah, when you get to sort

of travel around and see exciting things, it sort of reminds you that there's so much more than just sitting on my couch and doing a bit of work.

Teacher turned traveler

James: Well, it ties in with today's topic. We're going to be talking about combining travel and business, and in particular the way that you have become an expert in your field. You've put on a delivery model of running events, and you've somehow managed to combine that with your desire to travel. And it came from humble beginnings, as a teacher. You were a teacher, doing PE teaching, I imagine?

Jarrold: Yeah, absolutely. I mean it is the most humble of beginnings. Like, go and become a teacher, that's like that noble profession. I started it, still loved it, and just began a blog in 2008 like documenting what I was doing in the classroom. And eventually, by accident, became something that it is today. But it's through you know, meeting people that get this world that it's become so much more.

James: Right, so the short version is you were a PE teacher, you started, you got really passionate about it, you have obviously got a strong mind for the technical stuff, you've started documenting this on a blog, talking about what tools you were using, how you do your session planning, etc. And you've built up a following. You've done a classic niche marketing thing of combining two different fields. You've got the PE, and the geek, and you're now called "ThePEGEEK.com." Is that right?

Jarrold: Yeah, exactly. And that came from a student. I was in my early classes and talking about the various technology that we were using to students. And a student actually said that to me, like, "You're just like a PE geek." And I'm like, that absolutely sums up exactly what I'm trying to do here.

So I go and buy the domain, started writing even more consciously about how you can use technology in your PE teaching to improve the student outcomes, and it was right time, right place, because nobody was talking about it, it was sort of a combination of two niches, and it just became, yeah, it became an authority in that space.

James: Yes, and often with our unique ability, as Dan Sullivan talks about, or the thing that we're really good at, we can't see it so much ourselves, but

outsiders tend to be able to label us better than we label ourselves, and they can often tell us what we're good at, even if we're not sure about it. And you've now proven it, beyond any shadow of a doubt, because you've built up an audience, you had demand from people to share what you're doing, and you've somehow engineered this situation where you are travelling around, running events, so we're going to cover that a little bit in this episode.

An auspicious encounter

I want to just zoom back a bit and explain how we came together in terms of right time, right place. I remember sitting across the table from you and you were explaining to me what you're up to, and my jaw just dropped. The sheer quantity of things that you've been doing, the rapid pace that you do things, the specialization of what you do, they're all uncommon compared to the average person I speak with. And we made the decision that I should help you refine and streamline your business model a little bit. And that was now, what, 3 or 4 months ago. How is it working out for you?

Jarrold: Yeah, man, I mean that's exactly right. When I often talk about the number of things that I was doing, it is a little bit ridiculous. I mean, that was the absolute impression that I got from you as well, and it's absolutely been really empowering to realize that more is definitely not the best thing to be focusing on, and I've had more impact in the things I've been doing since I met you and been focusing on less.

It's strange how that happens. I've been consciously ignoring things that I would normally have jumped at, and I've seen an increase in the income. I'm now spending less on new projects, and ultimately working less, which is another positive.

James: Right, and the thing that's almost mind-blowing, is that as your PE geek business was ultra successful, tens of thousands of dollars a month on a rapid projection, you still managed to squeeze in a teaching job.

Jarrold: I don't know how. I look at it now, and I wonder how I did that, because from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m., that was nothing to do with my business. It was teaching in a classroom, and then outside of that the rest of it happened. As soon as I left teaching, I immediately gave myself this massive effective hourly rate increase, because I immediately dropped 12 hours of my day. I know you're a big proponent of that, so that's been one

of the most powerful things that's happened since meeting with you and understanding how valuable my time is.

James: Exactly. You mentioned the word effective hourly rate. Any of the listeners of this podcast know that I like that measurement as a way to filter opportunities. And I think we had a discussion around the mindset shift of letting go of that role. It was something close to your heart, it was the thing that started your business, it's your area of expertise, in the beginning.

Jarrold's current world tour

It's also, you really could call it research and development, but we did have a bit of a mindset discussion about letting go of one thing to be able to embrace something in a bigger and better way and a more meaningful way, to actually have a greater impact sometimes by letting go of the less leveraged activity to be able to focus on the more leveraged activity. And there's probably no better example than your current world tour. Give us an insight as to what you're doing right now. Where are you off to on this trip?

