



# Who Is Rachel Pedersen?



Rachel Pedersen is a go-to expert for all platforms of social media. In this interview, she shares how she got there, and how you can grow your own social media followings for the benefit of your business.



**Rachel Pedersen**

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 753. And today we're going to find out all about our guest, Rachel Pedersen. Welcome to the call.

**Rachel:** James, thank you so much for having me.

**James:** Well, I've been keen to get you onto the podcast to talk about what's going on in your world, because from what I can tell, looking over your shoulder on social media, you've definitely got an interesting life, and there's plenty happening, and you've piqued my interest in a few areas that I really want to cover today.

We're going to be ranging from topics in between platforms – I want to ask you about YouTube, I want to ask you about TikTok, I want to ask you about what you were doing before those things became your focus. And I'm also curious to find out the balance between your agency and your education side of the business.

And just a little bit more about your life, because it has been quite an interesting run since you've been through some interesting times, you've had some study, have worked in restaurants, you've been a marketing manager for other businesses like chiropractor. You have built your own team, you've got a bunch of students, and you're really kicking butt across all the social platforms. So there's a lot that we could talk about.

## Early ventures into social media

But why don't we just go back to the start? How did you find the social media world? What was life like for you and what happened to cause that?

**Rachel:** So we have to go back quite a ways to discover my love for social media. So back when I was in middle school, and the beginning of high school, I spent a lot of time grounded. I had really strict parents, and I feel like I was grounded all the time. And so a lot of my time was spent at home on the computer, and of course, we had the dial up and the AOL, you know, the modem that everyone remembers vaguely.

But I would just spend all my time on MySpace, and I kept upgrading my MySpace. Back then, I think when I was like 13 years old, I learned, like, basic HTML, to be able to upgrade my profile to make it all fancy and cool and have music effects. So that was my first foray into social media.

But the second foray was the most impactful for me. Back 10 years ago, I was 20, just about turning 21, and I accidentally became a single mom. And so it was this really weird season in my life, because that was never a time that I saw happening. I had no clue that that's what was going to be, you know, a part of my path.

And so I would spend a lot of time at home. It's very hard to find babysitters when you're a single mom and you don't have any money. At that point in time, I was actually going to school for hair. I was on welfare, food stamps, and renting one room from my dad at that point in time. And he was going through a financial hardship as he's going through this, like, massive divorce. So it was just overall, like, not the best time in our lives.

And so at night, I would watch reality television. And then I would get on Twitter, and tweet at the reality stars. And when they started messaging me back on Twitter, I was like, This is so crazy. And I know that that sounds silly. Like, it's just a reality star.

But for me at that point in time, I felt so stuck in my life. I didn't see any way out. I didn't know anyone who was successful. I didn't see even, like, the steps, and I didn't know what books to read. And so for me, it felt like this magical portal into a different world, which could be Hollywood. It could be the Hamptons, who knows what it could be. But that was that first dive into social media where it was like, I think I'm in love with something here.

## Celebrity and winning the lottery

**James:** The celebrity is a fascinating one. Because culturally, it seems to be in North America, celebrity is so revered. And it's what everyone aspires to, more so perhaps than in other cultures. How important is it when you're dealing with people now in social media? Do you think that's a big driver for them to want to be famous, to be recognized and to be revered and to have people interacting with them?

**Rachel:** You know, I'll be honest. My gut feeling says that a lot of people want to be famous and want to be celebrities, because all the steps in between feel less attainable. So if they set their eyes on something massive – extreme wealth, extreme fame, extreme platform – they think that that's what's going to unlock happiness for them. When the truth is, even a little bit of fame or platform is sometimes really overwhelming.



superfastbusiness

“A little bit of money doesn't solve your problems. A lot of bit of money certainly doesn't.”

RACHEL PEDERSEN

And a little bit of money doesn't solve your problems. A lot of bit of money certainly doesn't. And so in a way, I almost feel like it's like the desire everyone has to win the lottery. Everyone's always like, I'm going to win the lottery. I'm going to win the lottery.

And that was actually a huge part of my plan for success at some point when I was a single mom. I'd buy a couple of tickets each week and I was like, I'm going to win the lottery, or I'm going to connect with some celebrity on Twitter and my life is going to be made. But I think both of those are almost pipe dreams, because people don't actually want what comes with it.

**James:** Well, you certainly see the nasty magazines and shows ripping apart celebrities.

And I remember when I published [my book](#), and I got this sort of huge surge of sales out of the gates, and I had this sort of like, Oh, hang on a minute, like, what have we done here? It's like, is this pushing me into a new zone that you can't go back to? It's kind of nice walking around not being recognized and not being famous.

