



The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast with Amy Porterfield Session #20

Creative Ways to Run a Business From Anywhere in the World With Natalie Sisson

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/20>

Amy: You're listening to the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast Episode #20.

Intro: Welcome to the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. Business advice is so easy you'll feel like you're cheating. And now your host, Amy Porterfield.

Amy: Well, hello there! Amy Porterfield here and thanks for tuning in to another episode of the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. I know that there are hundreds if not thousands of options for business podcasts. So I truly appreciate you tuning in and listening.

Now, I don't know about you but for me, this year is flying by. I mean 2014 is going to be here before we know it and honestly, I'm not ready for the New Year. I'm kind of a planning girl. I like to plan things out, I like to review the year that I just had, and just make sure that I'm set up to win for the coming year. So I need a little time to do that.

Now speaking of that, I'm actually creating a podcast. It's going to be episode #21 and it's going to be all about planning for the New Year. So if you want a little extra support to make sure that you're set up to win for your New Year in your online business then definitely check out episode 21. It's not out yet as of the time I'm recording this but it will be coming out as the next episode and I'm really excited for it. So definitely look for that soon.

Now, one of the reasons I'm a little bit behind in planning for the New Year is because I just returned from my final two speaking gigs of 2013. I'm so excited I'm finally done. No more travelling for the rest of the year.

Now, I've been preparing for these speaking gigs for a while now that's why I'm a little behind in everything else that I want to be doing right now because the first speaking gig I had was in Dallas at Michael Hyatt's Platform event. And this one was really, really important to me. I'm a huge fan of Michael's. I wanted to do him proud. I wanted to make sure that I got up on stage and I really gave some quality content to his audience. And I

truly think I did. I think it went really well. I got some great feedback from the audience and I love this event.

If you're looking to build your online brand, if you're an author, a speaker, or just an online marketer and you want to get more strategic with your brand in the New Year then you definitely want to check out the Platform events. They are fantastic. I know he does a few a year. So to learn more, go to MichaelHyatt.com and I'm sure he's got some information about his Platform events on his website.

One thing I'll say about Platform, it was easily one of my favorite events of the year and I feel like Michael brought together speakers and attendees that were just extra special. These people although I just met them, I felt like they were friends and family that I had known forever. And I think that's a great sign that you've put together a fabulous event. So by far, one of my favorite events of the year.

Now from Dallas, I went directly to Scottsdale, Arizona where I was a keynote at PartnerCon. It was an [Infusionsoft](#) event where they brought together the resellers, coaches, consultants, and I got to get on stage and talked about building your brand with Facebook and specifically, Facebook advertising. That was a great event as well.

What made it extra special was that Pat Flynn was also a keynote. He had spoken the day before and I heard he killed it. I was on a plane travelling to Scottsdale when he was on stage. But I heard some great feedback of course. And when I got to Scottsdale, I got to hang out with Pat for a long time. And he's a good friend and it was so nice to catch up with him. And we did a meetup, my very first meetup. Pat has done a few for sure but this was my first one and we hosted about 40 locals to dinner and drinks. It was such a fun time. I got to actually meet some fans and some friends that I've only known online.

And I have to say, I'm a homebody. Like when I touched down in San Diego after those two big trips, I was really excited to be home with my boys and just really come back to my home office and sit there and it's just a comfortable place for me. So getting out of my comfort zone, meeting people, and putting faces to names and getting out there in the real world, it's something I enjoy but not something that comes extremely easy to me. So it's definitely pushing myself beyond my comfort zone. So this meetup was really fantastic. I loved every minute of it and I hope to do more in the future.

So enough about me, let's move on to today's episode. Today, I'm interviewing Natalie Sisson also known as the [Suitcase Entrepreneur](#). Now, Natalie has a really interesting and inspiring story and I'm going to let her tell you all about her story in her own words. But I will tell you this, since 2006 when Natalie left her hometown of New Zealand, she has been

travelling the world and living out of her suitcase while building a very successful online business.

On her blog, she teaches creative ways to run your business from anywhere in the world using online tools, social media, and outsourcing. And she recently wrote a [book](#) all about how to create freedom in business and adventure in life. We'll definitely talk about the book as well. So I won't keep you waiting any longer. Let's go ahead and jump in.

So Natalie, thank you so much for being here today. I really appreciate it.

Natalie: Thank you for having me. I'm super excited.

Amy: I know we've been trying to set this up forever and we both have really busy schedules so I'm so glad we finally found time to carve out and really talk about what has been going on in your world.

Natalie: Definitely. Me too.

Amy: So let's go ahead and jump in because I know as always, we have tons to cover and I have a bunch of questions for you just based on everything that you teach and about your book and all these life lessons that I think that you have experienced and you help people immensely in terms of building a business and having that freedom.