Jarrold: It's about 15 countries in total. So it started in July, head over to the U.S. and just do all the typical tourist thing, but mixed up conferences and workshops all along the way. So perfect opportunity to see the world, and also meet with and work with teachers who are in those countries that I'm visiting. So it's all come down from growing a list, but more importantly finding out information about these people, where they are, what countries they're in, what cities they're in, and then using that to formulate a bit of a plan of where I could go and run profitable workshops.

James: Right, so let's talk about that process. I think in essence, we're really talking about getting paid to travel the world and doing what you love. You're a real poster child for that idea and concept, that you can combine what you enjoy and find a way to monetize it.

How it started

So if we look back to 2008, you're posting your teacher tips and lessons, you've then started building that audience. What happens from that to when you're now travelling the world? You've got a process. Why don't we go through that process?

Jarrold: Well, I mean for me, it was all about content creation and in 2008, I wasn't building an email list, I wasn't doing anything to sort of own the racecourse, as you would say, and it wasn't until about 4 years after that that I realized that you needed to be formulating and building something, where you could communicate regularly to people and build a relationship. So once I got that, I basically leveraged all of the opportunities from that one point.

So at the moment, my content was all about providing as much value as I possibly can, and still is, in the form of podcasts and e-books and blog posts and so on. But now when people come onto my list, I use ActiveCampaign and I'm heavily tagging them through a series of identifiers about where they live, what city they work in, what area of school they teach, and then I can use that information to then take it to the next step where I go and find people who would be interested in hosting the workshops.

The event creation process

James: Right, so you've got this segmentation happening. And how do you predominantly capture people's details and how do you communicate with them?

Jarrold: OK, so obviously from the website itself, through LeadBoxes, big proponent of using those, for all sorts of opt-ins, as well as the top above-the-fold opt-in to my site, a lot of my IOS apps as well, also have an ability to capture contacts and put them in. But I'm also capturing like cold traffic from webinars that I'm doing on automatic through Facebook ads.

So I've been using evergreen business systems to run continuous automated webinar, which I recorded once, and then literally running traffic to those. And then having them convert and sort of, people are really enjoying them, and then they go through the process of me further gathering that information, which I can then use to promote upcoming workshops in places all over the planet. Does that sort of make sense?

James: It does. So just to recap, you've got, on your site, places that people can opt in, and you're also running paid Facebook ads driving people to a webinar registration, which will automatically be run and then it will segment those people and it knows where they are in the world, and then you're using a broadcast, when you're going to go somewhere?

Jarrold: Yeah. Exactly. So the first step in the process is me thinking, I might like to go to X country, or I haven't been to that country yet and you know, there's an audience there. So I'll then put out some sort of social media type post and say, you know, "Phys Ed teachers..." use a hashtag that collectively gets all those people together, "...I'm looking for a school in Vancouver." And you know, come and do a workshop at that place.

And because of the engagement that you build, you always get people who respond, and then I get a free venue, because I always leverage the opportunity that they get, in that they get to come to the event for free, and then from there, put it up onto Eventbrite, and then start flowing traffic through it through the tags that I've set up. So it's quite nice to know that I can pick a location, find people in my audience who are there, and then fill that place with people who are from those places.

Why it works

James: And the important point is here, you decided in the beginning how you want to paint this canvas. You've got a blank canvas and you're saying, I want to paint with red and blue here. You're in charge, instead of the business being in charge of you, you're dictating where you want to work, what you want to focus on, and then you're putting it out there and you're literally crowdsourcing from your own audience and getting that community and network aspect and leveraging resources that are just sitting there.

It's such a good example of what Eli Goldratt would suggest, and that's utilizing untapped resources. So most of your students are going to have access to school facilities or venues, and you're just leveraging that.

Jarrold: And they seriously throw them at you. They throw them at us, for sure.

James: Well, I think a lot of schools want some PR and exposure and they want other visitors to come and see what they're all about as well. I know that when I was on the school trivia committee, which is probably a whole podcast episode in the future, the local high school was very keen to host our primary school parents, because they wanted to show off and let let them know where the next stop in the journey was when they get to choose schools.

Jarrold: Yeah, for sure. I mean, that's what I found out, and obviously professional development is pretty heavily entrenched in teachers, they have to do it, it's something that they need to do for their accreditation and so forth. So I tap into all those sort of language, with my promotion, but most importantly they're already interested in the topic. And when the two match up, the tickets just sell like crazy.

James: Well, you're one of them, aren't you, Jarrold?

