

**[00:13:00]**

Jamie: Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I'm Jamie Masters. And today on the show we have my good friend Steve Chou. He runs an amazing site called MyWifeQuitHerJob.com. If you haven't heard of it, you have to. I think it's awesome. He also runs an ecommerce store called Bumblebee Linens.com. And he literally just quit his job, even though he makes a ridiculous amount of money for the longest period of time on his blog, because you have income reports on there. Thank you so much for coming on the show today, Steve. I really appreciate it.

Steve: It's great to be here, Jamie.

Jamie: It's so funny because I have seen you at so many conferences. And you were always like: oh, I still have a day job. And I'm like no; I thought you were making good money? You're like I am. Why the heck did you keep your day job for so long?

**[00:14:00]**

Steve: It's because I was doing something pretty cool at my job. I was designing micro processors. And like I spent all this time in school, and maybe it's because it's an Asian thing. Like, when you become an engineer and you study something, and then you become really good at it and it's fun, you know, you want to keep doing it, right? Like, I don't get a chance to do the electrical engineering stuff now.

Jamie: You poor baby.

Steve: It was hard to give up.

Jamie: No electrical engineering, man.

Steve: It's good stuff.

Jamie: You can teach your kids how to do it.

Steve: Yeah.

Jamie: So I can see little pieces of that. But the thing is that you have small children, your wife is the whole point of your site because your wife quit her job, so she could stay home with the kids. Can

you give us a little down low of exactly your trajectory and story in a nutshell?

Steve: Yeah. And like a minute or less, like my wife basically told me when we got married that she was going to quit her job when she became pregnant with our first child. We live in the Silicon Valley. It's really expensive here.

[00:15:00] And if you want a good house and a good school district, you basically need two incomes. So finally that faithful day came and she was like okay, I'm going to quit. And so we started looking for different things to sell online. We came across handkerchiefs because way back in the day when we got married, she knew she was going to cry. We looked all over the place for handkerchiefs and we couldn't find any. We found this Chinese vendor, who sold us a whole bunch.

We used maybe six and we sold the rest on EBay and they sold like hotcakes. And so when it came time to start the business, we got back in touch with that Chinese vendor and ordered a bunch, and just started selling them. So that's the story.

Jamie: Did you read like *The Four Hour Work Week* or something like that, and you're like what do I sell?

Steve: No, I didn't. I didn't read *The Four Hour Work Week* until like way after.

Jamie: Good. Do it yourself, figure it out yourself. No, that's awesome. So that started the whole point, so not only do you have that ecommerce store now, which is still doing really well, you started blogging about the journey through the entire thing, right?

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Steve: Yes, that's correct. Mainly it's because a bunch of my friends, they all started asking me like how we did it? And instead of just telling them the same story over, and over, and over again, I decided to just document it. And what's ironic about that is my friends didn't want to read what I was writing, and then I just got a bunch of random people reading it, and that's kind of how the audience got started.

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Jamie: You're like come on; I wrote this for you guys. And they are now unsuccessful, and all your readers are way up here I'm assuming at that point, right?

Steve: Well, they're successful in different ways. They're all doctors, lawyers, and engineers.

Jamie: Yeah, overrated. But that's sort of the thing, so normally that is normal route of being successful. And so you going I have a company with Bumblebee Linens isn't like: oh, that's amazing. I totally want to hop that bandwagon. But you talk about what it did for you on the blog, and how you learned, and how you kept moving forward, and now you can afford quitting your day job, thank goodness.

Steve: Yeah.

**[00:17:00]**

Jamie: And moving forward and having ridiculously businesses, how the heck does someone even start on the ecommerce side right now? Because I feel like there's – when you started it was a lot less crazy, now there's lots more competition, we've talked about this before, so how do we get started now, besides just going to your site and reading it?

