



Turning Your Hobby into a Business



Steve Mastroianni wants you to be able to do what he does - make money doing what you enjoy. Tune in and hear more about hobbies that make money.



Steve Mastroianni

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 834. And I'm chatting to my good buddy, [Steve Mastroianni](#), the rock star. How are you doing, buddy?

Steve: I'm good. Thanks so much for having me, James.

James: It's always a pleasure. It's easy to get on the show, you just have to publish a book. And if you're a member of SuperFastBusiness, then that's even easier because we have a relationship. I love what you do. Of course, we met back at [Ryan Levesque's ASK Master Class](#) in Texas. You were one of the instructors. We had a good bond then, you went on to join my community, SuperFastBusiness.

You published your first book about helping guitar players play better guitar. What was that called again?

Steve: Practice Less, Play More.

James: Got a nice ring to that. We talked about it on Episode [642](#). But that was a while ago now. And you've been busy in between producing a family. Lots of kids, kids everywhere. How many kids are you up to?

Steve: Up to three. I still have some catching up to do. But I think I'm going to take care of things. So yeah, I think we cap it at three over here. We had twins. You didn't have twins, right? So twins trump - that's like four kids, basically.

James: I can imagine. I don't know, is there any diminishing return? Or is it just two of everything?

Steve: You know what, it's more than two. It's actually, it's like one plus one equals like five, and they're boys, two twin boys, right? So everything is crazy.

James: Ah, full of energy.

Steve: Yeah.

James: Yeah. I've got three boys. And I know what's involved.

Steve: But Lucy must be a vacation though, after all those boys.

James: Oh, yeah. It's like, she's a dream, just the perfect child.

Steve: So awesome.

James: She's two, and just like, an absolute pleasure. Of course, you can't have favorite kids. But this time around, I'm in a different situation. And you know, that's one of the goals of this podcast, without rambling too much. What you and I are talking about here is lifestyle transition. In my case, I was young when I started having kids and I had a job. And I did the whole career thing, as many listeners would know. And then later on, I was able to leave that to work on my own business.

The book that prompted this episode

Now the reason we're talking today is I followed your journey from when I met you to publishing a book, helping people in the niche you're in. And now, you've published a book that is to go a little bit broader, and it's more or less to help everyone make money from their hobby. So I'm going to put my sort of surfing hat on today and think, if I didn't have everything I've got, if I was just going around life like a regular Joe, I'm looking at your book with that sort of lens.

Okay, I love surfing, what would be the steps? Now, the book is called Hobby Boss, and the website or reference is hobbybossbook.com. I like to get that in early because people listening to this show are real action takers, and they're going to go and buy your book. I bought it on Amazon even though you sent it to me for review, just to support you.

Steve: Thank you so much.

James: And I shared it with my audience, because there's a lot of people in the regular world who still don't know about this whole information online business product world that we're in. So the purpose of this episode is just to go through some of the nuts and bolts to supplement what someone might - firstly, to interest someone enough to get the book.

I'm not an affiliate or anything, I just really believe in having opportunities beyond what you're experiencing now, as you have. You pretty much wrote this book while you were rocking your twins to sleep, on your phone, in a Google app. Is that right?

Steve: Yeah, that's right. It was actually down here, like in this chaos over here. I had my son Alex. So twin boys, Alex and Mikey, and Alex would be on my shoulder, and I was basically on my iPhone, just with my thumb just writing the book. I mean, I zoomed out to see myself doing that. I just knew that I'd be talking about it as just a ridiculous situation. But happy to do it, for sure.

James: I'd say a great deal of the way that I operate now is via phone and usually via dictate, which is probably harder if you have a sleeping baby, or if everyone's trying to be quiet. But I do most of my work, and the fun fact, on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, I don't come into this room. So for four days, this room is not occupied.

It's only on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, in this COVID environment where I'm actually living at home a lot, because normally I'm traveling as well, but three days a week where I produce content like this podcast. And then the rest of time, it's just phone, dictating forum posts, checking message thing.

I think the big point here is, we're in a world where we don't really have the excuse that we need a big office. You talk about this in the book, you don't really need an office, you don't really even need a logo or a big business name. You don't need business cards. Even if you've got twins and they're young, even if you've got other things you need to do, and I've watched you under pressure a few years back, you know, you had impending doom situation of - Hey - you know, it reflected on my own situation.