Jarrold: I use the language that, yeah, I know exactly what they need, and what they have to sort of try and improve. And that was the difficult thing, that if I went away from being an expert, that I wouldn't have that. But I think now I can have more impact, like we've discussed, because I can do more workshops, and I can still talk with people and still get everything that I thought I was going to lose.

Is it sales-ey?

James: What would you say to someone who says, "Yeah, I'm good at what I do, and other people are interested, but I feel a bit sales-ey if I'm going to start selling tickets to an event to share it." They might have a bit of a complex about that. What would be your advice to them?

Jarrold: I think I initially felt a little bit like that. I realized that when it was all about the value, when it was all about helping them reach from one point to the other, then the sales part was pretty easy, because I was putting out a solution to a problem that they absolutely had. And that was, you need to get so many hours of training, you've been given technology in your classroom, you have no idea how to use it, I can get you to this point. I don't even need to sell you on how much the ticket costs or whatever. They want that outcome, so they were flocking to it for that reason.

Who pays for it

James: And are your teachers paying for this out of their own pocket, or are you dealing with schools or administrative bodies to pay for it?

Jarrold: Mostly schools. I mean there's the occasional teacher who'll pay for it and come on their own terms, but most of the time it will be the school who provides it. So quite literally, lots of schools have pretty big resources, so you know, they'll send along 5 or 6 teachers. So rather than just selling

to one person, you've sold multiple spots to multiple people at one school, which creates a really good relationship, which then leads to potential upsells following the workshops, where I'll focus in on helping those 6 people take the stuff even further along the journey.

So it's got positives when you're working with school groups, because obviously it's not the teachers' personal finances, but then there's also opportunities where it becomes more difficult because of the fact that I'm overseas and I'm selling tickets to another country overseas and banking and all that sort of stuff can be a bit of an issue.

James: How do you handle the shopping cart aspect of it? How do people pay?

Jarrold: At the moment, they use Eventbrite, which I've found to be the easiest platform to instantly create tickets in multiple different currencies. I could sell tickets directly from my site, but a lot of the shopping carts limit you to just having one currency, but I tend to charge in the local currency of that place. So if I'm in Europe, I'll charge in Euro and in New Zealand, obviously in New Zealand dollars, which schools like, because it makes it easy for them to manage.

So Eventbrite lets me do that. It does have some shortfalls, but for the most part it's a positive, and a lot of schools still take up the option of using the offline payment. And I initially sort of hesitated with that, because I didn't want to have to send invoices and so forth. But when I enabled it, my sales increased, and I think it's like understanding your customers. Like my customers often don't have access to credit cards, they've got access to this channel.

James: It's very important, yeah. I mean, getting paid is a fundamental part of doing business.

Jarrold: For sure.

James: A lot of discussions that I have with students revolves around what currency to charge in, what method of payment that's going to suit their customer. It's good that you've got a blend between automated and manual. But the most important thing is you know who your customer actually is, and once you know that, it will inform you as to how they need to pay.

Any challenges?

So tell me about some of the challenges you've had with events. Have you ever had a situation where you've booked an event and turned up and it wasn't quite as described, or it was a different date or something else happened?

Jarrold: I have dreams about that, obviously. Running events, you can probably imagine. But I mean, I've had situations where the room hasn't been as described, like all I really ask of the venue is that it can fit 30 people, adults, comfortably. And a few people have sort of made that not quite the case, and it's a little bit squishy and a little bit less comfortable for the people there. And a couple of other times we've had people who've just turned up, like their school said that they had booked them onto the venue, and I'm like, well, technically we're overbooked and those sorts of things.

But for the most part, it's such an easy process of finding a venue, and then the school is pretty much set out perfectly to how we want it, because that's the environment that we're trying to showcase this learning in. So everything tends to run really smooth, we get lots of good feedback.

And then through all the automation sequences I've been able to do something very different to what most professional learning people do, people providing training in the teaching space, is I've got like an automation sequence that takes them from the start of the event right through to months after. Which is, you know, that continuous transformation lets me know that I've actually helped them, whereas some other bodies, you come for a day, you learn, and you never hear from them again. And that's sort of been something that I've felt has been a differentiator for me.

James: Well, it's exactly what I do. I have the live event once a year, but I also encourage every single person that comes to the event to belong to the membership that I have, because I can sustain their learning and can put the recordings from the event there, I can answer their questions...

