



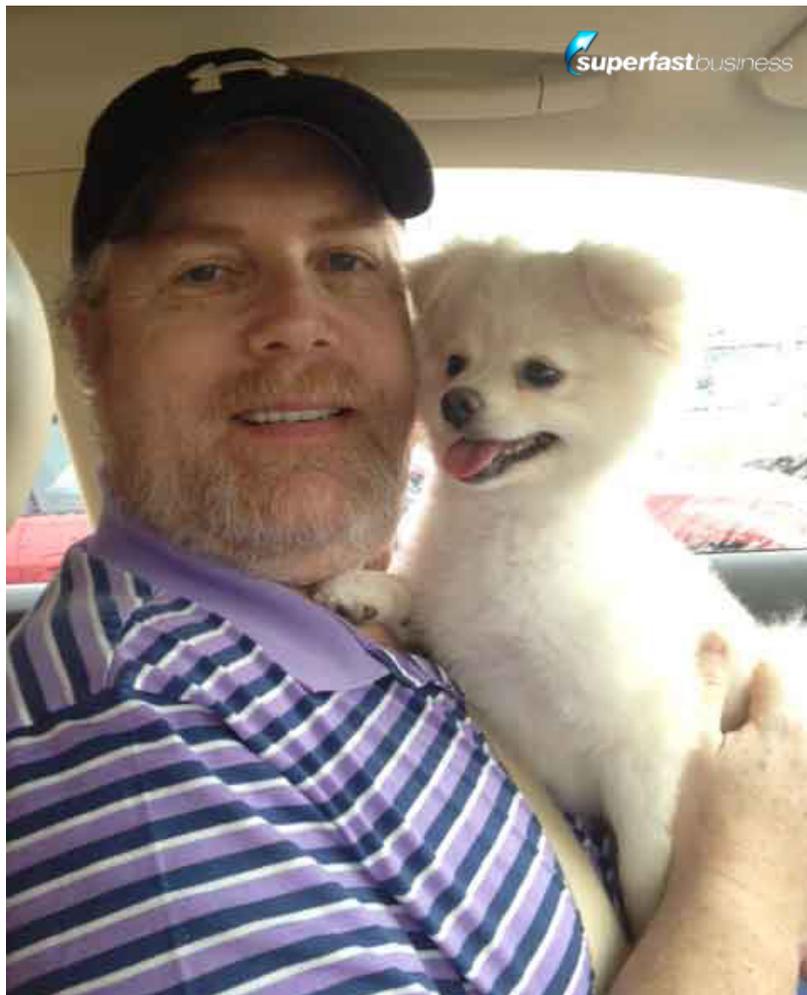
SuperFastBusiness presents

# How A Former School Principal Learned to Dominate Any Niche He Wants

Harlan Kilstein shares the methods he uses to dominate two vastly different online publishing niches.

# How A Former School Principal Learned to Dominate Any Niche He Wants

by SuperFastBusiness



**Harlan Kilstein**

**James:** James Schramko here, welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com.

Today we are talking about tribes and communities and power and groups and dogs. Welcome, Harlan Kilstein.

**Harlan:** Woof woof woof woof.

## Because, why not?

**James:** Now the dog reference, you built up this phenomenal beast of a marketing property called **Dogington Post**. I imagine it was inspired by The Huffington Post but relates to dogs.

**Harlan:** Well, actually, it was inspired by my own... If someone says that you can't do something, that really sets me off. And basically when I got involved, the idea was niche-fy, get into a niche. And so people would go after French poodles with three feet; Great Danes who like to sing in a higher key. They would really get into a niche and get a small group. And someone said, "You can't go after an entire group like dogs." And I went, "Well, why not? Why can't I?"

We started the Dogington Post, it was actually inspired by The Washington Post, because when I grew up The Washington Post was investigating Watergate. And so I really liked the Washington Post because they broke all of the news, and I wanted to break all the news in the dog market. And we've been doing this now for probably about six, maybe seven years or so. And we have gone from nobody to the authority in the niche.

I was in my vet's office taking my dog in for a visit, and I'm sitting in the waiting room where you sit with your dog until they come in, I guess the treatment room. And there's a sign on the wall and it says, "Do not feed your dogs jerky products from China." And I recognized it. It was a meme that we had published on the Dogington post, and it says down at the bottom, "Dogington Post.

So my vet comes in and I said, "Oh, I see this meme here about China." He goes, "Yeah, yeah, don't feed your dog that chicken jerky." I said, "Where'd that come from?" He goes, "Well, we got it from this site on the internet. I said, "Which site?" He goes, "It's the Dogington Post." I say, "Wow. You like that site?" "Yeah, we read it every day in the back. I said, "That's my site. And he goes,

“Yeah, yeah, we read it every day. You like it too?” And I said, “No, no, no – it’s my website.” He goes, “No, no, it’s the really biggest, it’s the best dog website in the world.” And I’m saying, “It’s my website. I own it.” He’s like looking at me like, “yeah right.”

And I said, “Go into your back office, go bring up the website, look on the bottom left and see who the publisher is.” He goes, “I’ll do that.” He comes back a minute later, he goes, “That’s your website.”