But first, I kind of want to back up and can you tell us a little bit about your story and how this all came about?

Natalie: Yeah, I'd love to because it's kind of unusual because I'm not one of those entrepreneurs that knew from day one that I had to be an entrepreneur and have a business. I just knew that in the corporate world where I had spent eight years doing branding and marketing and business development and building up my skill set that I kept quitting my jobs the minute I knew exactly what I was doing and I felt that I had gone as far as I could and I would quit my job and I would go off travelling. And if I look back on that now, I really should have taken that as a sign that I was just not good working for other people.

I was lucky in that I tended to be in roles where I was pretty much self-managing, either managing a team or very much in charge of my own role. But I really didn't like authority and I really, really just got to the end of my tether in around 2008. I was in London, England. I was working in an amazing job. I was head of propositions development. It looked incredible on paper, a really well-paid job, tons of room for development to turn

doctors into business people. And I just was in this horrible place of being in the rat race, caught up in that 9-5 thing, working with people who just didn't have the vision for the company that I did and I was just being blocked at every single point.

And I don't know if you've ever had that, Amy. We've spoken before that I was so frustrated and miserable and it's very rare that I don't want to get up in the morning and bound out of bed and I was literally thinking of ways to skive off going to work. That's how bad it got.

Amy: That's when you know it's bad, yeah.

Natalie: That's when it's so bad, yeah. And I was like, "Screw this! I'm going to quit my well-paid job." I just invested in a house in London and I left. I flew off to Canada to play World Ultimate Frisbee Championships and figure out what I was going to do once I got there. I was just determined to leave, to fly to a different country I've never been, to play at a sport that I adore, and to start my own business even though I didn't really know what that was.

So not exactly the most like normal path to take. And all my friends thought I was crazy. But sometimes you have to do that. You have to get uncomfortable. You have to put yourself in a situation where you really have to sink or swim. And for those people who know Vancouver, Canada, beautiful city but very expensive. So I found that the money that I had actually saved was going out the door just as quickly. And I didn't have any further sort of ideas for the business even though I just knew I wanted to be doing something where I was teaching, coaching, and helping people.

And I fortunately met my business partner at a networking event over a huge glass of wine and a big cheese board. And he said, "I have this cool idea for business." And I said, "I'm a homeless, unemployed bum with a background in marketing and branding and business development." And he said, "Perfect!" And somewhere out of that conversation, we co-founded this technology company and built a Facebook application, which you'll appreciate, being a Facebook maven.

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: And it's actually the number one fundraising application today called FundRazr. And I'm so proud of the team. They've gone on to – they're in the year four. They're profitable. It's incredible. It has got so much traction, which I don't take any credit for but it was amazing to be part of the startup, just taking an idea as you know, from nothing into something.

And it was also one of the biggest learning lessons in entrepreneurship over 18 months where I just got pulled in to everything, product development, alpha beta technology, financing, investment, every single thing in addition to what I was trying to do which was market and build this company online using social media.

And while I was there, if you appreciate, I started to blog. I was a little knee deep in everything and I thought, "Well surely, this will be a cathartic experience. I'll blog. My mother and my sister will read the blog and I'll talk about entrepreneurship and technology and why there aren't more women in business. I'll talk about my learning lessons and I'll interview some incredible women who are doing really well and figure out why they're doing so well."

Four years later, that is my blog. It's now called The Suitcase Entrepreneur and it has literally been my business ever since then which blows my mind that you can start a blog and turn it into a business where you teach and coach other people who to create freedom in business and adventure in life. So it sounds a little bit like, "Whoa! That just happened." But it has been a long, hard, interesting adventure and one that I would not change for anything in the world because I've just learned so much.

Amy: Wow! That's a story. I've actually never heard you talk about everything in detail like that. So that's fascinating to me because one of the things I think a lot of people listening struggle with a little bit is they're not exactly sure what they want to do. They know they want to leave that corporate job or they know they want a change in their life but they're not exactly sure what they're going to do and you weren't either. And you went out there and you worked hard and you networked and you figured it out and you took some really big risks but I think – I know none of that could have been easy but so, so rewarding I'm sure.

Natalie: Totally! And you know, what's the opposite of that? Never, ever taking that leap of faith, never taking a risk and seeing what you're made of. Like those are the moments I think when you really define yourself and you see what you have within you and how you can get through it. Like there were some nights when I was crying myself to sleep and I didn't – I had – not enough money to pay my rent for that month. As I said, Vancouver is very expensive. But I was just so proud that I stuck with it.