And the more research I've done on this, and the more grounded I've become, as I've had money and time available to me that weren't initially. And I can relate a lot to your story because I had a kid when I was 24. I was young and I had to scramble to get a sales job and increase my income. Like, overnight, I had to double my income. So I understand how hard that must have been for you to some extent, although my parents didn't charge me rent, but I wasn't living at home either. So, like, I had to pay it to a stranger.

I've realized that maybe a lot of people are chasing something that's not going to fulfill them, and I couldn't agree with you more. I talk about the lottery winners being people strategy. For me, it was like, when you take full responsibility, that's when the game changes, when you are responsible to not get the lottery win. I like the statistic, you have more chance of being struck by lightning twice than winning a major lottery. Then when reality sets in, it's got to be up to you.

So you got this feedback from some celebrities, you got some interaction that inspired you. My version of that was when I started doing SEO, and I could make my website rank above other people's. It was like Google was a praise engine. It was like saying, good job, well done. And I got some sort of feeling of significance from an action I did.

## Getting onto platforms that matter

How did you navigate from the platforms that ended up not being that popular, like MySpace, to going into the platforms where the game changed completely, and you basically became strong in your own right?

**Rachel:** You know, what's really interesting is, I remember back when I was mostly on Twitter, and one of my sisters, who's six years younger than me, she said, Rachel, you've got to read this book. It's by Michael Hyatt. It's called Platform. And this was like 10 years ago. She said, You've got to read this book. And I was like, Um, I'm not really interested in that book. Thank you so much. And I'm now looking back, I'm like, I wish I had read that book.

But what happened was, I became a hairstylist. And through that process, I started just using social media a little bit here and there. And I didn't really know much about social except I knew that when I posted a before and after picture, or a transformation with extensions - I love high maintenance hair, and so I was doing all of these really high maintenance colors and looks and updos. And so, when I would post a before and after on Instagram or on Facebook, more people would book.

And I started to notice that that was happening over and over again. And one day, a client, like, randomly showed up on my books. She said, All my appointments got cancelled and I somehow got moved on to your books and I don't know what happened. And we started connecting.

And it turns out her and her husband owned this little chicken chain across the southeastern United States. And they lived in Minnesota but they bought this chicken chain. And we were talking about, like, Shark Tank and social media.

And they said, we actually want to hire you to be a consultant and come help us with our social media, because we are so stuck and we don't even know where to start. And I went home that day and I remember saying to Paul, my husband (by the way, along that journey, I fell in love and got married in 13 days – so we met, got married 13 days later). But I was like, I think this is it. Like, I just know that marketing is going to be my thing.

So it accidentally fell into my lap, as if, like, it was destiny that continually knocked at the door until it finally just fell in my lap and was like, Here, go.

**James:** So you became a social media marketing person for a chicken chain.

**Rachel:** Yes, for fast food fried chicken.

**James:** I watched that Supersize Me 2 recently.

**Rachel:** Oh.

## Becoming secure with oneself

You've talked a lot about going on fitness, you posted some pretty vulnerable pictures. I remember seeing one picture of yours, your fingernails or something, it was like, scared me. Like, okay, that's really like, that's out there. So you've got no qualms in doing that. Did this all come from doing Toastmasters all those years ago? Or have you just become more comfortable in your own skin?

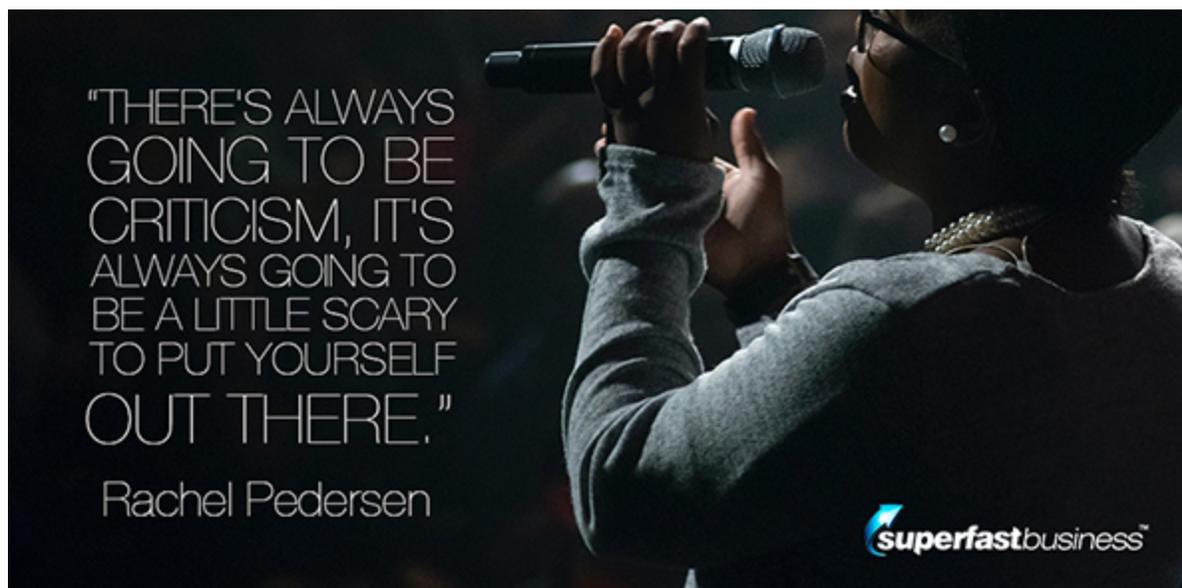
**Rachel:** Well, good question. I think Toastmasters helps everyone. I think every single person, even me today, can sign up for Toastmasters and benefit from it. For those who aren't familiar, it's a speaking program, and there are local chapters. It's fascinating. I've taken it several times throughout my life.

