

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.

Happy New Year, MFM fans.

This is, of course, producer Ben, and for this episode, we just wanted to share some of the best interviews from this year.

As I went through and looked at every single interview, there was really tough to pick, to whittle it down.

There were some really great interviews this year, including a lot from Q1 and Q2 that I had forgotten about.

I wanted to resurface some of those, remind you of them, give you a little sampling, a few little segments from those interviews, and hopefully they spark something, remind you of some parts that you loved, and you can go back and listen to some of those interviews.

Next up, we've got MrBeast and Hasan Minhaj, live from Camp MFM, talking about their work styles.

Is your company ran like a normal company at all?

The reason I was asking was because my employees sometimes would complain that I'd be too aggressive,

changing things too much, but you seem more aggressive than I am, and for a certain type of person, they like that.

But for you to achieve your goals, you're going to have to have a lot of people, and then every once in a while process, and every once in a while infrastructure, and every once in a while planning.

Are you a perfectionist?

Well, of course, yeah.

I just like to make the greatest YouTube videos possible, and that's literally all I want.

So yeah, I mean, if it's not the greatest video, I just won't upload it.

It's after you scrap a few videos, we kind of, everyone, you know, just kind of starts to figure it out.

Does it scare you that you can't stop?

Do you ever feel like, damn, I'm like, I'm just throwing all these coals on the embers of the algorithm?

I like to use better analogy.

It's like a treadmill, we're on like 12, like 12 speed, and I've been going out a couple

of years.

No, it doesn't scare me, but so like I was telling him, the way I like to work is like I like to go basically wake up, obsess over something, go to bed, wake up, obsess, go to bed, like every second of the day until I just have a mental breakdown and burnout, and then I like to take a day off or maybe a day and a half off, and I like to go right back to it.

So I don't like work certain days.

I just go as hard as I can every ounce of my entire body until I just crash.

And somehow that's sustainable.

What time do you sleep?

Right now, usually around three.

Wow.

And then and then you get up at like whenever they tell me what to do.

I don't think.

Well, I'm just shocked at like the numbers, so like some big numbers for revenue for your other businesses.

Yeah.

And you have to have infrastructure for that.

And so that's why I was wondering, I was like, because you are like this.

Oh, gotcha.

Yes.

On the stereotype, you're like this crazy creative person who's disorganized and that's perfect.

Yeah.

But to sell that much of candy and or of burgers, like you got to be.

Yeah.

So those are all separate entities.

So for our snack brand, we hired Jim, who helped build our X bar, and we built a team around him.

So that's a whole independent company that doesn't even work out of our studio.

And same thing with Peaceburg.

So that's the beauty.

I like to just find people who are just the best and they got damn well at their job and then just empower them and give them money and.

So how many people work at the studio?

In the studio, like 60, because we don't have enough space to fit everyone.

So that's why we're trying to build more of a building things just take forever.

Do people like working for you, you think?

The reason I'm asking is like these like creative types, I'm like curious about because because it's not like a normal company where it's like we are all trying to achieve this.

It's like, no, we're trying to make me big.

I've been on both sides of it where I'm on John Stewart's show.

I'm on Trevor Noah's show.

So I'm like, I'm facilitating somebody else's show.

And then I've been on the other side of it where it's like, no, it's my special.

It's my show.

It's my movie or whatever.

So there's also certain projects where I'd be like, I'd love to learn from you.

So there's been shows and movies that I've done like the morning show.

Like I've never done a sexy one hour drama.

I want to learn from Reese Witherspoon.

I want to learn from Jennifer Anderson.

I want to learn from the show creators.

Like, how do you do that?

How do you shoot that?

What's that lens?

What are you doing that?

Is that a 50?

Is that a 75?

How did you do that tracking shot?

Why did you do that tracking shot?

Let me see the script.

Let me see the future script.

There's all these things where I'm like, I just want to absorb.

I just want to see how you do the whole thing.

You know what I mean?

Like, and that's an additive, like positive value for me because most people don't have that access to that.

I mean, it's simple as Tariq got to meet his idol today.

Oh, man.

Bro, Tariq, Tariq, you got to set the bar.

Yeah.

We had told them that you were coming today to the thing and like the look of disappointment when they saw I was the only brown guy there, they're like, that ain't Huston's like, they're like, yo, Huston's changed, bro.

And then I tried to be funny on top of it and they were like, what the fuck?

And the camera really does add 10 pounds, bro.

I don't do that, bro.

Don't do that.

Don't do that.

Next up, we've got Palmer Lucky, the founder of Oculus and Andriel, talking about the founding of Oculus and what that was like, what it was like to sell and why he decided to sell to Zuck and to Facebook.

But this is a podcast that started, it's called My First Million because we're interested in money and we think it's really funny that the Silicon Valley thing is you have to pretend you don't like money.