When I look back on that day now, that kind of shitty couple of months where things weren't going great. And I was just hustling and hustling and building community but not actually earning any money. That was the moment. That was the sink or swim, the quit or

the carry on and I am so glad that I stuck with it enough to go, "You know what? I really want to build freedom in life and this is the way I'm going to achieve it."

Amy: Yeah, it really defined you. Those tough moments can change everything. I remember my first year once leaving Tony Robbins, I had definitely a few of those rough months where money really wasn't coming in and it was definitely going out. And at those times, it's funny how the universe works, I was getting offered corporate gigs again. So people were asking me to come.

I'm sure you've had experiences where people want you to come work for them full time. They love what you're doing. They think you'd be a great fit. And it's very flattering and the money is there. So those are the moments that I had to say, "That sounds so great right now because it's so safe but I know why I left and I know that's not the direction I want to go." So saying no more often than saying yes in those scary moments I think really defined you.

Natalie: Totally.

Amy: Yeah. I could definitely see that making a big difference. Now inside your book, so I have so much to talk to you about because I actually want to talk about this book that you wrote and kind of some of the marketing and strategy behind it. So we're going to get to that. But let's kind of stay this course with how you developed your business and kind of some of the core lessons that you lived by as you started blogging and seeing that, "Hey, there's an audience for this. I can make this into a bigger business and my brand."

And inside your book, you had some great lessons near the beginning of the book as you explained your story and I wanted to touch on some of those because they are so valuable for anybody either starting a business or transitioning out of one and thinking about creating another. And one of the things that you talked about is that to make a real change, you need to get uncomfortable. And can you talk about that a little bit? Because obviously, people understand what that means but what does it really mean for your life?

Natalie: Yeah, I think we touched on it briefly but if you're going to make a really significant change in your life then it's a really good idea sometimes to take yourself out of that environment of comfort that you've been in and change it up big time. So I'm talking about whether you want to move city or you want to actually move country. And maybe you don't have to make it that drastic but in order to see significant change, you have to get really uncomfortable and you have to change up that routine that you're used to and you have to almost leave behind those kind of systems that you've been relying on a little bit too much to really make that change. Because I honestly think that is the only way you're

going to get serious about it. It opens your eyes. It gives you more opportunities. You see things in a different light. So that's kind of what I was meaning about getting uncomfortable. You have to take that definitive action and make it quite drastic.

Amy: Yes, and I love that.

Natalie: Yeah, because otherwise you will always revert back to what you're doing. It's just – as you were saying, it's too easy to go back to corporate jobs. It's too easy to go back to the backup plan.

Amy: It really is. Now, when you say – you suggest making it drastic. I want to kind of get your opinion on something and that is that at the time obviously, you weren't married and you didn't have kids so picking up and moving to Canada probably was a little bit easier for you even though it's totally scary and a big risk. You left your corporate job and a house it sounds like that you just purchased. So that's a big deal. So I'm not discounting it at all.

But a lot of people have families that are rooted in schools and all that good stuff. So I wanted to offer a suggestion and you kind of tell me your thoughts on this but when I was – my only experience from corporate is working with Tony Robbins for so long. And when I wanted to leave, I was so scared to even tell anybody about it because like you, I didn't really have a solid, solid plan. I knew I would do social media consulting but I really wasn't sure exactly if I could pull it off.

And so what I did is I went to my bosses there and said, "What I'd like to do is start working from home." And then from there once they said yes and we worked it all out, a couple of months later I said, "OK. I'd like to go part time." So I had to take baby steps. But for me, leaving the corporate job when my paycheck was supporting my family, asking to work from home and then asking to go part time and then eventually of course saying, "OK. I'm leaving." Those steps to me felt drastic.

So do you agree that the level of the drastic decisions kind of varies depending on your lifestyle?

Natalie: I do and I definitely know that I'm probably not like a ton of people in that I am more than happy to take risks. In fact, I kind of like to push myself out of my comfort zone the whole time. It's how I operate best. But I know it's not for everybody.

That said, having gone through some pretty big experiences in my life, even for example and this may seem off topic but I did a body sculpting competition in 2004 and it completely

transformed the way I look and everything. And I had to give up a lot during that period and really discipline myself to do that and I really had to get out of my comfort zone.

And what I learned during that time is that you can push yourself so much more than you think you're even capable of. So my only caveat to that is yes, do it in the steps that you feel are appropriate. If you don't want to take the huge leap, make a baby splash but don't undermine yourself like you are capable of so much more.

So if it seems a little scary to you, can you push it a little more and make it a little bit scarier? Because honestly, and you probably heard this from people like Chris Guillebeau, what's the worst that could possibly happen? And I appreciate if you have a family and a security check, those things to consider but there are always people who are there to support you and there are always opportunities that come once you make that definitive decision that you might not have been able to say before.