And I remember, when I started, I would go to dog shows and people, I would ask to interview people. You know, “Could we interview you?” We were trying to get just content for our site. And now, I’m like batting people away with a broomstick. “No, we don’t want to interview you. We’re not interested.” And it’s really become quite a community.

And we’ve adjusted to the ups and downs of Facebook. I just found on my phone a snapshot of a meme that we published years ago, and that single meme got 40 million likes. That single meme got 40 million likes and of course now, it’s really hard to get something like that out of Facebook. So you have to be flexible and adapt. But yeah, the Dogington Post has become quite an internet property.

**James:** Well, congratulations on that. It was an interesting story and resonated with me because I started....

**Harlan:** Well, you started owning the racecourse.

**James:** Yeah.

## A couple of mistakes

**Harlan:** And I was looking over it at the time and seeing what we had in common, and I just think that we totally took it on steroids. Now, I made a couple of mistakes with that, that are probably worth sharing. May I?

**James:** Please do.

**Harlan:** The first mistake that I operated under was that Google would not

love us if I monetized the site too early. So I wouldn't even put up AdSense because I was afraid Google would think I was in it for the money. I found out that that was a really stupid mistake and I should have gone after monetization a lot sooner.

Second of all, I didn't know at the time that the niche that I picked had a demographic of women 45 to 54 and up, and that is the niche, that is the age group that clicks on ads more than any other group. So when advertisers come to us, it's generally very easy to make a deal because they want who our readership is.

And so the first mistake that I made was not monetizing soon enough. I thought that it would be a problem. It wasn't.

**James:** That's an interesting one, as I've set up a [surf website](#) publishing situation, which is like a baby version of where you would have started out. The first thing we do is put AdSense on there so that we can get a feel for who's advertising. And it seems to sort of sit in the Google ecosystem better, in a way. I think they kind of want to show their ads to people if your content's good enough for them to be able to, does that make sense?

**Harlan:** Absolutely. Google, it recognizes monetization, they respect monetization. I think they consider you more professional if you monetize the site than if you don't.

**James:** That is a good distinction, and certainly knowing about your audience is helpful. I guess that expression, "dog lady", you know, some such and such is a dog lady, must be born out of that age group and the fact that they're females. Who knows, the people have a bunch of dogs in the House and they're very into it. Actually, I was mildly concerned when you were talking about people who were pursuing three-legged dogs and dogs that can sing in a certain octave range. There's some pretty quirky stuff in that market, right?

## The story that went viral

**Harlan:** Oh yeah!. But we basically go after the the normal news thing, and we found out over the time what our people are the most interested in, and that's what we give them. So, for example, the two biggest stories, the two biggest

things that they respond to are dog abuse stories and dog food recall stories. Now, dog abuse, any story of dog abuse, these mild-mannered dog ladies just lose it. I'm telling you that if I used the language that these folks use when I was growing up, my mother would have washed my mouth out with soap, OK? If someone abuses a dog, you hear, "Kill him," cut certain parts of his anatomy off – these people are insane.

There was a case in the United States maybe two years back, it was in January, two years ago, where a woman had duct taped shut a dog's muzzle, and the duct tape did so much damage that you know, when they removed the duct tape surgically, you could see that it had really hurt the dog.

When we found out this news, because we're crazy and we're entrepreneurs, we don't have business hours, we found out, one of our readers pointed out to us that the woman who did it had been arrested, and we were the first to break the news on the internet. This was around 10, 10:30 on a weeknight. We broke the news, and the story went viral. And if you've never seen one of your stories go viral, I can tell you, it's not pretty.

We have our site on what is called a storm server. It is supposed to be able to handle everything. It could not handle what was going on. The site went down. We called the hosting company, and the hosting company goes, "Yeah your site is down. You're getting fifty-seven thousand hits per minute."

OK. They put the site back up, allocated more resources. It went down again. We were laughing because we couldn't keep up with the flow. It went for about two hours and then people finally went to bed. They stole as many resources as they could from the server and sent it all to us to be able to keep the site up. But you know, when you have a passionate audience, they go nuts over this stuff.

**James:** So emotion is a strong connector here.

**Harlan:** Emotion is strong and dog food recalls, because they're afraid that they're feeding something that's going to....

**James:** Well, that's true, food affects everyone, doesn't it? That's one of the strongest bonds you can have with your dog, is feeding it, because it's not generally going to go and open up a tin of puppy food by itself. So it's

fairly dependent on you in a domestic environment. And I believe the dog will start favoring whoever feeds it quite substantially. So that bond of food, I can understand how important that is.

## Is there money in it?

With this site, let's just talk macro for a second. Is there any money in this?

**Harlan:** Oh heck, yeah!

**James:** I mean, I suspected that's the case but I'm sure I just had to ask on behalf of a listener. This isn't just a passion, hobby thing.

**Harlan:** Oh well, you know, didn't start as a passion. It started as a business decision. I wanted to prove that I could dominate a niche. And between all of the advertising that we have on the site, between all of the people who contact us to advertise directly or partner or sponsor with us, we do alright.