Wasn't quite enough coming in to cover where I was at, before I had the kid, and I could see it just getting worse. So you stepped up. Using a phone, using a device, you've created something. Now tell me, what is this book for? Why did you make this book?

Steve: Yeah, it's a great question, because what's very strange about it is when I started my business, [Rockstar Mind](#) in 2014, so I was my father's primary caregiver, he was diagnosed with stage four colon cancer. And speaking of high pressure situation, I gave up my dream of being a rock star. And I took care of him, because my father was always my number one fan. And so I took care of him.

And I also just couldn't sit and do one thing. I needed to, number one, I needed some kind of creative escape to manage just the mental health aspect of it. But also, I needed to pay rent. And so what's interesting is, well, first of all, instead of thinking about all these new skills that I have to develop, I went straight to my existing hobby.

Well, I wouldn't say necessarily a hobby, because guitar was my career, but I went to something that could be regarded as a hobby, and I wanted to monetize that. And so I looked at guitar, but the funny thing is that, I looked at that, so Rockstar Mind started as a guitar coaching company. But it was also, from day one, a guinea pig to teach people. Like, I knew that I was going to learn online business through Rockstar Mind, through the guitar side of things, and then eventually find all the formulas and the frameworks and systematize it, so that I could eventually teach it.

Even from day one, I knew that, and so every single thing that I did with Rockstar Mind from the beginning was to model it so that I could eventually teach it. And so, you know, years later, when life just took me out through all these different - it was just a roller coaster ride, basically, I kept coming back, like in and out of Rockstar Mind.

And actually, when we're talking about my first book, Practice Less, Play More, you know, you had a really, really big part in inspiring my book, Practice Less, Play More, the title and just in general, doing a book. And I actually doubled my business that following year. So after that [podcast that we recorded](#), that episode, I doubled my business, and that gave me a lot of confidence.

And I knew that I needed to share this information, like what worked for me, and especially for startups, where it's really hard to find information all in one place. And so again, this idea of being able to share these frameworks, being able to share these things that worked, in simple language, like not any jargon, or just in simple language, let's just lay it all out, here's how to do it, here's what worked for me and for my clients.

And as I was writing it, the pandemic hit. And you know, we had twins in February, and we were already on lockdown even before COVID, like we were done, we were here, we were locked down before COVID hit. But in 2020, I doubled my business again. And it was because of a lot of the things that I picked up from 2019 and leveraging the book.

It's not that you need to have a book, but it was just being able to focus on something, and I also have a really strong purpose. I knew that in order for Hobby Boss to be really effective and help a lot of people make the biggest impact, I needed to do my best work in the guitar space, so that I could then show people, here's how to do it, here's how to do it. It's not as hard as you think. It still takes a lot of work, but it's worth it, because you're doing what you love.

Handling stress and trolls

And just that opportunity to share with people is what really lights me up. Like, if I was just to do it myself, and just stay in the guitar space, it would be okay, but what really lights me up is being able to share those with other people and help them to achieve the same things in their lives. Because not everybody is wired the same way I am. Because like for me, like you said with stress, I can respond to it, even though leading up to this book launch, it was a very stressful situation and just at home over here.

But being able to step up and kind of push through that and get to a whole other level, kind of forcing simplicity and efficiency, I needed to get this book out, because I knew how impactful it would be for people who just don't know how to control their financial future, like, how to add new sources of revenue. A lot of people don't know, and they always look to someone else for that.

So when you can empower yourself by having, even if it's 500 extra dollars, like I heard, I can't remember where I read it, but even 500 extra dollars per month for some people is life-changing. So to be able to do that and not look at additional training, as far as like getting some certification or something, just look to something that you already can do, and already have a passion for, I think that it's a really, really cool thing to be able to do that, but also to be able to share that and see other people achieve that for themselves.

James: Yeah, definitely. So much in what you just said there, I just want to touch on those, before we move too far on. Firstly, yes, this is really suitable for a startup. And I don't really deal with startups that often. I don't cover it that much, because it's the most frustrating part, by far, to come up with the - well, firstly, the Holy Grail is an [offer that converts](#), but to get to that stage, there's so many baptisms of fire and trials. And a lot of people won't make it, let's face it.