And like, oh, I know you're talking about, yeah, you know, we're not doing it here for the money, you know, this money, money's, you know, money's not the real objective.

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If I actually tell my own employees and onboarding that if you work at a place where your boss is saying that, you should be worried because it's one thing to say that to the press.

It's one thing to say that in your marketing materials.

But if your employees don't believe that at the end of the day, you're trying to make their job a fiscally responsible decision, if you're effectively telling them you could be making more money elsewhere and your financial success is not my priority, you should be concerned.

Yeah.

Yeah, exactly.

I mean, you kind of did the best of both.

Like for all the kind of ironic people who are like, we're trying to change the world with this like HR onboarding software, you know, you actually kind of did and still made a bunch of money doing it.

So, you know, it's not like an either or a hundred percent, I mean, when I started Oculus, it was not because I thought it would be the thing that would make the most money.

There had never been a successful VR company in history to be clear.

And I did it because it was something I was really passionate about.

Now, that said, one of the things I'm most proud of in my whole career is that everyone who worked at Oculus achieved financial independence because we were able to build something incredible.

And like, I feel great that everyone who was part of that mission and who supported me early on, was able to make a bunch of money and a lot of them have gone on to do incredible things.

But yeah, Oculus was not, was not, was not done because I thought it was the best way to make money.

It's because I thought it really was going to be the best way to change the world in the long run.

Andrel was a little different.

I, that one, it wasn't just, oh, this will be fun.

I want to do something really cool.

Andrel was like, I felt like I had to do it or things were, things were going to go really poorly.

So more, more of a, more of a stick than a carrot on that one.

How much did you make off the Oculus sale?

Oh man, I probably shouldn't say, because this is also one of those complex things where you know, there was the, there was the sale.

So there's what they believe they called the merger consideration portion of the compensation. And then they, you know, you cut an employment deal where they say, we're going to pay you know, this much for five years, I can say that I was locked, I was locked up on a five year vesting schedule.

So typical would be for most of our employees were for, I got locked up for five because I was a key guy and that, that money technically is not for the acquisition.

It's just, yeah.

I had that too.

Yep.

So, and of course, you know, you, you can't, you can't pretend you can't say they're the same thing or they, they're supposed to be treated differently tax wise, compensation wise.

And then of course there's the bonuses we had.

There was an earn out that was a, it was a, it was a huge earn out.

It was hundreds of millions of dollars for the founders of the company.

If we could hit certain sales targets and user hours of time targets, and we actually had four years to hit those targets and we, we hit them within less than two years.

So we actually did, it's kind of funny with people like, oh man, the acquisition must not be going as well as people expect is like, no, we maxed out the top bracket of our earn out because we're, we're, we're kicking butt.

But anyway, it was in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

I can tell you that.

In the healthy hundreds of millions of dollars.

A bunch of people who listen to this are founders and like would want to sell their company someday and both me and Sam, we started this podcast right when we both exited our companies because it's like, all right, we're kind of earning out.

We can't start another company right now, but like, oh, we can start a podcast.

That sounds kind of fun.

And actually just yesterday, I just closed on another sale of a company, but these are small scale compared to what you did, right?

Like congratulations.

Thank you.

But you, you sold for, I don't know, two or three billion bucks.

How does that happen?

If somebody, you know, Zuck comes over to your house and is like, I'll give you three billion dollars for this.

Like, how does that, how does that conversation go down when, when, when, when you're talking about the sort of like the grand slam type of outcomes?

Well, it's a, it's a long story, but you know, I know, I know Sam didn't want to talk all about VR, but I can tell, I can tell you that.

No, I can't, this shit's interesting to me.

Oh, great.

We, we, we were talking, we won't talk about VR optics and the metaverse, but I guess on the business side of it, the interesting thing about the acquisition is that we didn't have any of intention of selling initially when we first had our conversation with Facebook.

And I think that really was, was a positive thing because actually first time we talked, I think basically we were offered a billion dollars to sell.

And we said, no, we're not interested.

We think this company's easily going to surpass that value.

We think it's not going to be a problem for us to make more money.

And we're, we're happy to work with you guys, but we, we don't want to be by the way.

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Was that, was that easy to say no to a billion dollars?

I mean, you started this thing like on a Kickstarter dude, like, you know, at some point were you like, was it hard to say no, or was it not, not an issue at that point?

It wasn't an issue for me.

And I think, I think different people had different opinions.

I mean, look, if you, if you look over my career, I've made a lot of similar decisions.

Like when I was starting Oculus, when I was deciding whether I was going to do a Kickstarter or work for someone else, I actually had a job on a job offer on the table from Sony to run a PlayStation VR lab, you know, out of PlayStation group.

And when I turned them down, they actually doubled the offer.

And then I had to turn them down again.

And a lot of people were wondering, how could you have done that?

You know, how could you have decided to do your own thing?

It was so much higher risk.

And I think that a lot of it is, is social programming.