Amy: You are so right. I was hoping and I didn't know what you were going to say to that but I was hoping you would have a little bit of a different take because you're right, there are definitely other things that personally I could have done and I know a lot of people who are listening when they heard my story, they're thinking, "Oh yeah, that's a little easier. That would be a little bit better."

I still think though that even going a little bit more drastic like let's just say that I ended up quitting and I had to dive into the consulting, maybe success would have been a little faster. That was first year was really slow and really tough. So I agree. I mean when you make up the decision as to what you want to do in order to get uncomfortable, push it a little further. What else can you do to really make sure that you're really not comfortable, which means things will change. Transformation will happen. So I appreciate that. I think we both have different views but we definitely are on the same plane that you've got to take those risks. Great stuff.

OK. So another lesson that you had and I like this one so much, know your special sauce. What is that all about?

Natalie: Well, it's not what some people think which is, which flavor of sauce do you love putting on your Pad Thai for example? But it's actually about – your special sauce is finding what you're really, really good at doing over and above anything else that you can do better than anybody else. And whenever I say this to people they're like, "Oh, I'm not better than anybody at anything." But there is always something that you are really good at that you take for granted.

So generally, the way you can figure out what your special sauce is, is to listen to what other people tell you all the time. And I'm sure, Amy, people tell you all the time because it's so true, you have an incredible way of teaching and breaking things down to make them seem so doable and easy to take action on, right?

Amy: Thank you.

Natalie: That's a gift. And that's something you do very, very well. Now, other people maybe great at building relationships with people, they might be excellent at introducing their friends to their new lover, like some people are just great matchmakers but they don't see it as a skill set.

But listen to what people tell you that you do really well all the time. Listen to those little tips and strategies because often, they can see it before you do. We're all born with certain gifts and we all have good skills and knowledge. But it's what sets you apart that you can actually then capitalize on. Once you know that special sauce that you have, you can bring that to the table every time.

And Daryl and I, my former business partner in FundRazr, we used to interview people and ask them that question. So we go through the interview questions that are normal and then at the end we'd say, "So what's your special sauce?" And it was so fascinating to see the way people reacted to it because some people would say, they just know straight off. They'd be like, "Well, I am excellent at building relationships with the influencers so that we can do x, y, and z." Other people would ask to clarify, which was totally fine. And some people will stop. And the final lot of people would say, "Well, this great Thai sweet chili sauce that I put on my ..."

Amy: Really?

Natalie: Yes.

Amy: That cracks me up.

Natalie: It was really funny. But I guess people don't take enough time to step back and actually celebrate what they're really good at. They tend to be quite humble and push things aside. I think actually the Americans are much better at this. I am thinking more from the side of New Zealanders who I love to death but we are renowned for having something called the tall poppy syndrome which is where if you stand out above the rest too much, you're likely to get buffed off at the base because you should be knowledgeable

about what you do and talk about it but you shouldn't over promote or say that you're the best.

And I actually think the exact opposite of that. You've got to know what your special sauce is. You've got to know what you do better than other people. Maybe not the best but you do it better than other people and that's enough to provide value and for people to see that as a valuable trait that you have. And then you have to bring that and use in everything that you do. You have to – honestly, nobody else is going to promote you and think the world of you. You have to do it from your end and you have to be really clear about what that is that you offer.

Amy: Now, how is that different, the whole special sauce, how is that different in another lesson you talked about in the book, which is find your sweet spot?

Natalie: Great question. So your sweet spot is the intersection between what you really enjoyed doing, what you're really good at or even you're just good at and what people will actually pay you for. How it differs I think is knowing your special sauce is just being very aware of your present qualities, traits, and knowledge that you have and as I said, what people sort of tell you you're really good at. And that often will align with your sweet spot or be the same thing.

So an example of a sweet spot that I love to give is perhaps you really enjoy cooking French cuisine. You're also very good at it and you hold dinner parties all the time. People always tell you that you're great at it. You have a real thing for it. And then people might actually pay you for that if you can teach them how to become a great chef and that's of interest to them. So that's an intersection of all those three things that you're good at it, you enjoy it, or you're even passionate about it, and people actually value it and will pay you for it.

And I think that final point is the point that a lot of people missed. They're passionate about everything. They love sports. They love flowers. They love dogs. And they can see all these kind of ideas around it but often, they missed that bit, "Well, which of those passions and which of those things that you do within your passion would people actually value and pay you money for?" And that's the tricky bit.

Amy: Yes, it definitely is. I've worked with a lot of people where I'm thinking, "I just don't know who's going to pay you for this." And now that I've gotten better at what I do, I'm very honest about it and say, "Let's talk about this." I once read in a book how – it was all about finding your skill set and your traits and what you're great at, and the author suggested crafting a really short survey or letter to let's say, 20 of your good friends, people

that know you really well and specifically asking them, "What is it that you think I'm great at? If I were to change my career tomorrow, what do you think I should do?"