So I tend to focus on people who are already past that phase for my coaching. So I'd love to bring in some supporting materials for that. Now, there are other options out there. I saw a course launching recently at the time of recording this, I think the cost was \$2,000. There was an associated membership for a couple \$100 on top of that, and one of the people posting in a group about this was saying, Should I get a business card loan for this course?

And then other people were saying, you know, I'm praying for you. And I'm just thinking, this is insanity, that someone is like, that person, definitely \$500 is going to be life-changing. But to get to the \$500, I think they need to spend \$4,000. And then they're going to find they're going to need other costs. Like, this is not a free type of business.

There are costs, right? Incidental costs, whether it's your email, your website, etc. So what I like about your book is it's just super easy access. For a few dollars, you get the blueprint. And you cover things I didn't even expect to be in there. One of my favorite ones was how to deal with trolls. And you posted fabulous screenshots.

Steve: Ha-ha. I love trolls. Yeah.

James: Yeah, I can tell you do. I don't like trolls at all, generally, and I'm sure I shouldn't say that on a podcast. But thankfully, I don't get many, which is good. Usually, if you run Facebook ads, you're going to get some negative comments. But I do understand that when people put these negative comments, they're really mostly just expressing something about themselves, it's revealing about themselves.

One of your funny ones was someone trolling your guitar practice book. And they were just saying how that a guitar practice book is such a scam, and that they've been practicing since they're 11. And, you know, they're 16 years down the track, and they still play like crap. And then someone else pointed out, well, you kind of answered your own thing there. And he realized it.

But I'm sure they're not all that easy to deal with. And I can see, one way you've coped with pressure is, you've certainly focused on helping others, from your father through to you know, how I met you, you were a coach in someone else's group. And you also use humor, you're quite funny. And I think you use humor as your release.

Accepting the inevitable challenges

And I bet, I'm willing to bet you play a lot of guitar to get it out of your system. Your guitar is probably like my surfing. Based on what I can see from when we're recording here, that looks kind of like a basement setup or whatever. But how important is it for people to know when they're going to start something that it is inevitable, that it's not going to just be handed to them, and that their responsibility cannot be placed on someone else?

You can't just pay someone the money, and they'll do it all for you. It has to come from within, and it's going to be tough. Really, you're going to get slapped, and kicked and punched in the face, metaphorically, by trying to start a business. It's just how it is. It's very rare someone just hits a home run out of the gates. What do you think?



Steve: For sure. Yeah, 100 percent. You know, resilience is definitely the number one skill to have. I think that the music industry gave me some really, really good training for resilience, like really thick skin. You hear no all the time, and so that definitely was good prep. And it's funny because you mentioned that you don't focus on startups, like you usually help people who are further down the track, and you do great work.

And I found that, when I was starting, I found a lot of mentors and coaches that did the same thing. And so I couldn't find somebody who was focusing on startups, so I had to kind of piece together all these different things and you know, any of the advice that I would receive from people, not you, because we met further down the line, but some people, they would just be like, You know what, from zero to six figures, you just have to hustle.

And it reminded me of what I hear in the guitar space, which is practice, practice, practice. It's like this sort of, shrugging off kind of comment of just like, practice, practice, practice, where that's like, that's not really advice. That doesn't even work.

James: It's almost defeatist, isn't it?

Steve: Yes, so defeatist.

James: I don't want to imply defeatism here. What I do want to point out is the people I'm seeing posting are almost having this sort of Pollyanna expectation that it's done and dusted. They'll pay the money. So buying the book doesn't get you a business, you've got to execute.

Steve: No, it doesn't. You've got to execute. Fast action for sure, quick and dirty. And also, like I said, the resilience, this is one of the things I put inside the book, is a damage plan. So basically, you have to prepare that things aren't going to work out, like you can be ahead of that, be proactive and say like, Okay, well, if this happens, like my hard drive fails, here's how I'm going to take care of it. Step one, step two, step three.

And for example, if someone trolls my post, here's how I'm going to take care of it. Step one, step two, step three. And so you have to expect that that's going to happen. Like, one of the shifts that you make, the identity shift that you make as a hobby boss, as an entrepreneur, just in general, is that you're responsible for every dollar that you make, at least at the beginning.