You know, I grew up watching media that conditioned me to believe that when you have an opportunity,

you have to take it when, you know, when you almost have to follow the narrative.

And looking back, I'm not sure I could have done anything else.

Like, could I have stayed in school instead of starting Oculus?

Once I realized I had this breakthrough in VR technology, I think I could not have possibly done it.

There's, it's almost to the level of free will not existing.

I could not have chosen that.

Could I have gone to work for Sony?

Looking back, I don't think so.

I think I couldn't have made that decision.

And I think it's actually the same thing with that billion dollar offer.

Like I almost could not have said yes.

You know, like that first offer, I, like, narratively, it makes no sense.

It doesn't align with what I've been trained is what you do when you're a, you know, when you're a free thinking iconoclast.

And so I couldn't have done it.

I think what, what, what happened is a few things changed over, over time after that initial offer.

You know, we didn't talk to, to Facebook for, for, for a few months after that and a few things happened.

One, it became clear that our competition was not only serious, but was going to be putting massive dollars into their success.

Something not a lot of people remember, but I certainly do because it was a big deal in my mind.

The day that we announced, no, the day we find, it wasn't that we announced the day we finalized the Facebook acquisition was the same day that Sony announced PlayStation VR.

And we had known that it was coming for a while.

We, we, we had actually even shown each other prototypes and stuff, but it really reinforced this was a serious thing.

We're going to have some of the biggest games companies in the world putting hundreds of millions of dollars in and competing with us.

And that made the, the pitch that Facebook came back with, which is listen, you maybe you could make more money as an independent company, but if you're with us, we're going to make VR happen much faster.

So yes, you'll, you might make more money, but you're going to go much slower than if we were able to artificially supercharge your growth far beyond even what you could do with venture capital.

And they, they were willing to commit billions of dollars a year for a period of a decade or more.

And that's, that's a really tough thing to turn down when you really believe in something.

And is this like literally coming to your house and talking about this, or is there like an army of lawyers in between you guys that are like bankers and, and corporate people?

It was a very small number of people.

I mean, it was, it was, I mean, I think that the, the, the lawyers and the accountants are much more likely to be involved in a deal when the deal is contingent on, you know, your revenue and your multiples and your PNL's like that, that's where you need to drag those people in to really make a, an assessment.

This was such a high level bet.

It's not like, Oh, I think that you have this margin on your headset and you've sold this many development kits.

It was so early and the technology so nascent, the real bet is, do you believe in the metaverse?

Do you believe that there's going to be a virtual world parallel to our own where you're living and you're working and you're playing?

And then most importantly, do you believe this is the best team in the world to do it?

And I didn't know this at the time, but I found out later that Mark had been going around and talking to various university research labs, government research labs, talking to a, you know, seeing what other companies were doing.

And their conclusion was we were way ahead of everyone else and that if, if this was going to happen, this shift to immersive computing, the final computing platform, arguably, that we were the people in the best position to do it.

And that's not something that a lawyer can really give an opinion on.

It's not something that an accountant can put a value on.

It's a, it's a very high level bet.

All right.

Next up, we're going to go to an interview with Dharmesh Shah, the co-founder of HubSpot.

This whole interview is gold, but here Dharmesh is talking about starting a startup during an economic downturn and it's really about more than that.

It's just about startups in general and what is crucial for success.

If you go to paulgram.com slash bad economy is the name of the blog post.

And he makes this case where he goes, the economic situation is apparently so grim that some experts fear we may be in first stretches bad in the mid-70s, which is when Microsoft

and Apple were founded.

And as those examples suggest, like a recession may not be such a bad time to start a startup, but he, which you've heard before, but I thought there's one interesting part was he goes, I'm not saying it's a good time either.

The truth is more boring.

The economy doesn't matter much either way for a founder starting a startup.

And I actually thought that was a really good point because I hear this so much just like I'll talk to kind of young founders and they listen to Twitter and they listen to podcasts and they listen, you know, they listen to kind of these, like a lot of it's like, you know, VCs who are, you know, also pandemic experts and also, you know, macroeconomists as well.

And so they hear and then they sort of start to adjust their plans and their mental models and like their room for everything.

It's like, dude, if you're a startup, you're like an aunt in this world.

Does the aunt care what's going on with the presidential election?

No, like you basically just need to build a product.

You need to carry your little piece of dirt.

It's like build a product, get a customer, get 10 customers.

Like it doesn't matter if the economy is bad.

If you can't get 10 customers, it's not going to work anyways.

And so I thought it was a great little blog post talking about like kind of starting a startup during the downtime, which is where I think we're about to, or we just officially entered a recession again.

So as curious, Darmesh, do you have any thoughts on that?

Yeah.

So my position is I lean more towards kind of a Paul Graham end of the spectrum, which is I think it's either neutral that it doesn't matter.

It's one of the things you're suggesting towards positive and the positive elements of being in a kind of downturning economy or recession is that things become available that would not have been available to a startup before like talent.