And every year, there's a sponsor. We do the 12 dogs of Christmas to find homes for dogs that have been in shelters for more than two years. And every year, a dog food sponsor steps up to the plate and says "yeah, I'll sponsor that." We just had a sponsor. Tomorrow is Valentine's Day, when we're recording this, and we had a sponsor for a doggy breath spray, because of course you want to kiss your dog on Valentine's Day. And people don't say no to us.

## In a different market altogether...

**James:** Now, you've taken the same principle and applied it to completely different markets. You've started that [Completely Keto](#) group.

**Harlan:** Now, the Keto group is playing around with Facebook's algorithms. When you have a Facebook page, you basically live and you figure out and you have to learn how to legally, and I emphasize "legally" game the system. When you legally game the system, you're figuring out what works, what doesn't work. And you learn all kinds of tricks that nobody publishes to get your engagement up. And we used to see the gauge ring go all over the place, and we've seen all kinds of weirdo stuff.

Like, right now, my team from the Dogington Post is at the Westminster Dog Show in New York. It's the biggest dog show of the year, biggest dog show of the world. And before they go, they schedule all their posts. It's all set up to run on automatic pilot. And while they may check in once or twice a day, they're not posting. It's all auto-posting. Our numbers actually go up when they auto-post. And of course, Facebook knows that you're auto-posting. Right? You're scheduling all of your posts with them. Facebook loves that for some reason. Doesn't that defy logic? You would think that they want someone hand-curating and posting etc..

**James:** The interesting thing to me is I would see that like a predictable model. If they're going to support that page, they know what's coming, so they feel like it's not going to be inconsistent, at least. But you're right. You'd think that organic would pay.

## The website-FB group relationship

What is the relationship between the group and the website? Because you know, from [Own The Racecourse](#) perspective...

**Harlan:** Now, Facebook has decided, they've decided that organic reach is history and it's a pay to play, which I don't mind the pay to play. The groups are still working, so to speak, and Facebook is pushing groups. And so, for example, they just added group insights. And I'm looking at my insights, I have a bunch of groups in this niche. And in the past 28 days, I'm looking at close to a half a million posts, comments and reactions, and they're showing me what's going on in this group. It's insane what's going on, the level of activity. We have a team of moderators, because you can't have one person moderating a half a million comments. It's just insane.

**James:** I was going to ask you, as the founder or director or whatever role you play in that, how much time do you need to spend on Facebook if your business is there? I'm just curious, as someone who doesn't have a business on Facebook.

**Harlan:** So I check in frequently, because people are asking me questions all of the time. But that group I started monetizing right away and I have

programs. We have coaching programs. We have auto-coaching programs. I have a cookbook coming out in a month. We do daily recipes. My email list is growing. I have a bot on Completely Keto that's doing phenomenally, it's one of the fastest growing bots online.

It takes a lot of time. And by the way, Facebook gives you so much information – the days that are best to post, the times that are best to post. Who would expect that your best times would be eight through 10 o'clock at night?

**James:** Well, that's when all the people come home from their job and they're multi-screening media at the same time as with their tablet, right?

**Harlan:** You know, it's really funny, because the head of BuzzFeed said that he invented BuzzFeed for people who are bored at work. So I was expecting that during work we would be high. But it's not. And then things die around 11 PM, even though the West Coast is still up and it's 8 PM for them, we start to die.

## The monetization process

**James:** So just from a technical perspective, you mentioned a laundry list there of monetization devices – coaching, cookbook, bot. Could you just explain – how do you get someone who's on Facebook to put dollars into your merchant facility? What's happening there? How do they get from one to the other?

**Harlan:** Well, you know, we'll post a lot of Amazon or other affiliate links. There is a company that is a bakery for this, and I am their biggest affiliate. I got a message on Facebook from, "Hey, Harlan, I'm running a sale today. Could you promote it?" And I get nice checks from her every month. Amazon products. Let me tell you something. Black Friday and Prime Day are my two biggest holidays of the year. I mean, on Prime Day, I'm there posting links all day long, and making thousands of dollars in commissions.

**James:** So it's just putting an affiliate link into this hot group and people just clicking on it and buying, and no doubt they buy one thing, they buy a few other things and you're getting tagged for all of those instant sales.

**Harlan:** Right. Plus the whole day before you're putting up all kinds of cute,

sneaky things to get them over there and get cookied 24 hours in advance. So in the afternoon on Thanksgiving, I'm posting things like, "Hey, the price of this is changing. Could you go over there and tell me what price you see?" They're all going over there and telling me the price, but meanwhile they clicked my link, got cookied. I didn't care if they bought, but I had something like 600 people go and tell me the price.

**James:** Wow. So that's how you get the engagement.

**Harlan:** Oh, the engagement in this group is just crazy. I mean, some of our posts, like, one post of mine, got 929 comments, 3000 likes and was seen by 35000 people.

## Does Facebook like this stuff?

**James:** I see a lot of these posts, like, what's something you've done that no one else of my friends would have done. And you'd search for that, and you can see there's like dozens and dozens of this thing. My thoughts are like, a) super manipulative, someone's just trying to earn an engagement out of me to promote their Facebook, and b) it's pretty boring to just cut and paste a message that other people. It's unoriginal. Does Facebook like these things, and is it actually good for people?