And even if you have someone help you out, you're still responsible for masterminding the whole thing for the vision. I mean it's a very different mindset where, you know, if you just show up and do the work, that a lot of people think that like with a job, you'll show up and do the work, you get a paycheck. But this is different. There could be salesless days for weeks.

James: Look, I'm dealing with some employee types, and I'm transitioning them into my world. And it's fascinating. One of them was my Monday guy, every Monday, he'd be like, tell me again about what you do. He just hated going to work on Monday, and he wanted to escape. So it was all an away motivation.

And then when he finally quit, I'm having to untangle him from these horrific things like hours, or him just clocking off on the weekend. I'm like, dude, like, your business will be something you might need to think about even when you're not there, because it's there 24/7, like change of mindset.

Being your own best cheerleader

Really interesting also, in the book, you have come up with a technique of helping yourself out, which I think is leveraging off some of the classics, you know, stuff way back from Maxwell Maltz, but using some technology to enhance that. You make little videos for yourself. Could you talk about that?

Steve: Yeah. You know, what's funny is, I was having this conversation, I came up with this idea speaking with a member of SuperFastBusiness, actually, with Janet, that we were talking about this. And I just got this idea that, okay, so you get motivation from different people. And they say like, you know, it's okay, it's going to be fine, it's going to work out, or whatever the motivation is, and they're all, you know, it's great intentions.

But what I started doing is like, okay, well, on those days where I feel really, really good, like, you know, I did \$1,000 day or whatever it might be, just I closed a sale, or it's not always financial, but you have a really good day, really productive, whatever it might be, and I record a video for myself, looking at the camera saying, Steve, this is awesome.

I show myself how good it can be, like, I got so much done, and it's possible, and even though you have three kids, and you have different stressors, you can definitely do this. And, you know, I'm proof. On a bad day, putting that video on, and hearing it from me, is a very strange thing. I guess, it's like it flips a switch, where it's like, Oh, wait a second. I'm like, communicating with myself, like at multiple levels. I haven't had to use it that much. Like, I'm happy about that. It's there if I need it. This is all part of the damage plan.

James: It reminds me of when I was a high performer in my job, and I reached a goal, one of the goals is when I'm an owner of a motor dealership or a general manager, I get a Rolex Daytona. And when I was able to get it, even though they were sold out for years, I managed to manifest one, like within a day or two, and I'm not like a big believer in the Secret, but the way I manifested is I told my friend, I've achieved my reward now, but they're actually sold out.

And he said, I'll speak to my friend, he can probably help out. And I said, Who's your friend? He said, He's the managing director of Rolex Australia. And I said, Fantastic. And he had one sent to the store near us. Anyway, I purchased it. But from then on, I had this anchor. It was on my wrist as a permanent reminder, much like you could tie a piece of string as a reminder.

That Rolex was my reminder to myself that I had made it to the top of the pile, that I've got that. And even before that, there was this incident in about 1995, when I was 23 years old, I had a baby coming along the way, you can really relate to this, I'm sure, Steve. And I got fashion shamed by a client. I was there in the showroom, and this guy said to me, and I've been told a lot, you know, you're too young to be selling BMW by clients, you know, these were all older than me, like twice my age, pretty much the average client.

And he goes, Nice tie. And the wife reaches over, grabs it, turns it, and she sees Target, and throws it back in my chest and says, No, it's not. So I actually went up to the fashion store, and I spent \$220 on a Gieves & Hawkes Savile Row tie. From that day on, I basically started getting ornaments or artifacts or trophies that would remind me of my power. It's like I became un-mess-with-able. I had a \$400 tie, you know, when I became a sales manager.

Steve: That troll experience, you see, this is how you flip it, right? That troll experience, the girl grabbing the tie, she trolled you.

James: She trolled me.

Steve: You take that experience, and actually, what's interesting, that trolls are very powerful that it's not that you take it personally necessarily, you realize that that's hurting conversions, right? They spot things, they have amazing ability to spot things that if a few people are talking about it, even if they like, you know, if they talk about it, like aggressively sometimes, that also just will demonstrate, it's like, Well, wait a second, you know, if she caught that thing, maybe other people are seeing that, but not saying anything, because they're being too polite.

But maybe that's why I didn't convert. So it actually gets you to rethink things. Now, it's always up to you whether or not you make the change or not.

James: And it's up to you if you get hurt by it or not, you know?

Steve: For sure.