But, you know, it was back in 2016, right around when I was replacing my nine-to-five income with clients, and there was this month, it was April of 2016. And I was about to hand in my notice to my nine-to-five and I was like, I'm going to give him a one-month notice; I don't want to give two weeks, because I'm nervous. Like, I was so scared.

And then literally, as soon as I gave them notice, the next week, one of my posts went viral. And it was a post about my small wedding ring and how, you know, my ring is tiny and all these people always are like, you need to upgrade it. Like, when are you going to upgrade your ring? And I was like, I don't really care about the ring. I'm not really a jewelry person. What I do know is that the ring is a symbol of like, our whirlwind romance and how we fell in love and we were soulmates, and we knew right away. It doesn't mean it's always been easy.

But I posted this, and within the month that post reached 11.3 million people. And by Sunday, the Today Show was calling me. And at first, I thought they were pranking me. But it was real. It was on, like, 32 online publications. And like, Sealy was sending us a free mattress. There was just all this crazy stuff happening.

And it was in that moment that I realized, it doesn't matter what you say – how positive it is, how inspiring, how encouraging, how low, how vulnerable things are, people are always going to have some criticisms. And so I would rather be criticized for being very authentic along the journey and just showing, hey, this isn't where I want it to be. But guess what, I'm going to show you the before, and then you'll appreciate the after with me.



And people will criticize that, but they'll also criticize the perfect after. So I learned to just accept that there's always going to be criticism, it's always going to be a little scary to put yourself out there. But more often than not, people react really well when you show them, hey, this is the ugly that's going on right now.

## Huffington and the hero's journey

**James:** It seems you've really mastered emotional storytelling. You did some stuff for Huffington Post. Was that good, working on a big platform like that?

**Rachel:** So I wrote, I want to say five articles for Huffington Post. I got in right before they shut it down to contributors. And then they like, rebranded as Thrive Global. And that's kind of where the power went, as Arianna switched platforms. And so I got five big articles out before then. And I want to say, I'm going to stay on the safe side, two to three of those articles hit the home page of Huffington Post.

And so it was through that experience, I was like, I know how to incorporate, it's almost like the hero's journey, a little bit, into everything that you do. So it compels someone from chapter one, from paragraph one, from that first line, the title, all the way through to the end. They want that feel good conclusion.

**James:** Right. So you've got your own [hero's journey](#), you know? You've been a single mom with food stamps. And then now you've got these hit-it-out-of-the-park successes. You can bank that, right? Anything you do now, you can turn into a winner. You've got your audience, you've got your success story.

In some ways, for me, it was like when I became the top salesperson, I knew that I was going to be fine. Because anyone who wasn't the top salesperson was my customer.

And in your case, what do you advise people who are still in that more early phase of their business and they haven't had the big win, they haven't had a success? Maybe they've listened to this, and they're not so concerned about hoping to win the lottery, or that someone famous will just reach down and touch them like the hand of God and gift them a million dollars.

Like, I grew up as a rich kid. And then my parents had some financial setbacks and it was like a big smack in the face. It was like, I went from going to have an inheritance and being a poor student to having nothing, and having to start from scratch. And it was the best lesson ever. This was in the recession of 1991, around about that time. So it was the best thing that could have happened to me in hindsight. I needed that lesson.

But how do you help people get their win where they can bank on their confidence and to have that story start happening for themselves?

**Rachel:** Okay, so I have a really interesting kind of thing that happened for me, and I think that this will serve some people. One thing that you brought up that plays into this is I used to be totally okay with, like, fast food and fried chicken. Whereas today I've been eating extremely healthy for a while. But I'm now on day eight of eating 100 percent plant-based.

And it's just so different than my past lifestyle. I used to be known to like order massive Taco Bell orders and just down it in the night and feel disgusting for the rest of the week. But when I look at who I was before, and who I was before that, and who I was before that, it almost feels like there's been multiple lives within one lifetime.