Steve: There's a lot more people doing it, but the tools to do research are a lot better, too. And so really it just comes down to finding something with a good value proposition. Now there's tools that can you tell you how much everyone is making, selling something on Amazon for example. And then there's tools that scrape eBay and tell you what's selling on there as well. But basically it comes down to finding something – and you can look in the reviews to figure out like deficiencies on products that are being currently sold online.

Make changes to it to make it better. And as long as you can say that you're better than everyone else, then there's always going to be some space for you in the marketplace. It's just a matter of effort and legwork really is what it comes down to.

Jamie: So why didn't you start another ecommerce thing? Like, you were doing handkerchiefs and it was going really well, what made you not just keep going and doing more products?

**[00:18:00]**

Steve: We are adding products that are relevant to our Bumblebee Linen store every year, but I wanted to diversify. And so I wanted to just kind of build myself into my own personal brand, and I wanted to teach also, because that's something that I enjoy doing, and so that's why I kind of steered it over to digital products, which incidentally is a lot easier from a profit standpoint because you don't have to ship anything physical, it's nice.

Jamie: So tell us more about this. Because this is the thing, he wants to jump on the blogging bandwagon, not that there's not a ton of Amazon seller type people right now, but they just assume: oh, we get so much more profit. It's way more bang for your buck. But I feel like that's also really saturated, trying to get – you started many, many years ago.

Steve: I did, yes.

Jamie: So if somebody were starting a blog right now, it's way harder to do something like that, or do you disagree?

**[00:19:00]**

Steve: Well, here's the thing, like if you want to make money sooner rather than later, then I would advise you to go into ecommerce because you're selling something right away. There's no ambiguity there, right? But when you're blogging, you got to build up and audience and that takes a long time. And so I would argue that these days it is much harder, and so you can't in my opinion just blog. Unless you're an amazing writer, I feel like you need to be on like a podcast, you need to have something else, like a YouTube channel to just get yourself out there.

And you really have to express your personality, and I think you got to put your face out there in order to succeed today. I don't know, what do you think, Jamie? We're all doing similar things, right?

Jamie: We totally are. So don't turn it on me because everybody wants to hear about you, they don't want to hear about me. But I think that's a really valid point, I hated writing, so therefore I was like I'll do videos that sounds way better. But your blog is hilarious. Like,

reading your about page again, I was like oh, my gosh this is so quirky and interesting, and it makes it so much easier to read. I'm assuming that was a very hardcore choice. How did that evolve as you went because it sounds like you have a really clear voice? I remember learning about finding my voice –

**[00:20:00]**

Jamie: You know, it didn't start out that way. And I'm with you, I hate writing also. I really hate it, but I just kind of force myself to do it. Back in the day there were no podcasts or anything. Today if I were to start all over, I'd probably start with the podcast first, because I enjoy talking much more. And today, the way I read my blog posts is I actually narrate them and have them transcribed, and then I do the editing afterwards. I forgot your original question, I apologize.

Jamie: I did, too. No. How did you find your voice, like how did you actually get better at knowing what to say and how to say it?

Steve: Yeah, that's a good question. Mainly, it's feedback from people. Early on I used to talk to a lot more of my readers, like sometimes I would just get them on Skype and just talk to them and ask them what they want me to write about. And here's the thing, when I first started writing I was really timid because I didn't want to piss anyone off. And that's just my personality, too. And it's like an Asian thing too, I think, right? You want to just kind of blend in and you don't want to cause a ruckus.

**[00:21:00]**

I remember there's this one post that I wrote, where I pissed off the entire Etsy community. But that post did really well. And so I was like: okay, maybe I should just start talking about how I really feel about things, not necessarily to piss people off, but just take a side and really say what's on my mind, as opposed to it being like middle of the road, and that ended up doing much better.

Jamie: So I want to ask you about this because I was just chatting with Pat Flynn about some of this stuff, too. He's like do more behind the scenes, do more – I am so opinionated as a human being. And if you don't know me very well, I am just nice, and the girl next door, and blah, blah, blah. But if I get you in person, I'm like: oh, no, you don't do that, that's dumb. You should totally do this and do this. And I haven't really been able to sort of show that as much as I could on my site.