**Harlan:** Facebook doesn't like cutting and pasting at all. If you do too much cutting and pasting, Facebook is going to slam you and mark you as a spammer. That's the first thing.

**James:** I would have thought they're pretty adept at figuring out, this is just manipulating a false score.

**Harlan:** Oh, absolutely they are. And it does not fool them at all. They've got some of the smartest people.

**James:** So what if you're original? There's one guy I was following for a while, but I just couldn't stand it in the end when everyday he'd ask some stupid question, like, you know, "If you could be a superhero..." or, "Such and such is blah blah blah. True or false?"

**Harlan:** I answered that one. I wanted to be James Schramko. But the next

question was, "Can you surf?" and I said "No."

**James:** Yeah, and I can't make coffee either, according to you.

**Harlan:** I am having espresso right now. Just letting you know.

**James:** These things, I mean I see this and I start unfollowing it, but I know I'm not the market. People seem to like this, because they get to have a chance at expressing themselves and being, you know, having a say. It seems to be the appeal of these engagements.

**Harlan:** It's very easy to get engagement based on your list. Right now, there's a controversy in the dog market. Because I'm sure you've been on planes and people take their dogs on, their rescue dogs, there are emotional support dogs. So over the weekend, one woman was denied, I think by United Airlines, because she claimed that her peacock was an emotional support peacock and this was a huge bird, and they said, "No, you're not bringing it on the plane." And the New York Times wrote an article about it.

If you look at the comments on the New York Times article, I would say 90 percent of the people think that like, dogs should be able to travel wherever they want, whenever they want, dogs at the expense of humans, etc. So if I were to put a post on, do you think that people should be able to bring their dogs onto planes? That would explode on my page.

**James:** Yeah. And I was thinking about that when I saw the news.

**Harlan:** In the keto market, if I posted, do you think that doctors should be more educated in the benefits of keto? I would get 30,000 comments.

## Where do the stories come from?

**James:** So it's all about relevancy and hitting the topical points, which you sort of alluded to before, you wanted to break news. So it sort of begged the question, how do you become the news source? How do you get upstream of the news instead of feeding off a syndication service? Where do you get the stories from?

**Harlan:** Where do I get the stories? So actually, I have a little secret. And the

secret that I have is, we put in so many stories, we curate so much, I actually built an app called Viral Curation. And what Viral Curation does is really interesting. It goes and finds the most viral stories, and you can find them by topic. So if I go on to Viral Curation, and go ahead and search a topic, whether it's dogs or ketosis, I can tell you what the most viral topics are. And when I do that. Facebook knows that it's a viral topic, because I'm selecting something that's already been viral on Facebook. And lo and behold, I am feeding Facebook exactly what it wants. So it always works.

**James:** Right. So for our team, we set up a site in the surf market, and we've set up our Slack to bring in feeds from all the main sites in our market, and we cherry pick the stories that are worth curating. And like you, I actually got press pass and went to some events and took pictures and people weren't interested in interviewing you when they don't know who you are. But after the event, the athletes start contacting us wanting copies of the pictures we took, and that's how we could start the dialogue.

## Team size and KPIs

I'm wondering, how big is the team now on some of these properties of yours?

**Harlan:** The team for Dogington has been three or four since the beginning, that's including, like, web people. And we are now really just, the team actually on curation is much bigger. The team on the on the Keto site is 10, because of the group, and it's just exploding.

**James:** Do you have a KPI, like how many posts per day that you have as an objective?

**Harlan:** You know, they've been doing this every day for such a long time, and they have a really good idea. We actually, believe it or not, mapped out a publishing schedule that Facebook seems to respond the best, how often we publish, and so forth. And I think it's something like 10 or 15 times a day at specific times. I don't mean like 7:27 AM, but they want to see something between seven and eight AM. So we are set up, and we follow a schedule, and we've tested this schedule, because we test everything. We actually, our motto is, "Believe nothing, test everything." And we've tested this schedule and

worked it out, and it does quite well for us.

## Why have a website AND a group?

**James:** So just the relationship between the group and the actual website, like, is the content different or the same? How do they work together? Why do you have both?

**Harlan:** If you have a group, first of all, you have a much higher engagement. Facebook is not limiting the engagement. As a matter of fact, people complain in awe that my group takes up their entire timeline. Because if they're active and they're posting, Facebook figures they want to see more. And so they see more. And they're like, going, 'Wait, Harlan's occupied my entire timeline!' So there is no issue in a group of Facebook limiting you.

**James:** And what about the website, though? How does the website work in relation to the group?

**Harlan:** So the website is where we bring people to for our major monetization. If you were to go to Completely Keto, you would see ads from different providers that are there, and all kinds of services that are there. Soon the cookbook will be up there and selling. And let's just say that that monetized rather nicely.

**James:** Right. So the Facebook group's where you're generating all the traffic and engagement, and then you signpost them off to the site where they can buy things?