And the people that really know that are going to give you that honest feedback. And I think there are some really cool truths to that, reaching out to people and being ready to hear the good, the bad, the ugly from them but asking them the questions that will get them to really, really share their thoughts about you. What do you think about that?

Natalie: I absolutely love it and I've done it with my clients and I've done it before and I suggested it to a lot of my friends as well who are at that point where they're like, "Well, I don't really think I'm that good at anything and I don't know what my friends would say about me." And I'm like, "Ask them."

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: I usually get them to not only ask for feedback but also to ask them for five words or even three that best describe you. And I really like that as well because that almost creates your brand for you. So they might say, in my example they might say, adventurous, cheeky, fun-loving for example or they might say something completely different like impatient, energetic, something else. But it's really interesting to see what people think of you from their outside perspective that you may not have even seen in yourself.

And once again as you said, the good, the bad, and the ugly. I always just think, learning about yourself and being curious about what you bring to the world is always beneficial even if initially the truth may hurt. You might get some incredible surprises in there that you haven't even seen that your friends just think you're amazing at and think the world of you and can describe you in a better way than you can.

Amy: Yes, definitely. Oh good, I'm so glad that you would recommend that because I know you do a lot of coaching one-on-one with people and so it's good to hear that you use that strategy as well.

Natalie: Yeah.

Amy: One more reason from the book and then we're going to dive into talking about how you created this book and how you marketed it as well. But how about this one last lesson that you said and it kind of goes with becoming uncomfortable but you say, "Don't wait for the right time." Talk a little bit about that.

Natalie: Oh, so true. So another way of putting that actually is perfectionism is just another form of procrastination. I would say that I'm a little bit of a perfectionist but the times when I have put off doing something like launching a website or putting up a sales page or finishing a product because it's not perfect are really been the times when I've missed out. And I see so many people waiting for the right time and permission to do whatever it is.

So I'm just so over that. And I would love for everybody listening to just take a look at what you currently have in your repository of things that you started on and never ever finished. Take one of those things and freaking make it count and get it out there. We've all heard from Seth Godin, "Just ship it." But I just love that idea and I've done it more and more in my business.

I become less of a perfectionist and I've just got stuff out there. I've asked questions. I've tested it. I've launched in the minimum viable product and then I've added to it, added value, and just kept tweaking and refining whatever it is that I've produced, whatever that offering is based on feedback from my customers and my community.

Whereas in the past, I used to have it all perfectly presented then I'd put it out there like, "Here it is! Of course, it's amazing." And people would be like, "Huh?" because I hadn't done any of that ground work right ahead and talked to them along the way. I hadn't asked them the questions. I hadn't showed them little sneak peeks. I hadn't got them using whatever it was that I was creating.

And so, I just would love for people to start shipping and actually doing and not waiting for that perfect time and moment because it never ever comes.

Amy: It never comes. That's so right. I think one thing I've gotten really good at over the last few years is just to do something. Get it done. Take action. And it's funny because a lot of people over this last year have said, "I really admire how you just get it done." And they wouldn't have said that in my first few years of business because I was scared to put things out.

I wish so bad that I had that same mentality in my first year, in my second year out where I just said, "I'm just going to get this out here." Those are the people that truly build a business quickly and they actually see some real profits much more quickly than those people that are – you know those people that work on their program, their online program for like two years.

Natalie: Yeah.

Amy: It's just insane. So I'm so glad we brought that one up. It is a really valuable tip for everybody. OK. So we are going to switch gears because I know a lot of people listening have thought about writing a book, they're in the process of writing a book, they have a book that maybe didn't really do so well once they did start marketing it, so I'm excited to talk about your book that came out this year, [*The Suitcase Entrepreneur: Create Freedom in Business and Adventure in Life*](#), love, love, love the title.

And you have two big things you did. Well, you did many big things but I want to talk about those two. The one is Kickstarter. I want you to tell everyone kind of how you used Kickstarter because that fascinated me and you had great success with it. And then also, you did a [30-day blog challenge](#) that I want you to talk about as well. So let's first talk [Kickstarter](#).

Natalie: OK. So great, great call on that. So I love crowdfunding. I think it's a huge opportunity for entrepreneurs and those people who want to get their ideas off the ground and have proof and validation from people who will back it up and support it. So for my book, I knew that I wanted to write it. I finally felt I had a book in me. It's all about becoming a suitcase entrepreneur, creating freedom in business and adventure in life. And I was like, "I might know that I want to write this but who here wants to buy it?" So it's coming back to that sweet spot.