Most of it's interviews and I try and shut up as much as humanly possible. So you give me your advice for sort of pulling back the curtain and really being more opinionated. What did you learn so far with what's working on that side, am I trying to piss people off, am I looking for things like that, what are the things that I should be doing?

**[00:22:00]**

Steve: So I never try to piss anyone off, just to be clear.

Jamie: Because I'm a people pleaser and that wouldn't work very well for me.

Steve: But I do take a stance and then I stick with it, instead of kind of being wish-washy about it. I feel like if you're just in the middle of the road, then that's a negative. You have to just take a position and stick with it in order to be successful. Like, the middle of the road guys don't get anywhere in my opinion.

Jamie: I agree 1,000 percent. Though figuring out what your stance is takes awhile. I feel like at the beginning of my blogging, quote-unquote podcasting career, I didn't even really know what those things were, and it's evolved, but I'm an impatient person like you said, and blogging sometimes takes a really long time. So give me some advice on either tips, or tactics, and or strategies on building your audience. Because I know you've had a huge audience that adores you, how do we do that faster?

**[00:23:00]**

Steve: I mean, really, I'll be honest with you, so I didn't really start making decent money with the blog until three years out. And I know there's a lot of people who do it a lot faster, but really it's a slog, just to be honest with you.

Jamie: Please do, please be honest, people need to hear this.

Steve: It's a slog. You got to just gather email addresses or however you want to do it, like you can do Facebook Custom Audiences, email addresses like Push Cruise New –

Jamie: Push Now.

Steve: Yeah, Push Now and all that stuff. Basically it's about putting out good content and then just keep presenting that content out to your people. And get people to just jump on your bandwagon. And the more your personality comes through, the more people will just like you for you. And then once you have their mindshare, then you can start worrying about making money. I feel now that I have the mindshare, it doesn't really matter what product I put out, I feel like I'll be able to make sales. Not necessarily because of what I'm selling per say, but because of my personality. If that makes any sense?

**[00:24:00]**

Jamie: it does, but people are annoyed now. They're like oh, that sounds great for you because you built this for a really long time. I have to do three years of slogging before someone will buy it based on my personality.

Steve: It doesn't have to take that long. I mean, if you know people, and you network – oh, so that's one thing that you definitely need to do. You need to go out there to conferences and what not and meet people. The fastest way to get bigger is to meet people and then help each other, either through like a JB partnership or what not, or you can just help each other blast to each other's email list and that sort of thing. So if you want speed, then that is probably the route that I would take.

Jamie: Let's dive a little deeper into that because everybody wants speed, right?

Steve: Yes.

Jamie: So explain to me how you approach JV side, whether you're asking for a list swap or – because it can get a little skeezie. You know, you're in the space where everyone's like: oh, if you mail for me, I'll mail for you, blah, blah, blah.

Steve: Yeah.

Jamie: And it just starts to get a little bit icky. So how do you do it in a really awesome way?

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Steve: I actually don't do list swaps. What I'll do is if someone is just launching something, I'll add it to my newsletter at gratis. There's no like deal like: hey, I'll do you if you do me or whatever. That sounds really bad.

Jamie: That sounds really bad, yeah.

**[Crosstalk]**

Steve: You know, I'll just help them just for fun or whatnot. And one thing that I did do a lot early on is guest posts.

Jamie: Oh, did you? Okay.

Steve: And if someone asked me, and we've met at a conference, for a guest post, and it's about something relevant that I might blog about, that's no problem at all. That's like no skin off my back. The email blast is more intrusive I feel.

Jamie: It's asking a lot, especially if you don't know them really, really well.

Steve: Right. And to ask them to join on a webinar also. And it gets really tricky too if you sell your own product because like my list, like I'd rather blast about my own product. And the people on your list will run out of money, too.