James: I didn't have the resources to process that back then as I have now. Obviously, I'm way more confident, I'm established, I've achieved a lot of the things I want. If someone fashion shamed me now, I'd just feel sorry for them, because they don't really know me. Or I wouldn't put too much, because I'm actually not trying to impress them.

Like my friend [Ezra](#) says, you know, the lie these companies tell you is that you're imperfect unless you have their solution, right? So as I sit here in bare feet, and a T-shirt, you know, an organic cotton T-shirt...

Steve: Yeah, look at this professional set that I've got over here, right?

James: I can't help but think, it's really not that, you know, and I'm not wearing a watch anymore, I generally won't. So it's really about using that energy, using that thing. And I agree, when I have a client leave my membership or whatever, I'll ask why, and how can I improve? It is hard to ask, how can I improve, because you know they might answer with something that's unpalatable.

However, it caused them to leave, and I want to plug that hole in the bucket. And if you do that for 10 years, you boost your retention and you actually deliver a better service. So if you go back to what you're trying to do here, is if you can, you know, like that cheesy old saying, you get what you want if you help other people get what they want.

If you turn your hobby into something that more people can enjoy, and I just spoke to a client of mine this morning, he started a Pokémon channel. He loves it. And he's just about to hit 40,000 subscribers and it's almost brand new. And he just loves it. But he's helping these people enjoy their passion, their hobby. He's leveraging his love into more people loving it.

Expecting and recognizing the tough bits

It can't help but flow back onto him. Other people are sending him stuff now. He's getting quite famous from it. It's like, if you get through the tough bits for the hobby, yes, you're going to have some obstacles, but you can expect them. That's what we're talking about. Expect them. Don't be shocked or surprised when they come. Expect them and say, Hello, I recognize you.

And here's the interesting thing, I almost say fun fact, because it's all through your book, and it's stuck, but fun fact, every time I've purchased a property or whatever, there's always been obstacles. There's always been an unofficial auction or something changed or whatever, it's like, always difficult. And I always smile because I know, this is the little challenge I'm expecting.

Steve: There it is. Here's the challenge. Yeah, here's the one.

James: Here you are. This is the barrier. This is the moat that keeps everyone else out. So celebrate the difficulty. Because if it was so easy, then it would just level out, like you'd have 300 million Americans would have their own hobby business succeeding because it's so easy. And then it's commoditized and homogenous, and it's back to zero.

Steve: It's great that it has a barrier to entry. It's so great because it's empowering for you as the business owner, because you know that as long as you just develop a bit of resilience, like you're just doing a bicep curl, you're just like strengthening that muscle, as long as you do that, a lot of the filtration is going to happen automatically because a lot of people can't handle it.

You know, I wasn't always strong like that. You know, sleep deprivation is very good for business. Like, sleep deprivation actually kills the perfectionist, and it gets you moving quickly, and you know, I'm not going to say that like a life hack and a productivity hack is to have kids, but it kind of is. And so you know, sleep deprivation, that's one thing that I noticed is that the perfectionism, because I'm a recovering perfectionist, but perfectionism is gone, because you just can't like, you can't wait on things, and you just got to keep going.

So things start to, like, brush off, and the perfectionist is the one very often who will take things personally and really obsess over things. And yeah, this got to be like, quick and dirty, you know, like, just got to move forward, minimum viable, just get things going. And then once it's tangible, once it's out of your head, then you can start to mold it. But like you said, expect the challenges and welcome them.

James: Parenting, man. There's absolutely no way I would have the life I have now if I didn't have kids, no way. I wanted to quit my job several times, but I just couldn't. Like, my boss lied to me about the pay. I think I worked almost two months straight, 38 days straight when I started before I had a day off. I wore through the soles of my shoes and couldn't afford new ones, because he told me I'd get a pay rise, which didn't come.

He wouldn't even give me the day off for the birth of my child, which I took anyway. The kids, they hold you in more than you could. So basically, they up the responsibility. That's the short answer. They make you a lot more responsible than you could be as a single person or not, without having kids.

I'm not prescribing every listener go out and have kids. Definitely not. I'm saying, parent to parent, I know you find that baseline of you underneath all the rest, because when you've absolutely exhausted, when you're responsible for this little human for the next 20-plus years, like that's the power of responsibility you just can't prepare for easily.