And what really changed the game for me was watching this movie, and I know it's available on Amazon Prime. And it's called Finding Joe. It's all about Joseph Campbell and this hero's journey. And it's a little bit cheesy, but I love this movie because it opened my eyes to the fact that no matter who you are, and no matter where you're at, you're within the hero's journey.

It's just a matter of continuing to go. You're going to face hardships, you're going to have to slay a dragon. And this movie just helped me to realize, wait a second. The cycle happens over and over and over again in one person's lifetime. And so once you realize that you have the choice to keep going until you experience the win - which isn't what we always think it will be - that's when we're going to have those massive breakthroughs.



There's a quote from Joseph Campbell, what is it, "The cave you fear most..." The cave - I'm going to have to think of what that quote is. But there's a Joseph Campbell quote about the cave that you fear to enter most is the one that holds the treasure that you most desire. And sometimes, at least I know for me, I've thought that the treasure was millions of dollars, or a huge stage, or a massive accolade. When truth be told, oftentimes, it's who you become along the journey that means so much more, and what you learn you're capable of.

**James:** Yeah, it's great. That's been my challenge with things like personality tests or A players. These are myths based on the fact that someone would be constant the entire time. And the reality is, if I do those tests at different times of the day or different weeks of the month or whatever, I could be a different person.

And you know, you discover that, even in the most obvious sense, when you're going through your change in food intake, I bet you'll have to change jean size and you know, your physical body changes in appearance. So you'd have to think your mental appearance is changing too as you go through.

I remember reading *The Courage to Be Disliked*, and really enjoying the fact that we don't have to keep bringing old crap back into our future, we can let it go because the past no longer exists. Such a powerful, letting go of anything bad that happened. You can just, I mean, it's gone and no longer exists. It's the past, and we can choose to have a new reality.

I think it's really great you're talking about who you've become or who you are. Because the mind game is everything, right? And you've been through this transformation yourself.

So then you've gone off, you've had some successes, and you've banked them and turned yourself into a social media strategist. And now you're helping all these other people. So that's just building up your database. You're getting all these experiments running, you've got more successes, you can look for patterns and repeat it quickly for someone else.

## Entering the agency model

Tell me about setting up your own agency. What was that like?

**Rachel:** Setting up my own agency was our first foray into entrepreneurship. So I started with an agency. Only, I didn't really call it an agency. I just called myself a social media manager. And I took on a few different clients.

And I'll be honest, at that point in time, my work was not remarkable. It was social media management, meaning I was going to manage it, there was very little strategy involved. I'm not super type A, and so there were sometimes even typos and mistakes. Like, it just wasn't that remarkable in the beginning. But it was consistent. And it was social media content being put out there.

It was back in November of 2015, that I started securing clients outside of Mrs. Winner's Chicken and Biscuits. And at that same time, I was actually working in marketing full time. So I made a leap without the degree, without tons of experience. I still don't really know why they hired me, but they just kind of felt like I'd be a great fit. And we got some massive success within that company pretty quickly.

But then I just was like, there's something else. I need to be doing this for myself. And so I secured one client, and then a second client and then a third. And it took me about six months all together to replace my income with clients. And that was my first time making the leap, was in April 2016. Right as I'm going viral, right as all of this crazy press is coming out, right as I got the email directly from Arianna Huffington, I would love to accept you as a contributor. It was very overwhelming.

But I think what most people don't always hear is what happened right after I left my nine-to-five. And that was that my biggest client left. And so I had this, like, total breakdown where I was like, Am I going to just completely fail and my family's going to end up, like, homeless on the side of the river, living in a van?

Like, it was just so overwhelming for me. And I don't think I had enough senior-like guidance or mentorship or people to tell me Hey, listen, kid, it's okay, this is totally normal. This is a part of the journey. And so I was scared and I just did what I knew best. And I wrote a children's book about entrepreneurship, which we've never published, but someday, maybe we will. So that was, like, the early stages of our agency, and then things started to compound from there.

**James:** You know, I just launched a business that I started 12 years ago and never finished, and it just restarted now. So there's always hope. And you got other people out there, like [Todd Herman](#)'s published a children's book. I was thinking of children's books when I was a young parent and in business, thinking it would be just such a good idea. And I think the world definitely needs that.

I mean, you and I are examples of people who didn't go through the full academia channel and still managed to land on our feet, right? So, in fact, one of my guests told me that 50 percent of courses that kids are studying for university right now will not exist in 10 years. And I think if there's anything we've seen from the year 2020, it's that things can change a lot in a short time.

## Living up to the label

I think social media seems to be just such a purple patch. It's so hot right now. And the thing I've noticed about you is, firstly, at some point, you were branded as the Queen of Social Media. Are you still the Queen of Social Media?

**Rachel:** You know, that always makes me laugh. Because a couple of different people started, like, kind of jokingly referring to me as that. And then, early on when I was nine months pregnant, I spoke at Russell Brunson's event. And they used the phrase "Queen of Social Media".