It's like, oh, well, there are people sitting at Meta Facebook or sitting at Google right now that may be reevaluating their lives or they may have just been let go from a venture backed company that raised \$200 plus million, right?

So now you've got this talent that's coming on the market that might not have come on the market before things that were super expensive, like buying Google AdWords or certain marketing

channels because you have this glut of money and a lot of venture capital.

Yeah.

I think of venture capital as a very efficient machine of turning like money from LPs into Google AdWords rep you, right?

That's they're just a conduit between the two.

And as in a downward economy, you're going to get less of that kind of glut of money flowing in, which drives the cost overall down for certain things that I think are important to entrepreneurs.

So I'm generally net positive that a down economy is actually a relatively good time to start a startup.

For like the last 18 months or, you know, whenever like the last 24 months, whenever things been booming, I've my wife works at Airbnb and, you know, I've got a lot of friends that work at Hub obviously HubSpot and all these and Sean was at Twitch.

So we have like some, some perspective on how, on the salaries of big companies.

And I've seen some of these salaries and they are crazy, crazy, crazy, crazy, crazy.

As the, as like a leader and the biggest shareholder of HubSpot and you like see these, see these numbers, are you thinking to yourself like this, like we can't afford to pay someone like an entry level person \$250,000 a year.

I don't know how this is going to work.

Like what's your perspective on that when, when these salaries are going so high and now it's like a little bit normal, more normal.

Yeah, but as a startup, I mean, you can't afford those salaries anyway, right?

Unless you're one of those kind of rare exceptions that has \$50 plus million going out of the gate, which is very, very rare.

And so, you know, one of the things a founder has to kind of get good at, it's convincing really smart people to do this irrational thing, which is join you in your startup, right?

And if you can't, if you can't do that, if you can't make that sale, which is the most important sale you'll make is being able to kind of attract people and then it's customers, it's not going to work.

So you have to do one of, you know, two things.

They're recognized kind of superstar talent and give them something they can't get because it's beyond confidence.

Like, oh, you'll learn more here.

Oh, you're going to do your own startup someday.

This is the place to get your startup MBA because you'll be exposed to a bunch of things.

You'll meet your future co-founder of the company, those kinds of things.

Either you have to do that or you have to say, I'm going to be really good at identifying diamonds in the rough.

People that have not made it to the \$200 plus, \$300,000 plus salary yet, but they will someday. I caught them early in their kind of evolution.

And so I can get them.

So it has to be one of the other form of arbitrage, otherwise you can't play the game.

That's just not, I don't think it's viable.

I'm doing, when you're saying that it's like resonating so much because it's basically all the three things we just talked about, I'm doing.

It's like, I started the milk road in January this year.

And so it's been, it's been, it's about to be six months or it's been six months.

And it's like, here, let me start a crypto company right when crypto crashes, you know, like 70, 80%.

And at the beginning, Ben, even my co-founder, Ben, he was like, you know, the only thing I can see going wrong is if crypto goes in a bear market, I go, well, crypto is going

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to go into a bear market.

Like that's like one of the few certainties of crypto is that it goes up and down.

And when it does, it is dramatic in both ways.

It goes from the elevator is dramatic in both ways.

And I was like, you know, so it's just a question of like, do you, what, do you think that kills it or do we just make it through?

Like that's really all we have to think about here.

So that was the first part of like starting in a bad economy.

The second one on talent was I recently hired this guy and he quit a pretty well known venture back company that I think it just raised maybe 50 or \$100 million.

And he joined and I talked to him a little bit before he joined, like he was thinking about doing his own startup.

He had, we had traded a couple emails, nothing serious, just he, he was wanting to be to use his product.

Then he took a job at this place.

All right.

Whatever I forgot about him.

Then he emails me and I shared this on Twitter.

He emails me subject line.

I have made an irreversible decision and I was like, okay, I got to click this.

What's inside?

And he's like, I just quit my job and I think you should hire me.

And I was like, okay, direct into the point and he tells me why, blah, blah, blah.

And so I was like, all right, boom, I'm sold.

Very bold approach.

I already liked your hustle before this because when you were hustling to try to get me as your customer, I was like, this guy's good.

So okay, let's do this.

And I made him a job offer, which was not like, you know, a Silicon Valley job offer, but the guy lives in San Francisco.

He was working for his Silicon Valley startup.

So he was like, oh, dude, that's like a 50% pay cut.

And I was like, I didn't say this out loud, but in my head, what I felt, I told him, I was like, that's what I could afford to pay right now.

And like, look, you come crush it, the sky's the limit, but like, that's what I could pay you right now, sight unseen.

And I said, and in my head, I was about to tell him the line that I had heard from Warren Buffett.

You guys probably heard the story, but when Warren Buffett goes and tries to work for his, you know, kind of hero or whatever, Ben Graham.

