

## **[Transcript] My First Million / MFM x Trends - How Jack Butcher Used Twitter to Generate \$1m in 18 months (From Scratch)**

All right.

Quick break to tell you about another podcast that we're interested in right now, HubSpot just launched a Shark Tank rewatch podcast called Another Bite.

Every week, the hosts relive the latest and greatest pitches from Shark Tank, from Squatty Potty to the Mench on a Bench to Ring Doorbell, and they break down why these pitches were winners or losers, and each company's go-to-market strategy, branding, pricing, valuation, everything.

Basically all the things you want to know about how to survive the tank and scale your company on your own.

If you want to give it a listen, you can find Another Bite on whatever podcast app you listen to, like Apple or Spotify or whatever you're using right now.

All right.

Back to the show.

What's going on, my first million listeners?

This is Sam Parr.

Today, we have another special episode.

This episode is for trans members only.

I know it stinks if you're not a subscriber, but what we're going to do is give you 15 minutes or so of the episode for free.

If you like it, you can go to trends.co and sign up and listen to the rest of the episode.

Or if you sign up for the hustle, in your email, you'll see, we'll send you some show notes.

Even if you're not a subscriber, you're going to get some value.

On trends.co, you'll get the full episode and transcription, and then you'll get access to community, where this guest is actually a member of the community.

Today's guest is Jack Butcher.

I met Jack in our trends community, and I actually went to his house a few weeks ago.

My wife and I went to his house and met up with him and his wife.

Jack Butcher, I've met a lot of people in my business.

Just because of, you know, it's with a media business, you get to meet a lot of interesting folks.

He's one of the more interesting folks because he's got such a great energy, but basically his story is that Jack came to America at age 22 from England and then worked his way up where he worked in an agency as a designer and things were going okay, but he decided to start his own agency and it sucked.

It was a lot of work and it definitely paid the bills, but still was a ton of work.

And so he started dabbling with some digital products where he launched us like a \$19 daily planner on Gumroad and it kind of took off.

I mean, it opened his eyes to sales, to digital products.

And so he decided to do this thing where he productized his service and he created this course called Build Once, Sell Twice, the productization of ideas, I think it's called.

And then he also created this other thing called Visualize Value, which is a design course that teaches you how to take concepts that are kind of complicated and put them

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in really digestible, easy to understand graphics.

And I've paid him to do this with some of our stuff and it's just crazy fascinating.

But he built this business to close to a million dollars a year in revenue in only 18 months.

And so in this episode, I talked to Jack about courses that he's seeing out there that are awesome, that he loves, opportunities for content creators to build courses.

I talked to him about how he runs his course and what works and what doesn't.

We also talk about the economics of the agency business and where some opportunity are is.

And then we also talk about productization, productizing different services and what he sees as different opportunities that are out there.

It's an incredibly fascinating episode.

I learned a lot.

I think you guys will too.

So check it out.

Again, you're going to get the first few minutes, 15 minutes or so for free.

But if you want the whole thing, go to trends.co and sign up and you'll see the rest of the episode.

All right, so what I'm recording now, oh, good, you're drinking my drink.

Our drink now, I guess.

We're a mutual Heineken zero lovers.

We got that sponsorship rolling.

I know I wish I'm going to put.

So this podcast, what we're talking about right now, this is going to be live on our main podcast feed and it'll get listened by a ton of people.

And then we're going to chop it up at one point and only trends members are going to see it.

And so what I wanted to talk about today was some of your core stuff.

But right now, I've already written the blog posts and we're live now.

We're recording.

I've written the blog posts.

And what I've said about you is that I don't know how I met you on Twitter or something in the group.

I don't remember how I met you.

But then we went and hung out in real life and I have to say, you're one of the more interesting people I've ever met and your business is your business is fascinating.

The summary that I'll give and I'll let you do all the talking is that you came from England at what 22 21, I think, yeah, 21, you did a bunch of part time low paying agency gigs kind of worked your way up the totem pole a little bit, eventually quit and you're like, I'm going to start my own agency.