And part of me cringed every single time I heard it, because it was like, I don't know if I can call myself the Queen of Social Media. But what I do know is that it made me feel like there was a really big throne to, you know, keep up with. And so it's really kept me at the top of my game every single day on every single platform. And so it almost feels like every single day, even today, as we get big results, that doesn't quite feel like the right title, but I'm constantly aiming to, I guess, fulfill that role, if that makes sense.

**James:** Right. And like, when it comes to platforms, we have quite a lot of choice these days. I mean, you're on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, you've got a podcast, a blog, and I know you're doing TikTok. So that's going to keep someone pretty busy.

## How many platforms should you be on?

Is it the right strategy for people to be on every platform? Or do we pick the one we can win the fight with? Or what's your advice there as a strategist?

**Rachel:** Oh, my gosh, I would never suggest that someone be on all platforms. It's not absolutely necessary. You know, I read the book *Atomic Habits* a long time ago, and I really loved the idea of layering different habits. And so, at first I hired some support, and we were on the main social media platforms. But then as you know, I started to realize, like, Whoa, Queen of Social Media means all platforms, I have to be good at all of these.

I started just like really hunkering in and identifying the patterns I could find on social, and then layering each platform with excellence. And so I don't recommend that most people do that. What I recommend is that you pick maybe two or three platforms maximum that you like, enjoy, understand, that are cohesive for you.

I will say there are certain ones that I favor, but pick the ones that you're most likely to actually use. Any platform can bring you success, any platform, it doesn't matter which one you ultimately go into, if you do it consistently.

## Personal versus business branding

**James:** The biggest question I get is, do I do it as a person, or as my business?

**Rachel:** Ooh, so this is layered.

When it comes to building your social media as a personal brand, there are some pros and cons. First and foremost, I feel like the pros are that face and name recognition. You build your personal brand, you can sell anything. For example, people have asked me if I would sell, like, a shampoo or a haircare line or something down the road, which I don't plan on doing but because of my name and my face being known, people are more likely to purchase anything that you're affiliated with.

I also like it, because I think it's easier to build when it comes to it being a person versus a logo. People like to build relationships and connections with people. And so those are two of the major pros that I see.

But there's a major con and it's kind of multi-faceted, and that is that everything feels personal. Every attack is personal. So instead of someone saying, like, I think that your logo is stupid, they're like, Hey, your forehead is huge. Or instead of someone saying, like, I don't like your website branding, people are like, look at how dumb she looks in that picture.

So it's very, very personal. And it's usually about the way that you look, because people try to lash out in ways that are going to hurt you the most. So if you haven't developed a tough, kind of that thick skin and the ability to handle those comments, I wouldn't jump into building a personal brand, especially if you're sensitive or it makes you feel really vulnerable.

The other big thing is, if you ever want to sell a company, it's a lot easier to sell a company if you build it under the business brand on all social media.

**James:** Yeah, I've done both. And I think in the last few years, it seems to favor personal brand over company. And I've put more effort into that personal side, but it's definitely, you know, the asset builder in me that wants to sell businesses and likes selling businesses finds that challenging.

But it's good to lend your personal brand to a business brand. You know, like the Branson, Virgin; Elon Musk, Tesla (although some would argue he causes chaos for them at times); Bill Gates, Microsoft; Warren Buffett, Berkshire Hathaway. There's definitely that personal brand is here to stay. I notice a lot of your handles are, The Mrs. Pedersen. Is that because you have a popular name?

**Rachel:** Actually, yeah, that's a huge part of it. Rachel Pedersen was taken on all platforms. And it just wasn't going to happen. I had The Mrs. Pedersen on Twitter from when I first got married. So it made it very easy for me to just make the handle on all platforms The Mrs. Pedersen, and I really like people being able to find you with the same name across all platforms.

And since no one else had ever claimed The Mrs. Pedersen on any platform, I was able to just go scoop it up everywhere. And so that's what I went with. And the good news is, I don't plan to get a divorce, and my husband's not allowed to die. So I'm going to stay The Mrs. Pedersen for a very long time.

## Staving off unwanted attention

**James:** I was thinking, also, it does a little bit of framing. It might ward off some overly amorous male followers or whatever, because this has to be a thing. You're a person online.

I mean, even I get a couple of female contacts occasionally sending me private messages. One of the top-searched Google items, you know, is James Schramko's wife. And you know, in your case, being a lady, you must get people commenting things that would be deemed inappropriate to a regular person. And do you read these things? And how do you react to them?

**Rachel:** I get those all the time to be totally honest, especially on Instagram and on TikTok. Those are the two platforms where it kind of seems like people don't have any shame and they just put everything out there.