So I decided I would put together a Kickstarter, not that I couldn't afford to publish my own book although it is quite a pricey experience. But I thought, "Why not have people actually invest in this book before it's written and tell me that it's worth writing?" It was a bit of a gamble. I was a little bit scared. I was like, "What if this falls on its face?" I really wanted to write the book but I went ahead and did it in March this year. I shot this terrible little video in the jungle of Borneo because that's where I was. I had a fly on my face doing it.

But you know what? I was so honest. And I was like, "Here it is. Here is what I desire with this book, here is why I want to help, here is how I want to reach, and here's what it's going to include. If you like it, pledge your support. Be part of the book. Be part of the process." And 30 days later, I had 121% funded. I had closed to 200 people who had gone ahead and done that and I was just blown away.

I mean don't get me wrong, once again, I hustled. I had a marketing plan behind it. I really kept talking about it during that month. There are ups and lows in any crowdfunding campaign and people in my community just came to support me and people who didn't even know me came to support. And it was incredible because at the end of that month, I had not only the money to invest in getting the typesetting of the book and the editorial

team and the copywriting and the graphics and the design, and even part of my book tour in place, I also had more importantly, 200 people who were like right behind my book and wanted to see it finished.

And the third massive part of it and this is the beauty of it is that I had massive accountability now to finish my book like I hadn't even really started writing it. And this is how my entire year has been and probably my life. I set big hairy audacious goals. I announced them as publicly as I can because then I know that I'm not going to let anybody down. Just like you, I'm true to my word. I will do it. And I said, "By end of July, you will have this book in a digital format and then it will be launched in August."

Amy: And it was.

Natalie: And then that happened. It was. It was an incredible goal to set. And amazing along the way, I had 15 people sign up for the editorial pledge so I literally had people paying to be my editor and I had all these people commenting. I crowd sourced the design of the cover. I got my community to vote on which cover they like the best on the taglines, on everything.

And as a result, I just had so many people who are invested in this book along the way. We just couldn't wait for it to launch. And I think that made a huge difference. Even if you don't do a Kickstarter campaign, run something whereby people can get involved and being part of the process of your book.

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: I love that process. I enjoyed it and I think it made my book even better.

Amy: Oh, I'm sure. Definitely.

Natalie: And part of that Kickstarter actually, once people have pledged is I asked them to comment on the Kickstarter and say, "What do you think would be included in this book? What questions would you like answered?" And I already had the structure of my book. I had already started writing it and I knew exactly what I wanted to include but getting their comments and their feedback on what they were struggling with around location independence, lifestyle, travel hacking, and business just validated that I was on the right track and that I was covering everything. And that if we have missed a few things so I could incorporate that, right? So the whole book was kind of thanks to the community.

Amy: Now, what's great is that if I remember correctly, the amount you were trying to raise was not like astronomical. It was – what was it?

Natalie: It was under 10,000. I think it was around £4,950 because I had to use the UK Kickstarter, which worked out at about just over US\$9,000.

Amy: OK.

Natalie: And then of course, the fee comes off. But it wasn't huge. I was banking off the fact that most books if you get a publishing contract, the minimum you kind of get or I should maybe even say the maximum is \$5,000 to \$10,000 for your first book if you are lucky.

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: So I was like, "Well, what about if I pay myself that through my community?" And I used the very online tools and social media that allowed me to build my business and I take control of writing my own book and publishing it, which was the complete emphasis and I'm so glad I did.

Amy: Oh yeah. You are one of the very few people that I know that was so strategic about it. You weren't crazy – you didn't have a crazy high goal that was very hard to attain but it was also, it was a substantial amount of money that allowed you to get it done and you knew how much you needed in advanced.

So what I really admire about you, Natalie, is that as much as you can go with the flow and live in a million different places and run a business and that takes a very different personality than probably my own but we're so similar in the respect that we plan, we strategize, we don't take anything lightly, we always make sure we put the work in advanced. And I think that says so much about the success that you've had.

Natalie: Thank you. Yeah. And it will be even easier if I wasn't travelling the world 24/7. Imagine what I can accomplish.

Amy: Oh yeah. I can't imagine. I cannot imagine. I am not the world traveler. When I worked for Robbins, we travelled all over the world and I have to say, it wasn't my favorite thing. And so, when I look at your posts and I see where you are and what you're doing, I'm always admiring it because I'm thinking, "Holy cow! I couldn't do it but I love how you live your life." So I think it's fun to watch. I couldn't do it but it's so fun to watch.