And he's like, you know, I'll work for you for free.

And Ben Graham goes, your price is too high, sir, which is the truth, which is the idea that you got to shadow Ben Graham and work side by side with him every day was you should be paying for that if you really want to be like a successful investor.

That's how I felt.

And I didn't want to say it because it's kind of arrogant, but it's like, dude, if I take you under my wing, my team is like three people.

If you become one of those three and you're working out of my, he came out of my house yesterday, you're sitting by me working out of side by side every day, like really I'm providing more value to you than you are providing to me at that point.

And like there's still a, you know, I appreciate the value you bring, but let's like the dollar amount is like the salary dollar amount is not what not the value you're getting.

And I think he knows that intuitively.

And that's why he said yes.

But like that Ben Graham story will stand out family.

No, no, he's a young guy.

He's graduated from college.

But here's the thing.

I think people have a couple of thoughts on that one is the salary slash compensation is just one vector of value that you get from a company that you join, right?

Another one that you get is you get the learning, whatever it is that they get exposed you to.

Another one that you get is a network that you build while you're there, right?

So there's all these other things that also in kind of an aggregate and maybe, and I think it's common for people to over index on the compensation or the kind of current compensation and under index on other things that, and then there's just the raw emotional value that you like being around the people that you're around.

Do you enjoy the idea that you're working on?

Like is it, you know, those things matter as it turns out.

I have a fun HubSpot story.

So when we started on this compensation thing, you know, Brian, I had to pick salaries for ourselves something more than zero.

And so we picked \$5,000 a month, right?

It's like, okay, well, that's it's a number.

And obviously below market value, we'd been out in the market for a while and had worked in our lives.

So when we hired employee number three, we had to decide what we were going to pay them \$5,000.

We hired employee number four, \$5,000.

And so we just built this like, okay, if you're here for the salary, you're here for the wrong reason, right?

That that's not why you're going to join this Motley crew of folks and that lasted for like a while.

And then we, and then it kind of has this inertia built in where it's like, okay, well, all of us sitting in the room chatting with you that we're trying to get you to join the company are all paying each other, I mean, paying ourselves \$5,000 a month.

Now, what do you think you should be able to get when all of us are making \$5,000?

Of course, that doesn't last forever.

And you have to.

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What was the pitch at that time?

So it's not like, you know, no offense to Hubspot, but it's not the sexiest idea.

You're not saying we're building the electric car here, you know, like you didn't have that going for you.

You know, you might have had like a, you know, your own magnetism, which is like, you know, like for me, I get this cheat code because like this guy, he listens to the podcast.

And this happens.

This podcast is a great talent pipeline for us because people will listen to it and over time they just, they decide for themselves either, I think this guy's a dummy and he annoys me or I think this guy's smart.

And I really like, you know, I'd love to hang out with these guys.

I think I could learn a bunch from them.

And so it becomes an unfair advantage, but you didn't have that back in the day.

So what was your, how did you convince people to do this \$5,000, you know, Lego block of a salary building?

So we cheated a little bit, right?

Because of the first eight people in the company, seven of them came out of MIT Sloan, the same school that Brian and I went to and we met in class.

So it was kind of in network kind of thing.

It's like, okay, well, it's just a bunch of friends that sort of know each other in network or whatever.

And it's like, this thing, right?

And it's also, and they were kind of far enough along in their careers that they were not missing meals or anything like that, right?

They had just gone to, you know, business school or relatively good business school.

And so that was it.

And then the other thing, and this is the part, there's equity, but there's also the, like, this is not that risky, dude.

Like, let's say this doesn't work out and we end up being chumps of the ideas really bad three, six months from now, you will basically be able to pick up where you left off, right?

There's like, there's no loss other than the opportunity cost of those three to six months.

And so not like a irreversible lifetime decision that I've made this call.

And that's all I'm going to have to be able to do for the next five or 10 years.

And that was enough.

Okay.

Next up, we have an interview with Peter Levels.

This was one of our most downloaded episodes of the year.

And it's because it was a really great interview.

And in this segment, he's talking about what it takes to become a successful solopreneur.

So what's the total size of all your, of all your projects in terms of top line and bottom line revenue?

And isn't it true that you're the only full time person and how many contractors are you using?

So I have one customer support contractor part time, Isabelle, and she works for all

my projects.

And I have a moderator for the slack group cause to slack groups, they, there's some drama in there.

Like I've had some crazy drama in these slack groups in communities.

So you need to have a moderator, you need to have rules and you need to have a, you can just automate this moderation away.

Like I tried that, but you need a real person there to, you know, check on messages and stuff.

And then I have a dev ops guy, he's my best friend, Daniel, and he works kind of like a SLA like a service level agreement where if the server goes down, he gets a message. You know, if I'm sleeping with something, he brings it back up, but the problem is it never goes down anymore.

Like it doesn't, we haven't really had that for years.