**James:** No filter, right? They just blurt whatever comes into their head.

**Rachel:** Not even hidden on DMs, just straight up in the comments. And I'm like, you know, your wife could probably see that. So I handle comments in a twofold way. Sometimes I'll check comments throughout the day. But most of the time I stay pretty far away from comments, because it really pulls me out of the headspace that I need to be in, because I feel the need to either, like, defend myself or even respond, and sometimes it's not needed.

So I do have a comment response team that supports me with all comments as needed. But that being said, there are a lot of days where I check comments and it gives me some good feedback for future pieces of content.

## How useful is this platform?

**James:** Right. Well, I did want to talk to you about TikTok. And when I was on [Anik's](#) podcast about, what were we talking about? Memberships. He was telling me how well you were going on TikTok.

And I made an edgy comment at the time, I was observed, and it really was just something that was in my mind from a conversation I'd literally just had that day about how the social platforms can really suck you up, and own you. Because you are the product, right? You're creating this content. And I said something edgy about spending a lot of time on TikTok.

I did say also I respect your abilities and how well you've done with it, but I am concerned that for the regular person, having TikTok on your phone would be the death of productivity, wouldn't it? Unless you're disciplined with it? And is it really a platform that we need to be on? Because I remember Gary Vee was banging on about Snapchat, and it was a big deal a few years back, three or four years ago, but I'm not saying much about Snapchat anymore. It seems like Instagram just copied it and made a better version of it.

Is TikTok useful for regular people? Is it useful for someone like me when I'm already maxed out on other platforms? And just to give you context, the only exposure I've had to it is a family member of mine, I saw some funny little videos popping up in their Facebook feed that had the TikTok branding on it. And they were singing along to a song or lip synching. I thought it was sort of interesting, but I didn't really get it.

And then like a year or so later, I'm hearing about it from people like you, and I've seen some of your videos. And the first thought I had was, there's no way I could – it's just not me. I'm not a performer or an entertainer, because I'm quite reserved and shy. So it doesn't seem like the platform for me. And I wouldn't have thought my customers are there, but maybe I'm wrong. You know, and I was wrong about [LinkedIn](#). I hated LinkedIn, but I make so many sales from LinkedIn and it's great for connections. So educate me.

## The lowdown on TikTok

**Rachel:** Let's dive on in. So first and foremost, if you want to download TikTok just to absorb it, be very careful, because it can consume several hours per day.

**James:** Right.

**Rachel:** The first thing that I recommend when you first get started, if you're even just going to check it out, is, within TikTok, in your profile settings, there's a digital wellbeing setting. And I'm being so serious about this. I recommend every single person turn it on, so that within 20 minutes you get a reminder, like okay, you have to enter a passcode to continue. Because it replaces mindless bingeing on Netflix at night or playing Toon Blast on your phone, or whatever it is that we do to zone out. It's very easy to get sucked into TikTok. So you have to be very intentional about not just sitting down and scrolling, or you will spend all day.

**James:** And they have a good nag game. I mean, I only got it to get my name. And since then, they've nagged the heck out of me, and I haven't logged into it once. Like, I'm playing their game. But gee, they're strong on their nag game. I've let them keep nag me to see how persistent they are. But they've got some good hooks.

**Rachel:** They really do. But here's one of the things that people get confused with, is how they do use those hooks.

**James:** Right.

**Rachel:** So what they're going to do is they're going to show you all of these crazy videos. And I mean everything from a prank gone wrong to a six-year-old dancing inappropriately to some crazy, like, they show you all these crazy videos.

**James:** the headlines are very link bait-y. They're tempting.

**Rachel:** Very. They've done a great job with that. So at first you might think like, there's no way that I can create content on here.

**James:** Yeah, the bar is so high.

**Rachel:** So the first thing I want to share, though, is about who's on TikTok. So right now, there's nearly a billion monthly active users on TikTok. It has actually recently surpassed Instagram as the number one most-downloaded app in the world.

What's also crazy though, is everyone thinks, well, if it's all teenagers, who cares? However, nearly 30 percent of those users are over the age of 30. So that means there's at least 250 million adults over the age of 30. And so one of the things that I recommend is that people follow influencers, whether it's Gary Vaynerchuk or Amy Porterfield, Rachel Hollis, like whoever you want to follow.

**James:** Rachel Pedersen.

**Rachel:** Rachel Pedersen, you can follow me. But I am going to put a caveat there, because sometimes my content throws people off. And it's because this is the only platform where you see my full personality. I am super goofy, super wild, super crazy. I love to have fun. And so this is a platform that I sing, dance, get ridiculous on. But I also generate a lot of leads for business.

And so if you see my content that is all over the place, that's because that's who I am, with zero filter. So I feel like that's really helpful for a lot of people. But then when you dive into my content, you'll see that probably once a day, sometimes even twice a day. There's something there to generate traffic, sales, branding, registrations, email list growth, like all across the board.