You started your own agency and it did mildly well.

Like it paid the bills for sure, but it was a pain in the ass hard work.

You hated it.

You created a \$19 like gum road thing on how to organize your thoughts and it did okay, but that kind of clicked for you.

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And then you created this visualize value store course, whatever you want to call it community and you share your revenue numbers and 18 months in, you're in the ballpark of like 800 to a million a year in revenue.

Yep.

Great.

So what I don't, I mean, I care a little bit about your journey, but tell me just like a little bit in your words, even though I'm doing all the talking for you.

No, you got, you got, it's a great overview.

So the, all of the agency jobs kind of touched on a little bit of little bit of each part of the agency world.

So I trained as a designer, came in as a designer on the, you know, the bottom of the totem pole and you doing all the production work, doing all the stuff that nobody else wants to do.

So that's like working on pitch presentations, you know, running around town, picking things up and, you know, doing all the stuff that is considered too low level for the executive team to get involved in and went bounced around from like tiny agencies, big agencies, worked in-house at a startup for a little while, worked at Bloomberg for nine months on the design team there.

And then got to, I think, a point in my agency career where I started to see the economics of the agency, so I like climbed up enough for them to like show me the project, like the bill essentially that they were sending clients.

And I was like, hang on a minute, you're charging \$30,000 to like design an email.

I was like, if I could get one of these clients on my own, then I'm going to be set.

But what I didn't realize is kind of an arrogant way to approach it is that there's all of this infrastructure and 12 people, strategists and people that have to answer emails at the middle of the night and all that stuff.

So jumped into that world and just quickly overwhelmed by all the stuff that wasn't first nature to me or the administration or the other stuff that comes with running a like complex service business.

And then over the course of six to nine months, started to dial in on the product side as a result of like starting an agency that was everything to everyone.

So we'll shoot car commercials, we'll build websites, we'll design apps, we'll do branding exercises.

And then I just narrowed in the service mix to just do one thing.

And that's how we met, if you recall, was the presentation for the ideation boot camp.

And I just went all in on this idea of visualizing value, which was something that I did to acquire business.

I was building pitch decks to basically win business.

And that was the asset that I would never get paid to make, but it would always get me a job.

And then I was like, you know, bell goes off, it's like, oh, maybe there's a market to just make these assets as the agency service.

Then obviously you hit a limit there with the time.

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And then started looking at how I could productize that skill set.

And that's where the course product started to come from.

So maybe we should break this conversation up.

And I asked you to prepare a little bit with some course ideas.

Maybe we should break this conversation.

I want to learn about the agency business.

I want to learn about productizing a service.

And I want to learn about courses where you, let's start with courses.

So your business is like in the 800 to a million dollar range now.

And this is all public.

You tweet this out.

Yeah.

Yeah.

With a lot of times with courses, I've got friends that have them and they like get big fast, but then they kind of teeter out.

Do you think that's going to happen with you?

It may, what's interesting I think is the thing that brings in business for the course is like remaining relevant on the front end.

So this is like my social presence in itself.

I think the learnings that I'm producing as a result of the promoting the course go back into the course.

So it's like this self-fulfilling feedback loop.

And while one of the courses is specific to design, the other one is about productization.

So it feels to me like it has a longer runway because there's a huge market of people that have an incredible amount of knowledge or experience that they want to turn into something that they can detach their time and income and sell repeatedly.

And the way I think about it is because that's not even the design product, it's not riding a trend of a tactic or anything like that is going to expire.

So I figure as long as I stay ahead of the market, then I have a lot to share to people that are a couple of steps behind me in that journey.

So my gut is I can keep it running for a while.

What's the end game?

I think building the media component of the company up a little more than it is now.

So the courses sell as a result of the things that I'm producing in real time on social.

So there's a pretty linear relationship between me making content and posting it on social and earning from the course.

So the end game is to just slowly increase, well, it's not an end game, but the target that's ahead that's going to stay ahead is decrease the amount of daily creative input to sustain a certain volume of sales, does that make sense?