**Harlan:** I think it was Perry Marshall years ago, called it the unlimited traffic technique, where you bought traffic on Google as much as you wanted and brought them to your site. Well, today, the unlimited traffic technique where you don't really have to pay for it is starting a Facebook group in a rabid niche. And you just have unlimited traffic.

**James:** And you put the same content on your website? Or is the website the heavy content and the Facebook groups the conversation starters?

**Harlan:** The Facebook page is the combination starter. The Facebook group, remember, I would say something like 90 percent of the content is generated

by the people themselves. They may be asking us questions, so forth. That's about 90 percent of it is self-generated in the group. So it's mostly user-generated content, and Facebook loves that.

**James:** So if you post some news about dog food on your site, and then do you post the same article natively on the Facebook page or group? Or do you just mention to them that it's now on the site and they can go over and check it out?

**Harlan:** We mention something, we do a story with a photo, and we can't clickbait anymore, but you know, people come over and read it. One of the things that is the most difficult is that people want to get the facts and then they want to go on. It's very interesting, between the two niches, we put – are you ready? This is really wild. On the dog site, the bounce rate is much higher than on the keto site. They spend more time. I had some people looking at our page going, 'woah, that's pretty darn amazing that they spend that much time on the site.' They're really into it. The dog people want to read the story and then move on.

**James:** So you have totally different depth of interests. It makes sense to me, because something like keto, that's your body, it's deeply personal and there's a massive ramification as to the information, whereas reading about someone who kicked a dog or something, it doesn't affect you as personally. It might emotionally upset you, but it's not as deep as putting food into your own body.

**Harlan:** That's correct.

## Some of the surprises

**James:** What have been the most interesting things you've discovered throughout this process of building communities and dominating a whole market in a general way, which by the way, it super appeals to me because I've not been the super nichey-niche niche sort of guy. I'm more of a generalist so it definitely appeals to me. What were the big surprises for you, other than the fact that you could actually do it?



"you have to present your content knowing that 80 percent and probably up are viewing your content on mobile."

HARLAN KILSTEIN

 superfastbusiness

**Harlan:** The big surprise was that you could really grow a community, a powerful community, and monetize it based on content. Number two is how much Google loves curation. Google goes absolutely insane for curated content. And number three is, once you have the metrics on this, how much the world has moved to mobile. So you have to present your content knowing that 80 percent and probably up are viewing your content on mobile.

**James:** Yeah, I'm not surprised by that. We've been talking about this for years.

## Insights from Google

**Harlan:** Now, I just, because I have to drop it in, I was invited because of these two sites, I was invited up to Google's headquarters in New York. And the big takeaway that Google had – and Google loves to play games, and hint at things, and say one thing but to another – but the big thing that they wanted us to get was page speed. And they told us two key things. If people have to wait for your site to load on mobile, they are gone. They want near instant loading of a site. And if you do not get near instant loading of the site, you're in trouble. They want to see that, like, instant load. Am I making sense?

**James:** Yeah. So it's got to be fast and it has to work on a mobile device.

**Harlan:** Right. And once it's once you have that, then they say people don't want to see a lot of content. That's what they've discovered, is that don't give people a lot of content. They want to get the facts and move on. So Google was showing us sites that load nearly instantaneously on mobile.

Extremely impressive sites that, hello, you know, you blink and the site is loaded.

And that is just impressive.

**James:** It is impressive, and I'm sure Google's own solutions might be part of the story there.

It's especially interesting we've talked about mobile fast-loading sites, because we have had an SEO background for many, many years. So that's not news to us, but it's a good reminder.

**Harlan:** Google is denying that they rank sites on the basis of this. However,

they do point out that sites with this stuff do better than other sites.

**James:** Did they mention that they like to see a secure site these days as well?

**Harlan:** That is taken for granted.

**James:** Yeah. I thought it was just worth mentioning, that's the big change. And most good hosting providers are automatically providing that these days. So a secure site that works on a mobile that loads quickly is a start.

Let's talk about the toolkit here. If you had a particular expertise...

**Harlan:** Now, hold on a second. Do you have a mobile device handy, James? Can you reach for something?

**James:** Yeah I've got it.

**Harlan:** OK. I want you to go to this site. It's amp.cards.

**James:** OK.

**Harlan:** How quickly did that load?

**James:** That's quick, and I'm on a pretty slow internet here.

**Harlan:** Yeah. So here's something else that Google said. They said that while we in sophisticated America are busy grabbing for 4G or 5G, most of the world, including the United States, is still on 2G. And they do not want to see these people turned away.

**James:** I agree. I'm on a third world internet connection here in Manly, Sydney. Our internet infrastructure is appalling, and things do load slowly. And for this call, I've had to tether my phone to the wi-fi network for my phone rather than use the in-house copper wire. It's that bad. And I do appreciate a fast-loading site. Google said they're interested in it.

## What you need for presence

So I just wanted to circle back now. I'm interested in the toolkit that we've talked about here. If you're an expert and you want to create a presence,

you're saying you're probably going to need a page, a group, and a site that is secure, fast-loading and works on a mobile. Is that where we're starting?