Can you get rich off your hobby?

Okay, so a couple of other things. Are we going to get rich off our hobby? You do cover that in the book. What's your thoughts?

Steve: Getting rich from it?

James: Yeah, you're going to make money. That's something people naturally ask, you know?

Steve: For sure, for sure.

James: You know, Steve, I'm sold. I'm going to get this Hobby Boss book. There's a very classic one, can I just take the hobby that I've got now and get rich from it? Or, you know, because I notice reading the book, there's actual work involved. You actually have to speak to customers, you got to find out the language they're using, obviously, you're drawing a lot of that from the training you and I have both been through.

And you may have to create your offer around an actual need, rather than your desire to sell something, which is quite scary news for some people.

Steve: For sure. And you know, there's some work involved in there where also, there's two key questions as well. Number one, is, well, okay, so there's no particular order. But basically, you have to know also that if by monetizing your hobby, if it's going to affect your passion for the hobby. So like, for example, if you love something, if you turn it into a business, then that actually might tarnish your relationship with the hobby.

So you have to be clear about that. But there's a way to do it where, you know, you just have to, this is why moving fast is actually a really good thing because you get to test some things, but also, if you're into some weird, like obscure hobby, you do have to do some research to make sure that there's some other stuff going on.



Like you have to find some competitors in the market, just to kind of, they did a lot of the work for you to prove that there is a market there. And then you find your own, you know, you carve out your own space, but making sure that it's something that you actually want to do. I know a lot of people, they like the idea of something, but like in chapter six, you really want to picture what your life would be like.

Like if you're making extra \$10,000 a month, then, you know, what's your life going to look like with \$10,000 a month and what's going to be required to get that \$10,000 a month?

James: What are you prepared to do to get that, and will you pay the price?

Steve: Yeah. Yeah. Because it's not easy. You know, you have to do the work, and show up and do the work.

James: I've talked about this before. But you know, the reason I started my business entity was I was gifted half a business. One of my rich clients was going to give me half his motorcycle franchise. He had three stores, and I went to meet with him and his wife. And at the time, I was earning about \$265,000 in wage plus superannuation, which is a 401K and plus two company cars and a laptop and a phone.

And they could probably pay me \$120,000 if I took on this thing, and it was a bit of a risk, because, you know, he seemed like he was pretty frugal. But anyway, the wife just looked at me and she goes, What are you prepared to sacrifice? I'm like, I'm out of here. Like, I'm not prepared to half, or even a third, really, when you consider benefits, to be in bed with this.

But my financial advisors, it's really worth spending money to get good due diligence, they said, You can't take this deal because they also have a construction company, which if it goes broke, it's just going to set this business on fire. Anyway, I drove past that building last week. It's not there anymore, it's been converted into residential unit blocks. So I think I dodged a bullet there.

Steve: A hundred percent. A hundred percent.

James: But my point is, I decided at the time, I was not prepared to pay the price for that outcome.

And here's a nice saying I saw the other day, if you want to increase your luck, then increase your surface area towards luck. Like, more opportunities, like you said, move fast, push a few buttons, see what happens and be less perfect about it. And you'll find it. I've actually tried and started more businesses and information products and things since I've been online than most people will ever do in their lifetime.

And you only see the ones that are left. So SuperFastBusiness, [SilverCircle](#). There's a bunch of revenue shares in the background that you can't see, but they're there like an iceberg, which is, you know, my predominant thing these days. That's what's left, you know, a handful of domain names here and there that I sell, and the rest, I just turned it off.

You're going to have to experiment with this a bit. But your guide, it's just great, because you're going to eliminate the learning curve.

an 80:20 blueprint with great perspective. You know, I haven't seen some of the things you mentioned in that book anywhere. And I read lots and lots of books, I'm very interested in the topic.

Why storytelling and being real are important

I'm most interested in the success of my students, which is why we interact, and I just get thrilled to see this happen.

A couple of other things. Just because you're so strong with marketing, can you just talk a little bit about us versus them, you know, choosing an enemy/storytelling? Because it seems to be an element missing from most of the offers that I look at when I'm coaching people. They just have these bland, anemic, little regurgitated pages that are never ever going to sell a thing, ever, in a million years. What are some of the fundamentals?