So he does security updates and stuff, you know, like cause I have a VPS, I don't use Amazon.

I use a VPS on digital ocean and line out.

And he kind of keeps that stuff safe, you know?

So that's good.

And how big is the business top line?

So how big is the business?

So remote to K is the job board.

It's the biggest business makes the most money.

No matter this is starting to grow though, it's like, it's past, I think a hundred K this month, a hundred K a month.

So almost like a million dollar business.

Remote to K is 1.6 million a year, I think.

And rebase is new business is an immigration agency.

So I want to help remote workers immigrate to countries that want to attract remote workers with like, you know, beneficial texts, stuff, Portugal is one of the first ones to do that.

So those are the three business really make money and the rest doesn't really make money a lot.

Like the book makes like, I think like 4K a month.

But everything you do is part of one flywheel.

So I've looked at your kind of like system and I've looked at a bunch of people because I got into a little pickle where I was like, God, I'm doing so many things and I want to do all these things.

I'm interested in all these things, but shit, am I going to be able to juggle five different things?

I got a podcast.

I have a VC fund.

I have my e-commerce business.

I have a newsletter business.

I have, you know, I don't even know what else, course business, I got other shit, right?

So it's like, am I going to be able to do this?

And what I saw that you did, I have this kind of like mental model of a solopreneur. And a solopreneur, nobody's actually solo, everybody's got like a little support team around them.

Like helpful, some in a big way, some in a small way, but basically it's like somebody who builds a personal brand and then builds a successful business and lifestyle around that.

And what I noticed was that you had this formula, which is, I don't know if it's intentional or unintentional, but I'll say it out loud because here's my read of your business.

It's basically you have, you starts with the red pill.

So the red pill is like, you know, that scene in the matrix where Morpheus is holding out a blue pill.

You know, do you want, do you want the truth or do you want to, you take the blue pill, you could just go back to your normal life just as everything was, you could forget this ever happened.

And he was like, no, I need to know the truth.

What's the truth?

He takes the red pill.

And basically it's like every great solopreneur, I think starts with one truth.

So like Tim Ferriss's truth was basically that like the nine to five work in a cubicle for 40 years model is like effing broken and you don't need to do it that way.

Like you could work four hours a week and live like a millionaire.

And so that was like Tim Ferriss's red pill.

And yours was basically like this idea of being a nomad, a digital nomad, which was like, Hey, yeah, you don't have to, you know, prescribe to the, subscribe to the, the normal way of living.

You pick a place that's where you are from, that's where you live and you pay, you know, you just kind of stay where you grew up and like, and you go to an office every day and like you have to wear shoes and whatever you're like, no, I wear flip flops, I walk around on beaches, I just kind of go wherever I feel like, whenever I feel like, and I carry a little like backpack and that's my life.

Yeah.

So you start with the red pill, then you, then you create content around that red pill.

So as you talking about that lifestyle and sharing everything from like, Hey, people always ask, well, do I keep in my backpack for the day?

Here's what it is.

It's like, there's every bit of content you can come up with that's like poppy, that's like fits that red pill.

So then you, that bit gives you authority on that subject.

So you become an authority.

And so, you know, pomp became an authority around Bitcoin and Tim Ferriss became an authority around life hacking and you've become an authority around nomadism.

And then you take that and then you basically spin off one of many businesses that can come up with it.

But every one of those business, either it's a big moneymaker or it's just another funnel

and more content, more new audience that's going to like get sucked into that same red pill lifestyle that you are like talking about.

And so it, even though you're doing six things, they're all actually part of one flywheel and every one that you do is you're going to feed it either because it's going to give you a bunch of cash that lets you fund this lifestyle in a bigger and better way, or it's going to give you new content, new stories, new things to be known about that fit that lifestyle as well.

That's how I see it.

I'm curious.

Is that a good, is that true?

And my thing started when I was, I was blogging just like you said, I was blogging about like nomadding, but I was blogging for my mom.

Cause back then you had like travel bloggers like 2014 and I was going to travel kind of and nomad and I wanted to, you know, every place I went, I wrote a little, I was this city to live in and stuff and what happened, all the crazy shit that happened to me.

And my mom was reading that.

But I wrote it in English cause my mom was obviously Dutch, but I was like, okay, she can read English.

So it's maybe easier to get more traffic and stuff, more audience.

But it wasn't like super, like a big idea just kind of happened.

And then those blogs started showing up on hacker news and I started writing more about like bootstrapping startups as a nomad in Thailand or something or in Asia.

And those started going on hacker news really high.

And I think that was the time it was like 2014, 2014.

There was a time when I noticed that the developers in San Francisco work for all the startups, they also were realizing, okay, maybe I can start doing this remotely because remote work was not cool back then and nomading was not cool back then cause you had the Tim Ferriss wave in 2008 was like the first nomad wave.

But there was, I love Tim Ferriss, but there was something about the, the followers there and the, the, the business that were created.