**[00:26:00]** And so if someone asks to promote someone else's product, it has to either be completely different and related to what I'm trying – like different, like it teaches something completely different, but it's kind of tangentially related to what I actually talk about on the blog in order for me to do it. I've only done it a couple of times, but I tend not to do that because it actually drains your list also. So I tend not to do those things. I tend to do more guest posts and just mentions out of like just to be helpful.

Jamie: Interesting. So you are a giver. It's really awesome that you're like I'll do this for other people first and then they notice you and they're like thank you, you're amazing. And you can sort of cash in, quote-unquote on that capital later. How do you ask for guest posts, specifically?

Steve: I usually ask for those in person. So if I'm at a conference and we're at the bar afterwards, I'll say: hey, would you be interested in

like a post on this? And after a couple of beers everyone's going to say yes.

Jamie: See exactly, such good tactics.

Steve: Right.

Jamie: I love this.

Steve: I learned from the master.

**[00:27:00]**

Jamie: Seriously? My mentor had always told me that the deals were done at the bar. And I didn't drink until I was 28, 29, when I was in business. And he's like that's now how it happens. And then I learned my lesson. Not that I drink a lot now, but it is everybody goes and hangs out later, and that's when everybody's guards down, so it's not like they're schmoozing giving business cards at the networking part.

It's like hanging out with real people. And yeah, you can offer a guest post, and if they say no, it's not a big deal. I mean, a guest post is pretty – it should be a pretty easy ask anyway isn't it?

Steve: It's a pretty harmless ask, as long as the guy is good at writing. I mean, it can be –

Jamie: Do you want to write a guest post for me, Steve?

Steve: Sure I'll write a guest post for you.

Jamie: Good, now I don't have to hire a ghost writer, awesome.

Steve: Well, here's the thing, the reason why I started my podcast was not for it to gain listeners per say, it was an outreach tool to meet people. Similar to how you do, actually that I did learn from you for real. I was like: wow, Jamie's meeting all these people through her podcast, like I want to meet people. And it's like the perfect excuse to talk to someone for an hour.

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Jamie: Seriously, you make so many friends just by talking to them for an hour. So it's worked well for you.

Steve: Oh, yeah.

Jamie: Give me some stories on ROI on meeting some people? Because I met you at a conference – I think I met you at a conference. And I feel like that's what you were doing beforehand, but the podcast makes it easier for you to be able to not have to go anywhere.

Steve: Oh, yeah, it totally does. So I'll just give you a quick example. So I had my first conference this past May.

Jamie: Congratulations.

Steve: And all the speakers were people who I had, had on my podcast. And the thing about the podcast is the best conversations happen after the record button is not recording, right?

Jamie: Yep.

Steve: You know, we're giving out good stuff here for you though, Jamie. I'm not holding anything back, but I'm saying –

Jamie: We just talk about kids later, come on, don't even.

Steve: Right. But yeah, podcasting is just an amazing outreach tool. So there's another way to accelerate your networking without having to physically go anywhere for a conference.

**[00:29:00]**

Jamie: Because you do have kids, we were just talking about this. Which conference are you going to? You're like I can't go away for that much because I've got small kids, so this makes it difficult. So I agree with leveling up your network, but what did that really do for you? Because a lot of people will be like: oh, I'm just going to network, and it's eventually going to turn into money somehow. And so I get that you're asking for guest posts, but why else are you putting such a focus on networking?

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Steve: Sure. So networking usually, for me at least, has lead to masterminds, and then masterminds has lead to strategies, and then strategies has lead to money.

Jamie: I love this. So take us through the process of how it went from mastermind, strategy, to money? We want to know the money at the end point.

Steve: Yeah. So after talking to some people – and ill just give you a quick example – so I was at an ecommerce conference, where I met up with a bunch of guys. And we just started talking randomly about things that were working for our stores. And then I was like would you like to get together, you know, nothing major, just like once a month or once every other week, just to talk about what's working for our business.