But you're right. You have an extra layer or an obstacle in getting things done. That's why this book is so valuable because you literally show people how you've done it and you have an exciting life that most people would only dream about. I heard an interview with you. I think it was John Dumas where you were talking about you realized that you're living a life that's so many people are in awe about or that they're like, "Holy cow! I can't believe you get to do this." And you said something really funny, you said, "If I won the lottery, I'd still be doing this. So I guess I've won the lottery already." I love that. Yeah, it was good stuff.

OK. So Kickstarter was a huge success and I feel like so many people can learn from what you did there. So definitely I appreciate you sharing with us your experience there. But you also did something also equally cool and that was this 30-day blog challenge. So tell us about that.

Natalie: Yeah, and it wasn't pretty incredible actually because one step before the 30-day blog challenge is I actually started doing my book tour a little earlier before my book had even come out and that's where we finally got to meet in person albeit briefly was at the World Domination Summit in July in Portland.

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: And the reason I really wanted to have the book written for July was that I wanted to hold a book party there because I knew so many of my community would also be at this event. I thought it would be a great way to kick start it. Get good publicity and write around it. But more just like share the celebration with my community. And there are 120 people who turned up to that.

There was no book to buy. There was nothing but it just created so much goodwill and it was incredible to like be able to share the story and talk about it and see what the feedback was and start the buzz. And I continued doing that throughout the US actually even before my book was launched and until August when I got to Vancouver and actually had the official book party which seemed fitting given that's where I started.

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: But I think that really helped. And during that time, during that month of July, I was like, "Well, how else can I make this such an important thing?" I put all this effort and work into writing this book. It ended up being 315 pages of everything that I knew. And I was like, "Surely, I can break some of that content out and go deeper into some of those ideas and turn it into something useful for other people."

So I decided to run a 30-day blog challenge on the day that the book came out on Amazon. And also, just share in 30 days of how do you create freedom in business and adventure in life and give people a blueprint of that.

Now, I must admit on the flipside, it was a heck of a lot of work. Creating 30 days of content is no matter how strategic you and well-planned you are and I used my team as well and I got them helping out but it was still a massive amount of effort. And it got such amazing feedback, Amy. I was so – I had no idea which way it would go. I used Contest Domination, thanks to you.

Amy: Oh great.

Natalie: I used your link. I thought, "How can I make this something that is – people can get access to a one day business building and lifestyle business session with me but also get access to the book and just be part of it?" And I had a thousand people opt-in through that for it. I had a bunch of people, about 300 or 400 people blogging continuously during that month. My first blog post had like a hundred plus comments on it. It might be good for you but that's not normal for me.

Amy: That's huge. That's fantastic.

Natalie: Massive! And I suddenly realized I had hit on something. I had created something. Everybody likes a challenge. Thirty days is very doable. And I also picked a month where I thought, August is not a great month I thought because most people are away on holidays. But somehow it actually turned into a benefit for me. Because they're on holiday, a lot of people have a bit more time to write and writing consistently for 30 days is no mean feat. And I was so amazed how many people actually stuck with it the entire 30 days.

But more importantly, it was just life-changing for so many people. They really have to work hard on creating their ideal lifestyle and their vision for it and their painted picture and what their business was going to be and what their strengths were and what their sweet spot was, and all those things we've discussed. Everything that was included in the book.

And during that month, not only did I increase my following across all my social media profiles, my Pinterest went through the roof, my Facebook page as I ran advertising campaigns but I also just saw this massive level of engagement. I doubled the traffic to my site in one month and I became a number one bestselling author in that first week.

Amy: Wow!

Natalie: And I honestly think a ton of it was due to that blog challenge that also brought along the buzz in addition to the Kickstarter, in addition to the book tour. So I was thrilled because all that work at one point, I was like almost burnt out. And I was like, "Why am I doing all this?" And it hit number one and I didn't even notice. When somebody was like, "Congratulations!" and I was like, "For what?"

Amy: Oh my goodness!

Natalie: I had to look it up on Amazon. I was like, "It's for real!"

Amy: That is so exciting. Congrats to you. That's really exciting. And I'm going to link to an article that you wrote. What was the website you wrote this great article about the challenge?

Natalie: Think Traffic, which is a great website. And I literally said to them, "Look, I'd love to guest post for you and write a complete breakdown of how to run a blog challenge, the results that I got, all the things that I did well, a few things that I would probably do differently, and just shared all my results and the tips for people there." So I'm happy to send you a link because it's pretty in depth. It's almost like a guide to running your own 30-day blog challenge.

Amy: OK, great. So I'm definitely going to link to that in the show notes. But just to get really clear, when you say you did a 30-day blog challenge, you were creating content for 30 days but were you challenging people to also create content for their own site? How did that work?

Natalie: Exactly.

Amy: OK.