And so recently, I started creating these things called like TikTok Fill Your Webinar, and TikTok Email Lists Blitz, and we've gotten as many as 2000 leads to our email list in our target market from one single TikTok, organically. And so it's crazy effective. I filled an entire webinar that did thousands of dollars' worth of sales just with TikTok leads.

## What TikTok can do for YouTube

I've also used TikTok to jumpstart my growth on YouTube. Back in September, I had about 4400 YouTube subscribers, which, by the way out of all of the platforms, YouTube is the most difficult to grow by far.

**James:** Why is that?

**Rachel:** And why is that?

**James:** Yeah.

**Rachel:** I think it's because of the level of consistency that it requires and the fact that you need to get that initial, like, jumpstart of engagement. It's not just a standalone, I guess social platform.

**James:** I reckon it's just, like, the production values have to be good and people want, you know, they want polished, long form video type stuff, it seems to be. Like, you've got to do good stuff.

I do watch some YouTube content. I watched some surfers in Hawaii for example. And they put a bit of effort into their vlog. Like, you can have your own TV show. And some of the editing and the music and the narratives are really well put together.

And [one of my fantastic students](#) sells a lot of bass guitar education off his YouTube channel. It's his prime source, and he's brilliant at storytelling and moviemaking. Same with Casey Neistat, right? If you're a movie maker, that has to be the channel for you, right?

**Rachel:** Without a doubt. I am not a movie maker at all. In fact, most of my YouTube videos, I just film on my iPhone.

**James:** Right.

**Rachel:** Totally easy. I'm all about what allows me to quickly create content. So we were at 4400 YouTube subscribers back in September. Today, literally today or tomorrow, we cross 30,000 YouTube subscribers.

**James:** Congratulations.

**Rachel:** Thank you. But I give most of that credit to what we've done with TikTok and using TikTok to pre-seed every video.

**James:** So it's a feeding engine.

**Rachel:** Absolutely, because it's untapped viral potential every single time.

**James:** I mean, look, I have nearly 10,000 [Twitter](#) followers because I got into that fairly early when it was easy to get a following. I missed the Instagram train. I've got very few followers there. But I like the strategy of cross pollinating your audience into different subscriptions. It's been something I'm passionate about. If you're going to stake out on a social media platform, at least get them on an email list, convert them into an [iTunes](#) subscriber or whatever platform so they continually, you can reach your customer even if you get shut down.

## How strict is the quality control?

Do platforms like TikTok in particular, is it aggressive with quality control like some of the other platforms? Does it shut people down like we've seen with other markets?

**Rachel:** In the past, I would have to say no.

**James:** Right.

**Rachel:** It's just an algorithm update that came out that kind of shifted this. Because in the past, it could take anywhere from a few hours to two days before a video would be shut down. And so sometimes there were mortifying videos that you would see on your feed page, things that only belong on the dark web.

**James:** Right.

**Rachel:** And that's kind of scary, especially if your kids are on TikTok. And so, you know, it used to make me a lot more nervous. But with this new algorithm update, TikTok has really slowed down the viral nature. So videos aren't going as viral in the first two days, which is a good thing. And then they're seeing more growth on the back end once it's kind of approved as being more safe.

So now they're reacting a lot faster. And I also noticed that there's been just some subtle shifts and it feels like it's become a lot more quality. Even since Disney's former head of streaming stepped into the role of CEO of TikTok.

**James:** That's a big sign, isn't it?

**Rachel:** Without a doubt, without a doubt,

**James:** I'll encourage our listeners to head over to your site, [RachelPedersen.com](https://rachelpedersen.com), to learn more about TikTok. I won't bog you down with the tutorials here, but I wanted to find out about it for myself, and you're the person I wanted to find out about it from.

## Best practices to grow your YT audience

What would be your back-of-the-postcard tips to grow your YouTube channel? You've just been through the process.

**Rachel:** With growing your YouTube Channel, first and foremost, create content that people need at first. And that might sound really silly, but a lot of times I see people's attempts at growing their YouTube, and I look at it and I always have this like, objective lens of, why would someone who doesn't know you care yet?

And the biggest thing that I've kind of put as my standard for all my YouTube videos is, if someone didn't know me, would they care? And so most of my videos pass that criteria, because I want people to realize I care about them before I ever ask them to care about me on YouTube.

Edit



So I lead with tons of value. I'm very consistent, I put out three to five YouTube videos per week. We've also got the system down. However, I think you can see serious growth on YouTube with one video per week. But being consistent with value is everything.

**James:** Oh, that's great. I think YouTube's a really good platform, to be honest. Well, it's like, that's not going anywhere. It's one of the longest-running, and it's got a stack of traffic. I need to up my YouTube game, and you've inspired me.