**Harlan:** Right. Optimized for mobile.

**James:** And you want to be building an email list and running ads.

**Harlan:** Oh hell, yeah.

**James:** What else is important?

**Harlan:** Well, the most important thing is really knowing your niche. I've looked at somebody who was running an ad to bring people to his group, and I looked at it, and I went, "Oh that ad is terrible." And he said, "Why?" And I said, "First of all, it looks like a stock image. The person looks professional. She looks like a trainer. People are not going to associate with it. I want you, instead of running a picture of a person, I want you to run a picture of a dessert." This was for a paleo site. And they swapped it out, they put in a picture of a cupcake, and their fees on Google, you know, for engagement, were cut by a third. Because people obviously are, if you know your niche, you can really get people.

**James:** You mention things that relate to relevancies. You know your audience, you talk about topics that are in the news, that are already viral. It's like selling things that people already buy, if you're capturing what's already viral.

**Harlan:** For really cheating, there is a site called The Wirecutter. The Wirecutter is an affiliate site, it was purchased by the New York Times, and they do exhausting research. So I'll go in there on a topic that they've researched, find out what their best product is, go and get my own Amazon link and say, "Hey, this product was rated number one by The Wirecutter." And there you go. They've done all the research and I get all of the sales. I'm very happy with that. It works for me.

**James:** Nice! We've found in our [surf site](#) the most popular content are board reviews. So the earlier we can find out about a new model, we can position ourselves in front of the imminent sort of onslaught of people searching for that model as they become aware of it. And we rank really well for board models. Most surfers are very interested in equipment, which was far more

interesting to people than contest results or, you know, how to stay fit. Less exciting than the equipment themselves.

So in wrapping up this session, and you mentioned that...

**Harlan:** Is that it? We're done?

**James:** No, I'm just sort of laying the foundations.

**Harlan:** How many years has it been since I made it to a Schramko podcast? I mean, seriously, we've known each other, we met in Dubai how many years ago?

**James:** Probably 2009 or 2010.

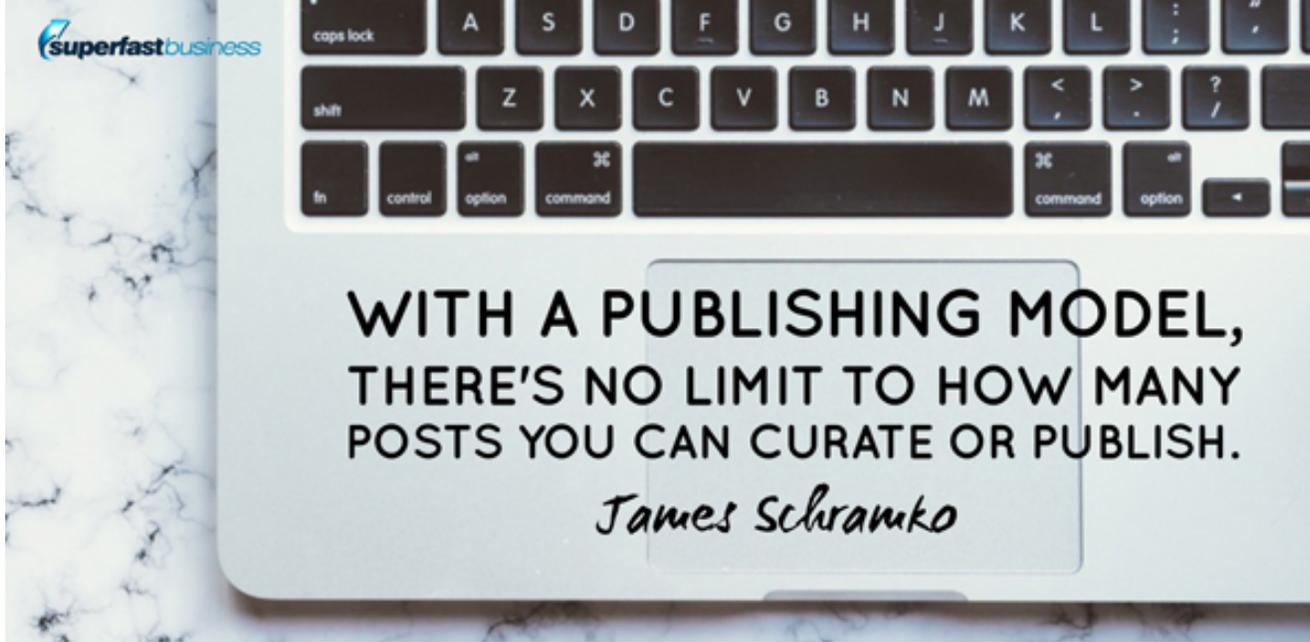
**Harlan:** OK. And it takes nine years for me to make it to a podcast. And you're letting me go just like that?

## A possible future episode

**James:** Well no, I'm not actually. I was saying you mentioned bot, which is something we've talked about a couple of times on this show, and I've just started my own experiments with it and I think there's probably an entire episode in that, so I was going to extend an invitation to to talk further about that, just in the interests of making this digestible for my audience.