They were kind of like, like shady, there was a lot of shady shit I met.

I came across in Asia, in Thailand, like Americans and Europeans, it was like, a lot of brain supplements and shit like, dude, yes, yes, dude, yeah, drug dealers, online drug dealers and like spam dexing and like, there's still shady shit, but less.

And I was like, I really hate this shady shit.

I don't feel like part of the scene.

Uh, I think it would be cool to make it more like, uh, you know, mainstream, like reputable businesses, reputable jobs that do it.

Um, so I kept blogging about it and it kept taking off on hacker news and, uh, and you're right.

I think, and then I went on Twitter and I think I kind of organically people started following me and then, uh, a lot of people went nomad, a lot of my friends went nomad cause I was blogging and they became my friends now.

Um, and yeah, and then I started all those businesses and, but I think it's, it's not

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like some, it sounds very like a constructed, it's not a master plan.

No, it's not a master plan.

It's very organic.

Like, uh, I kind of try, I'm like user zero.

I try to build stuff for myself and I always have like, I have like new ideas.

Like there's just like you said, red pill, there's like something that's a discongruence in society and what I'm thinking.

And most people then think like, okay, there must be wrong, something, there must be something wrong with me.

But I think like arrogance, I think there must be something wrong with society.

Maybe this is like a new thing.

So I'll try and make a little website about it.

Like inflation, like three years ago or two years ago, I was tweeting about inflation.

Like this shit's going to go crazy with all the fat printing money.

And everyone's like, nah, inflation is fine.

Stop, stop whining about it.

I'm like, no, I'll just prove you that the real inflation numbers are higher.

So I made this inflation chart.com website that shows inflation numbers are really high.

Turned out to be true kind of now.

So yeah, that's great.

What a technology are you using to build those sites because they all do look alike and you seem like you can spin them up like really quickly.

Well, that's really funny because I get a lot of criticism for the technology I use.

I use PHP because that's the language I knew because I was making a blog like WordPress.

So I knew PHP a little bit.

So I was like, okay, I just need to write with the language I know because I don't know other languages.

And I did that.

And then I use a JavaScript and I use jQuery.

So everybody starts laughing now because jQuery is like way passé, but I still use it because it's so easy to make a button, bind an event to it, age xj, to the server, to the PHP script, does something with a database, sends it back.

And it works for me really well.

And I think it doesn't matter what you use, but as long as you use something that's really fast feedback loop and iterative loop where you can really quickly develop, like I can make a new button in like 20 seconds and deploy it to the server and it's really fast.

And I know other developer friends of mine use a very big stack, all those Kubernetes and all this stuff, all these keywords, I don't really know.

And for them it takes sometimes like an hour or maybe even days to deploy a new feature.

And I think what we learned from startup and lean startup is that the customer feedback loop has to be very fast, iterative, so you can really quickly change stuff.

And it also makes your customers really happy because they see something, they have a problem or a feature idea, you can really quickly build it.

And then they see it.

I mean, if you want happy customers, that's how you get it.

You make something for them.

They're like, oh my God, I influenced this product.

And yeah, so that works for me.

So very, very simple stack.

All right.

And then last up, we've got Alex Hormozzi talking about sales tips and what it takes to be a great salesperson.

One of my favorite things from you is these little TikToks or Shorts I see where you're giving like a sales tip or a little sales trick or whatever.

And I would love for you, I think most people who are listening to this, just the bell curve of people listening to this, probably have spent zero time trying to improve their sales and have not seen some of these things.

So I want to give them the opportunity where they don't got to go click and find this random TikTok that I'm talking about in the ocean of TikTok.

I want to role play a little bit.

Give us an example of normal, like here's the default way people are doing something and here's the rephrase or the reframe that has better results.

I would love to get two minutes of learning sales from Alex.

Sure.

And just as a quick caveat to complete the loop from like 40 minutes ago, you said like what was the book or training or whatever that?

So it's my belief if you look at Belfort, you look at Bradley, you look at Grant Cardone, some of the big sales trainers that are out there, almost all of them invariably have the same story, which is I started selling and was the best guy on the team by a fucking mile.

And then I tried to figure out what I was doing.

And so I do think that some people naturally based on their childhood, their upbringings, their whatever, or just have a higher proclivity for selling, which carry-

Yeah, just a gift of gab and empathy.

Yeah.

And I think it carries over into how you recruit for selling too, because we've built a lot of sales teams.

I actually have a very short allowing for people to fail at sales cycle, probably much shorter than most people.

And it's just because I've never had a killer salesperson who didn't do pretty well the first week.

And so for me, we turn through this quickly, but as a result of that, the team is just killers and they know that.

So I like this quote from Grant Cardone, but he says, you know, my sales seems a dangerous place to work.

And I love that.

So in terms of a sale stuff, I think people don't know how people are really freaked out about the idea of selling, right?