Steve: Great question. And you're absolutely right, like things just blend in with each other. It's like the banner blindness, like, it's almost like people who are afraid to show any personality and any warmth. You know, I get messages from people who say, Oh, my God, I can't believe that you replied back to me. It's just like, Whoa, this is so crazy. It makes me cringe that other companies treat them just like a number.

So I bring people into my life. Like, you know, I talk about my kids puking all over me. And then smoothly segue into a pitch for something that I'm talking about, like let's just say making a mess. And then it's just like, you know, a lot of guitar players make a mess when they're practicing figuratively by doing blah, blah, blah, whatever the segue is. But it's pulling people into a real story, like people need real life.



I mean, like, there's enough sterility, like it's cold online, already. Just the digital world is cold. And so we got to add some warmth to it. And so by being real, this is why I love it.

What price would you pay for that income?

So back to what we were talking about, about the price that you're willing to pay, you know, a very interesting thing is that when you go through chapter six, and the ideal outcome that you want, when you think about it, you don't need to have \$10,000 a month, you don't need to expect that it's going to be a huge business. Just start off and get things going.

And then when you start making those sales, what's going to happen, what's very interesting, and I experienced this back in 2017, where I actually sacrificed a pretty damn good consulting gig for pretty much half the pay, but I was much happier, because I was doing something that I loved, that if you get paid, let's say 2000, or 3000, you get that revenue and \$3,000 a month, you could be happier with that doing what you love, and creating and doing anything that you want to do in your own business, rather than working a job that maybe pays \$5,000 or \$10,000.

And so there's this interesting thing that happens, because when you're doing what you love, and you actually realize the freedom that you can work when you want to, you can do all those fun things that you see with that laptop lifestyle. You know, I need to rely on the laptop lifestyle, when it came to having twins, just like navigating this past year.

And I just wanted to touch on that, because it could scare people away to hear about some of the successes that maybe we've experienced. And when you're starting out, and you know, you hear this, it just seems like a mountain, it's like Mount Everest away. And when you're starting, I'm telling you, when you make that first sale, you know, I still celebrate the first sale of every promotion, because it's special.



And when you see that your ideas can turn into dollars, it's an incredible feeling. If you've never experienced it before, it's an incredible feeling. And so as far as the marketing goes, so the reason why that sort of ties in, is because the excitement that you gain from this, you start to open up, you start to show more of yourself. And when you show more of yourself and you help people, you always want to be serving your customer. Like, you always want to be helping them achieve their result, like you said that when you help other people get what they want, you get what you want.

But it's like this feedback loop, that the more that they get what they want, they're going to keep buying, and then you're going to keep wanting to serve more, and it just keeps going and going. And then you come up with an idea, Oh my god, this would be so great if I could do this, and you don't have anybody to ask, it's just you, and you just go and do it.

That's an incredibly empowering experience. And that's probably what keeps me hooked into it, is that part never gets old.

James: It's also a great reason [not to have partners](#), if you can avoid it.

Steve: 100 percent.

James: That was one of the most liberating things when I changed the structure of one of my communities from a partnership back to my own ship. I hated anything that resembled, like, having to go back to the boss. [Revenue share deals](#) are different because it's really someone else's business. And I'm the smaller partner in that. And I totally respect their authority, their ability to make their own creative choices, I'm just guiding them. So I feel more like a navigator.

Steve: Yeah, and you're both already established. In that scenario, both are established.

James: We call that statistician, right? They can be the skipper, I'm just a statistician, and we both go on the journey together. But I've still got my own business, you know, it's important. I think, because you come from a music background, you've got a lot more experience with this self-identity, creativity, lack of restrictions and controls.

And some of the people that are in a bureaucratic, large organization will have had most of the soul beaten out of them, to the point where some of them don't even realize it anymore. Like, some of the fellows I'm working with are so soulless and sold into the way of how things are supposed to run. I also categorize the bulk of people I used to work with in the motor dealership still doing exactly the same thing in exactly the same place. Well, maybe two or three dealerships since then. And they don't know it. They just don't know that they're doing this.

The opportunities don't just end

So I think the intent for this episode is to let us all have a think, no matter where we're at, whether we're a startup or already established. Because even if you're established, and I was just speaking to one of my partners today about this, there's still plenty of opportunities for you to have that second thing or a third thing.