Jarrold: You can measure it, too.

James: They do. They have accountability threads, they have a success thread, where they're posting results to inspire others, and to inspire themselves. And also, they have the network effect of all the other people

who were at the event, and they've become a big crew who know each other over the years. Coming up to my 11th event, which you're speaking at, and we're going to be talking about how you, basically what happened to Jarrod pre-James and post-James.

We'll talk about what you brought to the table as a starting project for me, and what you're doing now in your business as at the date of the event in March. And I think what will come through is some very strong themes in terms of how you can take the raw materials of a great business and tune it up and simplify it and make it even more powerful.

So I'm really looking forward to what you're going to deliver at that event, and the emotional connection here is that my first event was actually devised when I was in Mexico, so there's a real connection there as to where you are right now and how this event came about a long time ago.

It's not about volume

Jarrod: Yeah, that's great. I'm really looking forward to it for sure, and to credit you on the journey as far as being incredibly insightful in everything that I've done, actioning everything that you've pointed out, and just sort of stopping doing everything, to the point of... I'd wake up with 25 different ideas every morning, but I would do all of them, and a lot of people would never do any, but I would do all, and the thing is not all of them had impact. Not all of them really improved the outcome.

James: Well, you're not really suffering the same obstacles as many other people. You have no issue with idea creation, with implementation. A lot of people get stuck on those few hurdles. You're an execution machine. Would it be fair to say, though, that when you structure things differently, that it can actually get easier and more rewarding by doing less things, it's not really just a volume game?

Jarrod: It's absolutely not a volume game. I mean, when I was building apps, and I still have apps, like they're still part of my revenue, but I don't build any new ones since realizing that it's not about the volume. I wanted to increase my income, so what I kept doing was building more and more apps, which of course cost more and more money to build, and more and more money to maintain.

But since stopping them, the actual thing that used to drive all my income,

my workshops, and my training surrounding the niche, has increased. And I haven't had to focus on projects like they are, heavily time-intensive and I've been able to enjoy what I started with and take my content even further.

James: Well, and if you're not doing a 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. shift most days, you now have a tremendous amount of capacity to serve new groups all around the world. Where are some of the places you're going on this trip?

Jarrold: All through Europe, pretty much every country in Europe is on the list. We've got workshops in most of them. Overall, there's 20 different workshops that we're doing. Immediately from Mexico I head to Canada, to start the whole journey off of completing my workshops and then eventually finishing off with the Middle East and maybe tapping into Asia. The end of it's still a little bit unknown, but looking forward to it.

Working less, achieving more

The good part about this is that I've actually been forced to work less, and therefore had to have my team working really well. And I mean, based on your recommendations, I jumped on Slack, banned all other communication like email and Skype and so on, and that's been great to see finally the team's come together. Is that what you've noticed as well?

James: The main thing is that when you get everyone off Skype, and off email, the interruptions stop. So it's like all the noise is gone, and now you just have serenity and focus, and it's so much easier. I've got a virtual team, there's 45 or 46-odd people in there. I don't mean the people are odd, I'm just saying rough numbers. And we're a family, you know, we know each other very well, we communicate, you can have segmented conversations. And I think this is really a theme that's come through in this call. If you're going to travel around the world, you definitely need to segment your customers, and in your business you can segment your activities.

And what we did by turning off your teaching channel is segment your activities from, in terms of the Pareto Principle, the place where you spent a fair bit of your time for the smallest contribution to your income, has disappeared, which means now you spend most of your time on the place where you get most of your revenue and life has just transformed.

The power of one idea

And it's not only that. Just having access to one good idea can be incredible. I remember not that long ago, I received a message from you which almost seemed urgent, but you were extremely excited because I'd shared with you one tip that I thought you could really get a maximum benefit from. You don't have to say what it is, but I'd love you to tell me what it means to you in terms of financial reward and how excited you were about that one idea, which took probably an hour to implement.

Jarrold: Boy, that's what I mean. It is a testament to how one idea can be transformative. But it is. It's the whole idea of the export marketing grants and being able to tap into something that I already had access to but was completely unaware of. So thankfully, you've made me aware of it, connected me with people who bring that to life, and it's going to be enormous for me, helping bring the message even further to people outside of Australia, but most importantly returning a lot of the money that I've spent to make it happen up until this point. So that one thing alone changed the game completely.