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And so I think the first reframe is like, you're not selling, you're helping someone make a decision that's going to help themselves.

And the front part of that is that I do think that the number one predictor of good sales is conviction.

And so fundamentally, you have one person who should believe in something, another person who does not believe it yet, and trust is the thing that transfers that conviction.

So if fundamentally there's the two things you need, you need trust and you need conviction.

Most times salespeople don't have 100% trust, I'm sorry, 100% conviction.

And so the also the idea of conviction as a binary is false.

So it's not like I believe it or I don't believe it is to what extent do I believe it?

Right.

And so that's why like in terms of if I want to improve a sales team, I can do the drills, which we do.

And that's like blocking and tackling.

But the thing that really juices a sales team is hearing the testimonials of the people that they sold last week and what they're doing today and how their lives have changed.

And so I noticed this because on my sales teams, when we were in person, whenever I did way out day, which is when everyone finished their challenges and everybody was crying and so excited, I tried to stack as many sales appointments as I could while people were weighing out.

And during those days, we closed like 100% because people were like, dude, how can you not think this works?

It's right there.

And so the thing is, is like you can either trick yourself into having the right tone or you can train yourself.

And I think that it's much easier to trick yourself into it by just simply believing.

Because if you truly believe in the product, you will talk about it differently.

And so in terms of an understanding of selling, if you need to have conviction and you need to have trust, trust is going to come from expertise and some level of rapport, right?

And so I think that overarchingly, to help someone sell, we just have to ask the right questions to get someone to come to the conclusion of their own.

And so most sales conversations follow more or less the same framework if you know what you're doing.

Most people are just chasing their tail and trying to chase the prospect to an outcome that the prospect doesn't know how, like, we've had this conversation 100 times.

They have only had it once.

We should be the one knowing how this conversation is supposed to go, right?

We should also come in with a massive advantage to how to have this conversation go the way we want it to, because we do it on a fucking day, right?

And so, you know, big, big front end pieces is like, why are they there?

What's the problem?

What have they done so far?

Explaining where they failed, seeing why our product is different from the things that

they failed, asking for permission to explain about the product, explaining the product not in any way based on features, but only based on the experiences that they will have as a result of it, and using analogies to explain those experiences, right?

And then having a close at the end, which the TikTok, I think, that you referenced was like a no-base close, and I think a lot of natural salespeople do this anyways.

Like, if I want something, I'm like, hey, can you do this for me?

I'm like, hey, would you mind?

And they say no.

They don't mind, right?

Like, this natural communication dynamics that most people who naturally know how to persuade people are at least influenced, do that on their own.

This is just retroactively looking at it and saying, what did I do differently?

Why is this different?

And in terms of like overcoming, because people are afraid of confrontation, right?

That's what they're afraid of.

And so, I believe that you can sell without ever having confrontation.

And you can do that with what I like to call childlike curiosity.

And so, if someone says, well, my husband's not going to approve that, I'm like, why wouldn't he?

Like, huh, that's so interesting.

Tell me more about that.

Rather than like, all right, let's, like, your husband's an asshole.

Like, that's not going to work because in arguments, no one wins, right?

And so, you're like, why would he think that?

Because I would think that he wants what's best for you, right?

Yeah, he wants what's best for you.

Does he know you're struggling with this right now?

Well, I mean, yeah, he knows I'm struggling with it.

Okay, so he wants what's best for you.

He knows you're struggling with it.

So why do you think he would be opposed to solving something that you're currently struggling with?

Just so I understand, would he be happier if you continued to struggle?

Well, no.

It's like, well, great, then would you be opposed to moving forward today?

And that way, and hey, if you go home to your husband, then you make a joke in the light of the scenario and then you close it, right?

And so, it's, I think childlike curiosity is the immediate that you have to train because people get defensive.

So that is one thing that like fighters talk about when they're in the ring, like in the beginning, you breathe in too much, right?

I don't know if you, like, if you've been like sparring and stuff like you breathe in, you breathe too much, you hyperventilate.

And so the guys who've done it enough, they slow down the breathing because when they

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get, things get intense, they can slow it down.

And so I think sales is a lot to say, why were you like, you're adrenaline kicks in, short breathing, faster, it's fight or flight, so you got to be able to slow it down and be like, huh, that's crazy.

I wouldn't have thought that.

Okay, tell me more about that.

And like, now you're interested and then they don't feel like you're combating them.

They feel like you genuinely are interested and want to help them, which is what you should be doing because you should be selling them only if it makes sense.

Okay.

I hope you enjoyed the sampler platter of some of the best interviews of 2022.

Thank you to Jimmy, Hussin, Palmer, Darmesh, Peter and Alex.

And thank you to all our guests this year.

It was a really great year.

Thank you to all of you, to our listeners.

We couldn't have done it without you.

We're so happy to see the growth of the show and how people are responding.

So happy new year and we will see you in 2022.