**[00:30:00]** And then we'd get together and we'd share things. And inevitably there would be something that they would mention that's working for them that would get me all excited. And I'll just give you a quick example of something I'm doing right now. I'm doing a giveaway for my linens' store right now. And because I heard from one of my friends Mike Jackness, who runs the Ecom Crew podcast, I'm just going to give him a quick shout out, and his giveaways.

He gave me all of his numbers for his business, and they were insane. He was paying something like 30 cents f ran email subscriber all through this giveaway. And he just showed me his entire – all of his numbers, the software he was using, all of his campaigns. And I was like: wow, this is like priceless info, so I'm going to go try this right now. So stuff like that, and that always leads to money.

So it's more like the strategies and stuff, nothing's that direct, meaning like; hey, this guy is going to give me like 50K on some – I mean, that can happen, I guess. I've done a couple JV deals, where people have sent me their traffic, but that's not my primary reason usually for the networking.

**[00:31:00]**

Jamie: I love that you said that though, because this is one of the reasons why I still love coaching. I get to see everybody's numbers. I get to see everything that's working right now. I feel like I am on the

cutting edge of what is actually working in all different types of businesses that I can sort of pull together and be like this worked here, I wonder if it will work here? But most people – no offense to most people – are sitting at home, if they're working for themselves, in a little bubble of like I'm just reading information online.

But to tell you the truth, the stuff that's shared, like you said the numbers, the exact tactics, aren't usually all displayed everywhere online for everybody to see. So that guys not going to open up the curtain and be like: oh, this is exactly what I'm doing, look at this. Because people could steal it like crazy, like we were talking about before.

Jamie: Here's the thing about, like you see all these blog posts out there that quote-unquote give you the exact strategies and what not.

Jamie: Yes.

**[00:32:00]**

Steve: But there's only so much you can write about in the blog post. And there's this tendency when you write a blog post also to pick out the things that work and emphasize those, but then you don't hear about all the crap that didn't work. And that crap is actually very valuable. And that comes out when you're in like a mastermind or when you're at the bar, of what not to do.

Jamie: Exactly, they're like I tried this seven times. And you're like I was about to try that strategy; oh, good to know. But they probably learned a ridiculous amount. I've been talking about doing life coaching and having somebody actually go through this and putting it on the podcast, so people can hear everything, the ups and the downs because otherwise you hear this, which is great because I love having you on, Steve. He's amazing. Look how amazing he did, everything worked perfectly. And of course we know that that's not the case. You've have ups and downs, I'm assuming, as we go through.

Steve: Yeah, sure.

Jamie: So let's actually talk about that for a second. What sort of down have you had to sort of come back from while you're growing these? Because you had a full time job, children, and two

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businesses, which you know, overachiever, but I'm sure there's been some down points, tell me about those and how you got over them?

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Steve: Yeah. See most of the down points have been – here's my philosophy in general. I'm like a slow and steady guy. So when I pick something that I want to do, I tell myself: okay, I'm going to do this for three to five years no matter what. So blogging was that thing. So I said okay, I'm going to write a post once a week for the rest of my life. For blogging it what's like the rest of my life type thing. And I'll just do it rain or shine.

Jamie: Before you knew it was going to be successful at all?

Steve: Before I knew it was going to be successful, because it was going to be like a personal journal, in the worst case. And once I started making like even \$10.00 a week or whatever it was for ad cents that wasn't like enough. Like, okay, if it pays for my utility bills, I'm happy to do this. And so a three year minimum on anything that I do. So the hardest part for me was with my ecommerce store, because once you – it's funny, once you start making money online, you gain all this confidence.

**[00:34:00]**

And once you have that confidence whatever you do afterwards, you're not going to give up on it. You'll find a way to get it done. So with my ecommerce store in the beginning, I didn't know how to build any traffic or what not, so my biggest challenge early on was learning how to run paper click ads. And back then when we first started, which was in 2007, there was only Google. And just imagine, like you have this money, and you're hemorrhaging it.