So but like, do you have a goal like, like by 40, you want to do, you want to do something like, do you want to sell this business?

Do you want to do you have like a, kind of some of the...

Honestly, it's been just a process of doing less of what I don't want to do over time.

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And I've kind of hit that point now where most days I'm doing what I want to do. So like the goal thing always tends to put me on a path for a certain amount of time that I have to make some aggressive compromise or try and hit targets for some arbitrary reason.

So there is no like, you know, five year, like this is exactly what needs to happen.

I think just optimizing for having a good time.

You're just living.

You're just living.

You're trying.

Trying, yeah.

My friend Andrew who, so we, this is only the second time that we've done this.

And he was like, I just want to figure out what makes me miserable and avoid it.

Yeah.

It's about spot on.

That's very articulately put.

You, okay.

Were you able to think about this, this whole course thing?

I imagine what you felt is what a lot of people feel, which is like, there's no way someone's going to pay me money for this.

Sure.

Yeah.

100%.

What do you think is, where do you think are some, some interesting courses that are doing well?

You told me about one that I'm going to buy actually.

So I take courses a lot.

There's one on how to buy a luxury car at a discount and sell it after you drive it around for a year at a similar rate at what you've purchased it for.

That's a great example.

Yeah.

What the, how big is that one?

How big is it?

Yeah.

I would think they're probably doing high six figures a year off that.

That's crazy.

Remarkable.

What's it, what's that one called?

Exotic car hacks.

I think it's called.

Yeah.

God, that's brilliant.

Yeah.

That's fascinating.

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Well, the way that you get customers for that is you just have an exotic car Instagram handle or YouTube page, which is fun.

Yeah.

I think those are the ones that tend to do well, right?

Is when you have some way to promote it on the front end that's so naturally aligned to the course itself.

And that's one of the reasons in hindsight why I think visualized value took off is you have this organic content engine on the front end where you can produce something.

So I was like, oh, that's cool.

I want to learn how to make that.

And then you can feed them into the product loop.

So that's like a huge part of making it sustainable and work the like sell as a result of producing content on the front end.

So that I think is a trend and the exotic cars is a great example of that.

You have something to point out that makes people want to learn the thing.

What are some other examples that you like?

I mean, I've seen people, there's a few people on Twitter that are like AWS.

I don't know the intricacies of some of this stuff, but like dissecting some facet of like Amazon AWS, you should check out Daniel Vosalo, he's doing a good numbers on Gumroad with an AWS product.

And there's a few people that are...

What's that mean?

AWS product?

Amazon Web Services.

Yeah.

But what's that mean?

A product?

Oh, it's like a tutorial on how to get the most out of some facet of AWS.

So it's like super niche and you can imagine if you wrote a book on that, you might charge a similar price for it, but the return would be significantly lower, I would imagine, unless you're with some huge publisher and you've got big reputation, but you can get into that niche and capture so much more of the revenue.

I know people with big books, you make more money than they do.

Right.

Yeah, it's fascinating.

You go direct to consumer, yeah.

For some reason, you call it a course so you could charge 299, you call it a book and at most 29.

Right.

Right.

That's outrageous.

Yeah, \$29 for a book.

Someone's life work.

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Right.

It's nice.

Yeah.

This is just a slight tweak in positioning.

Obviously, you can do things with a course that are slightly different than a book.

You can't put a video in a book, but you can get close enough with the information.

It's just...

Yeah, there's a different perception of it for sure.

What did you use to learn how to do this?

I think it's probably a byproduct of taking a fair few and figuring out what I like and don't like when I'm learning.

I also had this feedback loop with Celia, who you met, my wife.

She's not a designer, so when I first did the thing, I was making the curriculum and giving it to her.

I was like, does this make sense?

Can you follow this?

In no context, would you be able to do this or am I missing something?

Finding somebody who obviously is your target audience and making them go through it in order and they're like, yeah, I've no clue how you got from here to here or this thing is missing.