Natalie: There were a number of actions point to it but each day, I would post a blog with a particular topic and a call-to-action. Everybody who had partaken through Contest Domination or through my blog would get the email as well saying, "This has just gone live. Go across and read it and give me your answer." And then they'd answer by commenting on the blog or leaving a track back or ping back.

And so, they just had to respond to the call-to-action. They could also tweet it, share it, and follow the Pinterest board, et cetera. So there were a number of daily actions that were consistent every single day that they could do.

Amy: And all related back to the content in your book?

Natalie: Exactly.

Amy: OK.

Natalie: And *Build Your Online Business* book. So I took content from both those things and really tried to build something very, very robust. And it was quite advanced as well like a few newbies were like, "Oh, this is really pushing me hard to think about this." But that's what I love to do.

Amy: Yes.

Natalie: So yeah, it was very smart I guess from that point of view and that they got to take action every day, they got to feel engaged. Tons of people were then starting to visit each other's blogs and comments. So it created a really cool community on there and almost became a community that I wasn't even in control of, which was really cool.

Amy: Which is what everyone really wants if you think about it when it becomes like its own life. Yeah.

Natalie: So they had to answer the call-to-action. I've put the badge on there that said, "I'm partaking in the 30-day blog challenge." which meant if somebody came to their site and saw it, they could also find out how to do it. So it was just like a lovely evolving thing. And from time to time, I'd say, "Join the Twitter list or come across to Pinterest." which is where it really started expanding out I think.

So yeah, at the end of those 30 days, if people had stopped, quit the entire thing or even if they'd managed to do 50 or 60 or 70% of it, they had a bunch of blog posts on their own site. Many, many people got a lot more traffic. They got into the habit of writing. They also had to find a blueprint for what they wanted to do with their life and business.

Amy: Wow!

Natalie: So I think overall, it was beyond what I had even imagined. It was incredible. And it helped them but it also as I said, doubled my traffic, increased my sales across all my digital products, plus my book, plus the goodwill, and the community reach was just fantastic.

Amy: I hope you took a big vacation after that. That sounds like so much work. And I love hard work. So I'm excited that you did it but holy cow! You must have been a little bit exhausted at the end.

Natalie: I was. And I did go and take a digital sabbatical in Mui Ne, Vietnam. And I just turned off everything for about four or five days and lazed and read a book, yeah.

Amy: Good. I love to hear that.

Natalie: You need to do that.

Amy: Yes, yes, so very important. And that's what I love. When you work so hard at a project especially when you get some great success from it, when you do take those days off, they are so much sweeter because you know like I did this. I deserve every second of this time off. So I'm glad that you definitely do that. And it's such a part of your lifestyle which anybody listening that is looking to create a business and wants to do so on their terms and wants to have that freedom from leaving the corporate world gives you the freedom but I can tell you this firsthand, at least from my first year out, you can create a life that has zero freedom even with an online business where you're your own boss. Would you agree with that, Natalie?

Natalie: I'm so glad you said that. Yes.

Amy: Yeah.

Natalie: And I actually have to say, I think it's a bit of a myth, all these people who are spouting that they're location-independent and free to do everything because they're working so hard and not taking time out to discover an adventure and explore, which is actually a lot of effort to build something that allows you to do that like I work on it every day that I have a good balance between exploring my new destination and working on my business.

Amy: Yes. So you have to be really careful with that and just think not just because you leave the big corporate world doesn't mean you have all this great freedom. You've got to create it and you've got to work hard on creating that balance. And that's what this book is all about.

So I'll definitely link to your book in my show notes as well. I encourage everyone to check it out. It's a fantastic read. You've done such great work with this book. So congratulations on the success. You have earned every bit of it, Natalie.

Natalie: Thank you so much. I really appreciate you saying that. It means a lot coming from you.

Amy: Yes, definitely. And thanks for being on the show. I think people are going to find some great value. We've had some lessons and we've even gone beyond with some marketing lessons. So there is a lot in here for everyone. They're probably going to want to listen a few times. But I cannot thank you so much for being here.

Natalie: Thank you, Amy. It has been amazing.

Amy: Take care. So there you have it. To learn even more about Natalie and her brand new book, visit SuitcaseEntrepreneur.com. I'll make sure to link to it in my show notes as well.

And speaking of show notes, all the links we talked about in today's episode can be found at AmyPorterfield.com/20, just the number 20. Also, if you like this podcast, I would really appreciate it if you would take just a few minutes and write me a review. Reviews really help me get out in front of even more people with these episodes and it would truly mean the world to me. So all you need to do is go to AmyPorterfield.com/review. That will take you to a page where you can launch iTunes, write a quick review and again, I would truly appreciate it.

So until next time, make it a great week. And I can't wait to connect again. See you soon.

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