**Harlan:** Well, I'm going to tell you about bots, but I'm going to tell you that 99 percent of the people who are doing bots are missing out on the single most important thing, and that's engagement. So when James will have me back, I'll teach you how to build the bot that gets engagement.

**James:** Yeah, well that's a deal. And yeah, look, I just, we've had our private conversation, it's always been good to observe you build these things and to ask you questions about it behind the scenes. I'm really just sharing you with the audience. I appreciate how generous you've been, because you know about this stuff. It's easy to validate what you're talking about here, because you can go and look up the sites.



It's fascinating to me because I'm doing this publishing model as well, as my side project. We call this an infinity project in my business. It's something my team can work on forever and never run out of stuff to do. That's why I like a publishing model, because there's no limit to how many posts you can curate or publish. If you have an onboard team or in-house team and you're not sure what to do with them, if they have gaps in their workload, get them on to a publishing model and there'll be endless amounts of growth. But we've built our site up to a nice, powerful site as a side project, but I'm going to go and do a couple of things after doing this call in particular that will boost our website. So it's been really valuable for me, and hopefully I've asked questions that our listener would have liked me to ask.

**Harlan:** I'm going to just close with one little thing, and that is, if you have these sites, if you've built a Schramko [Own The Racecourse](#) site, just keep it up. Keep going like Dory in Finding Nemo is just keep swimming. Just keep posting, just keep curating, and you're going to be blown away by what that site translates for you.

**James:** Yeah, like generally not much happens in the beginning with it. It's a creeper. I was once actually carrying my board down to the beach. I'd put a sticker for my website on the front of the board for when I went to the [Maldives](#), so that I could get some GoPro footage and make sure that that was a business trip, of course. And the surf instructor, he recognized the sticker and the site and he talked about how he likes looking at all the board reviews and he asked me if I know about the site, what's my connection? And like your vet incident, I'm like, "Well, it's actually my site." He goes, "No way." I said,

“Yeah,” and he started, sent me some stock to review, some things to review for the site. And we struck up a great relationship. So it’s just a very rewarding business model.

## A piece of parting advice

**Harlan:** Can we ignore everyone here and just let me give you a piece of advice?

**James:** Sure.

**Harlan:** It is going to be worth it for you to attend worldwide conferences

and stuff, I'm sure, on surfing, at least once and show your face. Because one day, you going to get a notice from one of these site brokers saying, "Would you be interested in selling your site?" And that's when you get eight-figure payday.

**James:** That is the goal, it's been my stated goal for my community and that's what we're building, is we're building....

**Harlan:** People in the industry, I promise you, are watching your site.

**James:** They are, because what we've noticed, it's fascinating when we do a product review and the manufacturer themselves retweets us or reposts our Insta or gives us a thumbs up. It's nice to know they are watching and starting to take an interest. And, yes, the offers start coming, and it's tremendously satisfying when that tipping point comes. But yes, the goal is to sell one day to a company who would love to have our audience and everything we've built.

And this is all done in our spare time, mind you, but I'm going to do some proactive things as a result of this call because I've been wanting to unlock it a bit. Haven't spent much time on it. So I'll go straight to the source, and that's why you're here and it's been such a valuable episode. And we'll do Part 2, we'll talk about bots and how to get the engagement. And I'll also catch any follow-up questions that come from this episode, because no doubt there'll be a couple, if we have that kind of engaged audience.

**Harlan:** You'll get people saying, "Do not have that guy on again. He's impossible."

**James:** There's only one guy I can think of that might say that, but the rest of the market, they're lucky to have this golden advice, so it's fantastic.

**Harlan:** The stuff works. How many years old is Own The Racecourse?

**James:** Well, I first published it five years ago, but I was doing it for clients and myself for several years prior to that.

**Harlan:** And the concepts there are still timely today. Like, maybe there are little bumps in the racetrack you know, that the track needs to be smooth

because Facebook changes its mind. But that material is as valid today as it was.

**James:** Yeah, one of the main changes that are made is just, I say it's okay to load more of your content natively. That's one of the only significant changes. But the rest of it is still pretty much spot on. And even this morning, I woke up, checked the news and people are forecasting massive changes on Facebook and it's going to be a game changer and it's going to scuttle carts and they have to adapt and all this. And I'm thinking, that really doesn't affect me at all. It's not going to make a ripple in my life, because I'm tapping into already what you've described. You've just interchanged Facebook and Google several times in this conversation, but they're completely separate platforms and you're harnessing both of them. Plus you're harnessing your bot subscribers, plus your email subscribers, plus the direct relationship you have with advertisers. So you could easily set up another property and get in contact with everyone without needing... like even if one of these collapsed, and I hope it doesn't, but even if it did, you still have that relationship with your audience and you'll be able to contact them and tell them how it's going to work from now on. So it's very exciting.

**Harlan:** Yeah, it sure is.

**James:** Where can we find out more about Kilstein?

**Harlan:** Kilstein? You can go to [Kilstein.com](http://Kilstein.com). I believe that there's an e-mail sign up there. You can follow my rantings and stuff like that. I'm going to be releasing a significant piece on what I learned from Google. It was really interesting about speeding up and nobody's doing what Google is begging people to do.