I mean, you did a book on guitar playing. And here you are doing a book on how you can have your own hobby. So you didn't just say, Oh, well I'm done. It's like, once you get the vibe for that, and if you like the first sale, Steve, if you enjoy making your own sales, then one day, when you sell your business, you're going to be like, pretty delighted that that thought could turn into a chunk of cash in your bank account or an ongoing revenue stream, it's like, absolutely mind-blowing. And I think you can pair these ideas.

In fact, one of the only startups that I've really promoted and endorsed is the people who are helping people buy and renovate and do websites, because online property is still hot. And it's still a big gap between people who are good at this and people who are not. And it's a great way to build up your own business.

Now, if you combine that concept with building a hobby, you could literally do something like I helped a friend of mine do. He was telling me, this guy is really into a technical field, but he loves woodworking. It's like me, I'm a business coach/surfer. And he's telling me he was disappointed because his accountant wouldn't let him claim his woodworking tools on his tax return.

And I said, Well, why don't you go and buy a woodworking website, or buy a domain and set up a website, and now it's a business? And he goes, Oh, my God, that's the best idea ever.

Steve: Yeah, I love that.

James: So he went on to Flipper, he bought a woodworking site, he's using his technical expertise to tune it up. So it actually makes money anyway. And he's building a business around his hobby. I imagine he could buy your book, follow the instructions and develop it further. So if anyone's into the build and develop websites, then the Hobby Boss is going to be a good book for you. If you don't, if you just want to start from scratch, go and get the book.

I'm going to be sending people to this episode when they come to me, and they're not ready for some of the things I do. I'm going to say, Steve's the guy. He's a member of our community.

Steve: Well, thank you. I appreciate that.

Don't lose sight of the simple things

And you know, what's very interesting, one more thing about that is that, I still look at the book, and I need the reminders. You know, what's funny is entrepreneurs can be so stubborn. We're set in our ways that we're looking for the shiny thing, but we forget the simple things that got us to this place in the first place.

James: Or we get expert error.

Steve: That's right.

James: Expert error is when we think we know all our stuff. And we switch off from learning and optimizing. I was talking to a client this morning, this guy's making about \$5 million a year. And him and I were just talking about how we're in the greatest learning and innovation phase of our career now, not when we both had a job or had to change into our own business. He got punted from his job. I don't know if that's an expression in North America. It means sacked. Terminated.

Steve: I know, yeah, punted, yeah.

James: So anyway, in my case, I left willingly, couldn't wait to. But the point is, you think it's all going to be up front. But I'd say the advantage now, especially in a post pandemic scenario, there's a lot more people flooding into the market. Get yourself the right tools, get yourself the right educator.

You don't have to just make videos for yourself. If you like making videos, make them for me in SuperFastBusiness coaching, and I'll make them back. The other thing is, you know, create anchors, create rituals. We had [Todd Herman](#) talking about that sort of stuff too. Give yourself the mental tools to push through, or give yourself the guidance.

So I loved the book. Thank you for sending it to me, I've also bought it. I really think this is the sort of thing I could give to family and friends who are just starting out and say, Here's a good blueprint. It's so easy to read. It's got some humor in there. You've definitely got the runs on the board, because you've got the anecdotes that go with the stories that you've already learned from experience, like you know, that time you get trolled and so forth.

Thanks for coming along and sharing, Steve, as always.

Steve: Thanks so much, James.

James: So this is Steve Mastroianni, hobbybossbook.com. It's available from all good Amazons near you. And probably on the website. I'm looking forward to seeing what you come up with next. But I know you've got that hunger.

And by the way, just from one business operator to another, one of the things that was quite touching in your book is that you mentioned after you quiz your customers about their needs and all that, make sure you spend a bit of time with them after that, helping them with whatever they need help with. That's the kind of generous attitude that's got you where you are today. And it's what's missing from a lot of marketers.

So I like your heart-centered values, and I resonate strongly with those. And so, on behalf of all of your people who you've been serving, we want to thank you for that too.

Steve: Thank you so much.

James: All right. This is Episode 834. We're going to put the full transcription up available at SuperFastBusiness.com. Hey, if you enjoyed this episode or any of the other ones we've done, and if you haven't already, I'd appreciate a review, an honest review is fine, at wherever you leave reviews, maybe Apple, so forth, and share it with your friends who need to hear this episode.



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