## A map of Rachel's current business

Also, can you tell me, what does your business look like now? You've had this really successful agency. You're obviously teaching people how to do stuff as well. Give us a little map of the business. What are you selling, and how big is the team, and some of those sort of things.

**Rachel:** For sure. So we still have two totally separate businesses. We have the agency, which at its height was doing a one-million-per-year run rate, which as an agency is pretty intense. And then we have the education side.

But one of the biggest changes we made this year with our agency, thanks to the wonderful, brilliant advice of [Jay Abraham](#), is we changed it to a partnership model, almost like Shark Tank. So if someone wants to work with us in our agency, they have to actually bring us in as equity partners in their business. And that's been one of the best shifts that we've made.

So right now, we're currently partnered with six businesses, and I love them as though they were my own, only this time they really are. So while we'd had a ton of success for our clients on the retainer model, I like this one because there's a ton of upside for all of us.

On the agency side, we keep it pretty lean. And here's one of the cool things that we've done with both of our businesses. We have one core team for both. And so between both businesses, we have six core team members, if you include myself. I'm really bad at remembering how many we have. So hold on, I have to – me, my husband, Kellyanne, Tom... That's seven, seven core team members between the two businesses.

And then we have anywhere from six to 15 freelancers that either support us on, like, a retainer basis with content support or graphic design or per project, but regularly on an ongoing basis. So seven full-time team members. And we're staying as lean as we can, and I've been really enjoying that.

We have several married couples; we also hire my husband's parents to help us with the kids and with the house. And so we have two married couples on our teams, which is kind of funny. But that's kind of where things have been at.

And one thing that's interesting is I think last time we talked, I was working 80 plus hours a week. I was working so much, everything felt so out of whack. Today, I work normally nine to six, sometimes nine to five every single day, except for weekends. So I take evenings and weekends completely off.

And by switching from a pay-for-hire agency to an ownership agency, with me having the creative freedom to do what I want, it's almost like I got more work done faster and more excited, and was able to delegate better to our team.

## The beauty of revenue sharing

**James:** Well, that's music to my ears. I mean, I'm all about being able to [make more, work less](#). And Jay Abraham's got some great concepts. I had a [wonderful discussion with him on this podcast](#), and we talked about [revenue share deals](#) in particular. He encouraged me several years ago to do more revenue share deals. He said that was his main regret, that the people who he was getting paid to coach for \$25,000 could have been revenue share deals that turned into hundreds of thousands.

So after that conversation, I started building my portfolio. And I've a similar situation to you. I'm a stakeholder in a dozen companies. And that's taken the attention off the high-level coaching side of things. So eventually, the high-level coaching will be made redundant, because they'll either be partnerships or there'll be the different sort of membership level access.

It's a great business model when done well. I'm going to write a book about revenue share deals, because I think more people need to discover this thing. But you've definitely found your sweet spot.

## A different sort of living

And it sounds like life's going well. You've got three kids now.

**Rachel:** Three kids. I got a nine, five and a two.

**James:** They must be observing how different your life is to other people in your local area.

**Rachel:** You know, I'll be honest. Sometimes I think that they can tell that there's something different, but I don't think it's quite hit them yet. We live in a neighborhood where everyone is at least 15 years older than us. And I think the neighbors are kind of perplexed as to why we live here and like, what we do, and why we're home all day.

But in our neighborhood, there's a lot of like, CEOs, so everyone is home during the days. And CEOs of their own companies, or presidents. And so I don't think it's really clicked for them yet, that anything is really different. And I don't know when it's going to click. Isn't that kind of funny? I have no idea.

**James:** It is funny. And I've got a lot of kids, and for most of the time they were growing up, we had a brand new car every few days while I was working at Mercedes-Benz, and that was just their normal, it was a normal thing.

So, yeah, you're going to have some challenges is my prediction, based on my own experience that it's very hard raising children as an entrepreneur, trying to balance the detuning them from the groupthink and the way the rest of society is, without making them too unusual and mixed up. So good luck with that, maybe that'll be a future discussion.

I just want to say I really appreciate you coming and sharing generously your knowledge on social media. You've given us some great tips on strategy and a rundown on the platforms and what's working well for you, and some of the business evolution you've had. You've certainly come a long way from single mom, and I'm so pleased for your success.

And I'm looking forward to continuing to follow you on the socials. So your website, [RachelPedersen.com](http://RachelPedersen.com). That's the best place to go and find out about you and follow on whichever channels you're on. I'm sure you're there.

**Rachel:** I'm on every single channel, so you can pick your channels there. And I've got a whole bunch of free resources there, including, like, a quiz that says, is TikTok right for your business? So all across the board is available at that website.

**James:** Thank you so much, Rachel.

**Rachel:** James, thank you so much for having me.

**James:** All right. This is Episode 753. I look forward to catching you on a future episode.



Keep up with the latest in  
marketing trends with  
James's help

[CLICK HERE](#)