**James:** I remember [visiting the Google office](#) here in Sydney many years ago, and they were talking about people using multiple devices, how things should work on mobile. I'm sure it was at least five years ago. Their message is there for people who want to hear it.

**Harlan:** Right, but nobody wants to listen to them. It's crazy.

**James:** Goodness knows why.

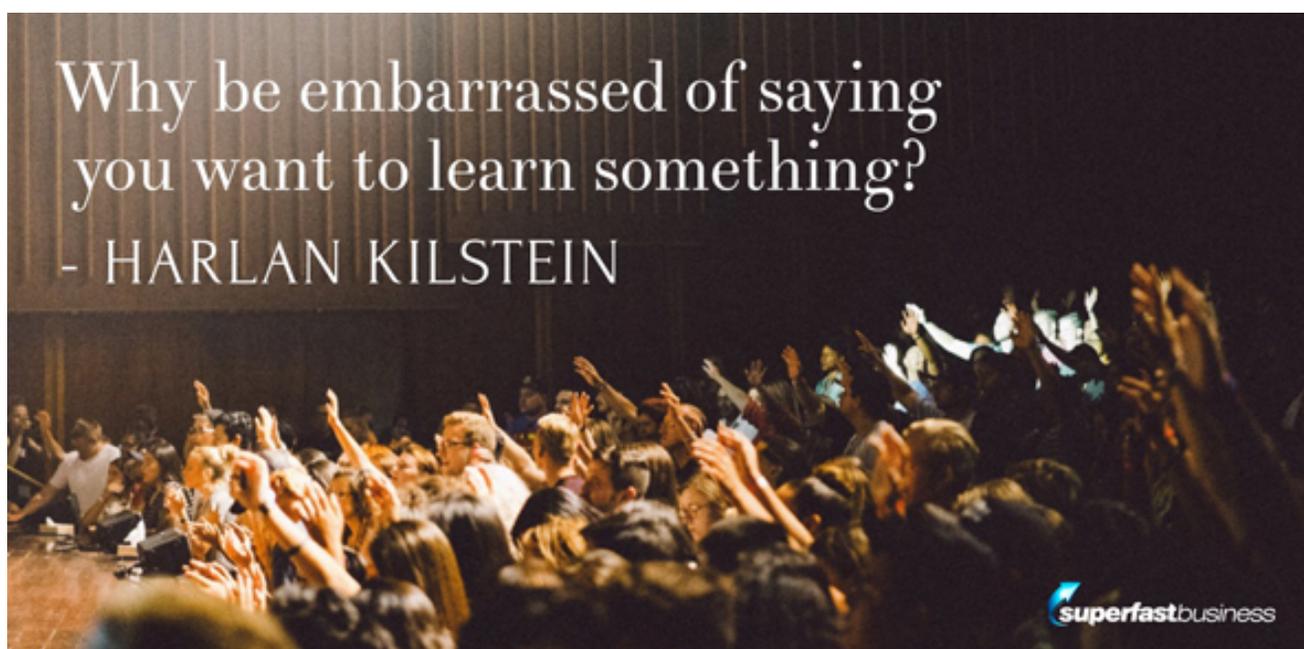
Thanks so much for sharing, Harlan, and I'm sure if someone already has a dog, they probably know about [Dogington Post](#). And if they're interested in keto, your group's called [Completely Keto](#)?

**Harlan:** That's right.

**James:** There you go.

**Harlan:** Completely Keto.

**James:** And also, you'll be found in most marketing communities online. I see you popping up here and there and with some eyes in. So there's one thing I'll comment on that I've noticed with you and a few others, and not many. You have a tremendous approach of beginner's mind. You're one of the most advanced people I know and you ask some of the most basic, vulnerable questions. And that is a rare skill. You'll go onto a popular group of known experts and ask them a question from scratch where most people would have too much pride to do that. If you don't know something, you're not ashamed to say OK, who do I go to for this? Or what's the best solution for that? And some people would usually not ask that question because they're worried that people might think less of them for not knowing. But that must be the secret to you knowing all this stuff because you've just said, I'm just going to find out.



**Harlan:** Why be embarrassed of saying you want to learn something?

**James:** Yeah. The other person I've noticed who does that well is [Ed O'Keefe](#). It's quite rare. I think a lot of people feel like they have to be an expert on all things and then they're too afraid to post a beginner mindset question. So I mean that in a nice way. You are a curious learner and you open up the floodgates. Actually, I think [Mike Rhodes](#) also does that. But there's a few people who do it, and it's very good to see that humility in the marketing as well to balance it out. And no doubt it's part of your recipe for success.

**Harlan:** There you go. I always want to learn from people who are successful themselves and know what they're doing. So I will respect if Google or Facebook says, "Do this," I'm not going to argue with them. I'm not going to moan, like, oh my gosh, it used to be so much easier. You can't do this, you shouldn't do this. It's just like, OK, you want me to do A? I'll do A. You need to do B? I'll do B. Why not?

**James:** Perfect. Thanks, Harlan.

**Harlan:** All the best, folks. Thanks for listening. And one day, like the King says in Hamilton, I'll be back.



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