You're blowing like hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of dollars potentially per day, and you're not seeing any business because you're learning. And it's only after you start making your sales do you make all that money back. And so when it costs money to learn that was my toughest part.

Jamie: I feel like that's what everyone – well, most of everybody's toughest part is. They start going in and they're like when do I stop? It's *The Dip* by Seth Godin, where they're like I'm putting in money, putting money in, putting money in, it just must not be

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working. How long did it take you before you really started seeing something come back?

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Steve: It was about six months I would say.

Jamie: That's a long time.

Steve: It is a long time.

Jamie: Like, every day getting up and going and I'm going to give more money out today, awesome.

Steve: Yeah, here's the funny thing, like when you're hemorrhaging money, it's just really hard, but you have to – as long as you have like a methodology. And I can speak from just AdWords, like I knew that just based on people even just clicking, I knew there was interest. And it wasn't until I had other pieces of the puzzle into play. So like when it comes to ecommerce for example, just bringing traffic into your site, the average conversion rate is like 2 percent, which means 98 percent of the people aren't going to buy.

Jamie: That's a lot of kicks.

Steve: And so to the key that I was missing was bringing those people back to the site. A lot of people just run ads and then they're done, and they say it doesn't work. But then they don't realize that you have to have all these other pieces in place, like the retargeting. You have to have email in place.

**[00:36:00]**

And you got to bring those people back like five or six times before they want to buy something. And so it took me a long time to figure that out.

Jamie: And for anyone that's not committed like you were, they would have given up, so I applaud you for sticking it out and figuring those pieces out to begin with. But isn't there other – like, I feel like I love that you said the puzzle piece thing, because I feel like there's a whole bunch of those, where people aren't even getting the full picture. Like, we were just talking in my last interview about positioning, and like what people actually care about.

And stuff that is logical, but if you don't have that puzzle piece along with all the other ones, and then bringing them back, it

doesn't work. It's actually, it's not easy. It's simple as far as we have this many puzzle pieces, but it's not easy to figure out how they all fit together. So give everybody some tips on figuring out their own puzzle pieces. Let's say they have an ecommerce store, how do they actually figure that stuff out?

Steve: Yeah, I'll give you a great piece, which I just kind of discovered relatively recently. So we sell handkerchiefs, and when we first launched those we catered those to weddings. And people who get married are typically between 25 and 35 years old I would say.

[00:37:00] And what's funny was just relatively recently I took all of my customers and I popped them into Facebook, and then I used Audience Insights. And I found that a large portion of my customer base are people who are like 60 years old. And that blew my mind. And so by looking at that I created a completely separate campaign on Facebook just for those 60 year old people, which has started doing really well. And those people actually will buy on a regular basis, as opposed to the wedding one offs. So something like that just blew my mind.

Jamie: And what's so funny is you're like how did I not see that before hand? Because that's selling multiple times to one person, which is so much cheaper for marketing anyway than selling a one off.

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Steve: Yeah, and we've been doing this, so for our recurring revenue for our linens' business, we actually sell to event planners and wedding planners.

Jamie: That makes sense.

Steve: But we had been just focusing on weddings. And then later on we branched out to like funerals because a lot of people used handkerchiefs for their funerals. It turns out sororities, and these are all these little things where you can get insight, yeah sororities, they like to engrave their – I'm not in a sorority obviously or have never been – but their Greek symbols.

Jamie: Yeah, but what would they do with them, keep them in their purse?

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Steve: My wife's part of a sorority, and that's – she kind of came up with the idea. And we just kind of looked and people were buying them, so we just put together a –

Jamie: So hey, they'll give us money, we'll make them for you.

Steve: Yeah, exactly. But I think that Facebook Audience Insights is a key. And health way you figure out new markets is you just use Facebook and you plug in different interests. And just start running ads and figuring out who's clicking on them based on whatever interests they are.