James: Yeah, it basically means that you now have a huge business partner on your side, like the Australian government, who's saying, "Jarrod, we like what you're doing, we want to get you out there and show the world what Australians can do, and you can bring back some of that money and pay your taxes. We're all behind it." So it's a totally legitimate leverage point that is available to you. So instead of you having to fund your own export marketing adventures solely...

Jarrold: Which is what I've done, for the last 4 years.

James: What I had done as well.

Jarrold: Completely oblivious, completely oblivious until you mentioned it.

James: What does it mean to you in dollar terms?

Jarrold: It's multiple six-figure return. Just all I have to go through is the process to actually show that those expenses have already been outgoing, which I can do and then once that happens, that comes in to your account and you just, you pay tax on it, but yeah, from now on, everything else that is outgoing is basically all designed to leverage that opportunity. So all of

the people that I'm working with overseas, who are doing my marketing for overseas stuff, my and so forth, and now...

James: Facebook ads?

Jarrold: Exactly. All that stuff is now...

James: Every day you're away from the country on business, to market. So the real point here is, over the 7 years or so, provided that the scheme stays alive, it could really bring you back around a million dollars. So that's not unsubstantial.

And also, the other thing is, from today onwards, whenever you're doing these events, you can structure the documentation in the right way and you'll make sure that it lines up exactly with the idea behind this situation.

So that's an example of one idea, but when you come along to SuperFastBusiness Live, I know you'll be sharing a few of the other things we talked about that have transformed the way that you're managing and structuring your business. I think one of the things that will more than likely come through is the way that you've approached your membership versus the way that you were doing it before. Think that'll pop up?

Jarrold: Oh, yeah. I sometimes feel like the content you created is being absolutely positioned directly as a message for me, about the whole selling one-time items, I was like the king of that, selling a one-time membership to PE teachers and then having to do an ongoing monthly service, because of that as well, that was the worst part.

But yeah, completely stopped all that, completely moved to an idea of farming, because I was like a complete hunter that missed hunting, and then would go out and hunt again and not be so successful, but yeah, moving into as much farming as I possibly can, through this new community, which is based on the things that are happening in SuperFastBusiness. It uses Xenforo, it uses Intercom, to help me be more helpful for the people who are floating into it.

Some parting advice

James: Fantastic. Well, Jarrold, as we part, just give me a couple of tips for someone who might be listening to this, they're an expert in their field, they've been told that by other people, maybe someone else has given

them a nickname like you, and they've got an inkling they would like to travel somewhere and run an event overseas. What would be your main advice to them?

Jarrold: I think you need to definitely start curating some sort of relationship with people who could be in the audience. Whether that's with an email list, or it's with some other mechanism, you definitely need to do that. Because for me, that's how it started. I mean the first opportunity I had was with one person who learned as much as possible from me, and then I put an event on in their place, and he helped me bring people to it. And it was in one of the big hub cities in Singapore.

So yeah, find a way to build up a real relationship with someone in an area where you'd like to go, and see if they can be on the ground to help you do it. That's how it began for me, and after that it's been all about doing that on scale with content marketing and smartly tagging them so that I can use that information to find people who can help me run events.

James: That's perfect. I totally agree. Create the relationships, curate them, segment them, be real in all your communications, be genuinely caring for their results, and if you want to go somewhere, put it in a diary and go there. I've done this too, Jarrod. I went to Hawaii, I wanted to do a business mastermind retreat with Ezra, who was my podcast partner with ThinkActGet, and we put on a little workshop, and we did yoga, we ate healthy food, we went surfing, and that's where I got the bug. Two years ago now, actually.

And I can honestly say that Hawaii business mastermind retreat changed my life, because I surf every day now, and that's where it started. So going to another country, dealing with new customers, is the best way to expand your awareness of the world and to really appreciate and lock in all the good stuff you're doing.

So I hope this podcast is encouraging someone, and thank you, Jarrod for sharing your story. You've got a site ThePEGeek.com, so if you're interested in technology or gadgets or health or fitness or you're a teacher, you're going to love that site. If you're a marketer like me, you'll just appreciate the beauty of the business model.

Now, Jarrod, you're going to be speaking at SuperFastBusiness Live, so I look forward to your presentation there and thanks for coming along to the

show today.

Jarrold: Welcome, James, thanks for having me and thanks for everything that you've done thus far. I look forward to the next goals that you help me achieve.

James: It just gets better, Jarrold.

Jarrold: I can't wait.



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