That little feedback loop made it was instrumental.

When we launched it, everyone's like, oh, yeah, this makes a ton of sense.

Her feedback actually made me include stuff that I wouldn't have ever thought to include.

Maybe you as the practitioner maybe don't think that point X is necessary to communicate, but you probably need to.

That's a huge part of it.

There's no official resource on how to do it, just responding or there will be, but

I didn't use any.

When you look at who does it best, who do you use as your North Star?

First courses.

Yeah.

I got into that Sam Owens guy, consulting.com.

He comes off as a scammer, but damn, his shit's good.

Yeah.

It's incredibly comprehensive.

I think so much of it has to do with learning style.

Some people want to sit through a two and a half hour webinar style, show me the full-on philosophy principles, the psychological breakdown of how this ad works and other people want to read a 45-second article and understand what it is.

It's hard to say who's doing it best, because I think everybody's got a different take on it.

I still think it's early.

When I first got into it, I was like, there's so many people doing this, I've seen thousands

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of different courses and feels like getting in late into the game, but when you get into that world, there aren't a huge amount of people doing it.

If they are, they're not a standalone brand.

They're using something like a Teachable or a Thinkific or it's like they exist within this marketplace.

They don't have a brand unto themselves.

A lot of those platforms dictate how the courses work versus people that are building custom configured things based on how they like to learn.

Is there anything that you've seen like someone's blog or a YouTube page and you're like, man, if you had a learning component to this, your business would be significantly larger?

Anything that comes to mind that's an obvious move that someone hasn't pounced on in your opinion?

I think there's loads of consulting businesses that could be doing this.

People that have really expensive services that they sell one-to-one, but could have a productized version of it that exists at a tenth of the price.

That's essentially what we have going on now.

Specific examples, I'm thinking like a lot of skills that teach people to be self-reliant in some way, so like creative.

The ability to, I think design is a good example.

Writing is a good example.

Writing is a popular one.

My best friend, Neville, has [copyrightingcourse.com](http://copyrightingcourse.com).

He's been doing that for 15 years, maybe 10 years, making an awesome living.

Then there's that guy, Dave Perrell, that's called the write-of-passage, I think he charges two or \$4,000 to learn how to write.

Writing is like a massive market.

I think your market of design is huge.

I think that other markets that are huge but that are played out a little bit is Excel.

I think Excel is a little played out.

I think that the whole no-code thing still has a lot of room, how to just hack your way through Webflow, that's kind of interesting.

Yeah, there's a guy, as a couple of other examples come to mind, there's a guy, Ezra Cohen, who sells, you've seen this guy sells video templates on Instagram.

I think he mostly runs his stuff, but I think he's doing seven figures a year selling these pre-packaged creative templates and some guidance, some tutorials that go along with it.

Then I think he jumped to how to help creatives package templated work as the layer on top of that, as his next course.

I don't know how he's doing with that one, but I know his template stuff was flying.

All right, sorry, I know, I'm a tease.

This is the end of the episode.

If you want to hear the full thing, go to [trends.co](http://trends.co).

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you're only out a dollar.

If you do like it, it's going to be about 300 bucks a year.

You're going to get access to weekly reports.

We have a team of analysts who breaks down interesting ideas and trends in the world of business and how to capitalize on them and pounce on them.

You're also going to get access to more weekly podcasts like this.

Finally, this is kind of shocking, but this is everyone's favorite part, which is you're going to get access to the community.

I pretty much live in the community.

Jack is in the community and our teams in the community and tons of crazy, interesting people like the CEO of HubSpot, the founders of Shopify, founders of Hootsuite.

All these amazing people are in the community and we all just share ideas and we comment on each other's ideas and I've actually met up with a ton of the folks who I've met in the group.

It's so fascinating.

Go to trends.co if you want to join that and get the full episode and I'll keep doing these where you'll get a little bit of access to some of the paid stuff.

We have a ton more, so check it out, trends.co.

See ya.