**[00:39:00]** And then if you find that a lot of people are clicking on this ad, then you just kind of delve deeper and just try different ad copy to get them to buy. And you get them on a retargeting pixel, and you get them on an email list, keep bringing them back, and hopefully you'll wear them down long enough and they finally purchase something.

Jamie: Wearing them down, I love it. We blast them and wear them down, and this is how we sell, it's awesome.

Steve: Hey, that's how I got my wife. You just got to keep going at it until you wear her down.

Jamie: You are a committed, committed, committed man. Three to five years, no matter what it takes. She will hate me or love me, one or the other. But that's really impressive, and I don't feel like especially the people that are in the first year, where they're like is this even for me, have that foresight to look and really commit three years in. Because you learned so much as you're going through. And if you're committed, you make different choices and different decisions, than if you're going: am I in or am I out? Am I in or am I out? Because then you can back out at any second, and you don't really go all in like you should.

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Steve: It changes your business model too because people who want money quick, they tend to pick things that are more one off, meaning they won't last in the long term. And so I'll give you an example, like right now there's this craze for those little Nintendo boxes, I don't know, people are selling them on eBay for like \$400.00 or what not. And so that would to me be like a really short

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term, like you need money quick, so it's a short term thing, so if you see those in the store, you buy them all up and you list them on eBay, but that's not going to last.

That's an extreme example. Whereas if you're committed for three to five years let's say, you're going to pick something, and you're going to probably build your own product maybe. Come up with a nice manufacturer in the ecommerce world, and so you can have consistent product in and out that's more predictable. So it affects your decision –

Jamie: Well, and then you have the time to be able to learn the marketing side, so that way you can actually level it up, instead of just having a six month window of sell as much as you can as fast as you possibly can.

Steve: Right.

Jamie: And learning the marketing on that kind of can be tough, though if it's trending sometimes that works a little bit better. When you're going into the ecommerce side, because I feel like it's a little daunting, this is why blogging seems easier because you can get a website and you can write on it very easy.

**[00:41:00]** We're talking about manufacturing or something like, it's like: oh, whoa, I don't really know how to start there. So what do you suggest, and I know you have a ton of resources on your site too, and of course we will link that up, but what do you suggest for people trying to figure out: okay, I want to start an ecommerce store. I don't know exactly what to do or where to go, or what I even care about? Like, you said there's lots of trending software, but is that where I start? I just randomly look up a bunch of products?

Jamie: No, that's not – no, that's not how you start. So what I like to do is there's this tool called Jungle Scout.

Jamie: Yes, I've –

Steve: You can go on –

Jamie: Sorry. I know the founders, they're awesome.

Steve: Greg Mercer, yeah.

Jamie: We spoke in Bangkok together.

Steve: Oh, you did?

Jamie: Yeah.

Steve: Okay, awesome. So basically it will tell you approximately how much people research making selling a particular item on Amazon. And so you can kind of go through and just look at – I mean, obviously it involves brains storming. You got to think of some things and you can type them in and see how much they're making. And you can go through and you can look at some of those products, and what people are complaining about.

**[00:42:00]** And so the idea here is you're trying to build a better mousetrap, or some sort of better product than what is available online. And once you've had that, you can go – people will tell you to go on Alibaba. I actually prefer to just fly to China and go to like a trade show. But the easiest way without having to travel is to just go on Alibaba, try to find a manufacturer. And tell them what you want to make and just get samples. And then you just – it's just a slow progression into finding, and then finding a good manufacturer for what you want to sell.

And often, it's just an iterative process until you've refined it, and then once you've had that though, what's nice about it is it's, there's a high barrier to entry, right? Like you said, it's very intimidating to actually have to create a physical product. But on the flipside, people have to go through all that effort to copy you, so in my opinion it's a much more sustainable business. And you can make sure to turn – you can make money faster than a blog, which in my case took a long time.

**[00:43:00]**

Jamie: So why would it – so if you had the choice to go blog, knowing what you know because it's better and more profitable, or ecommerce, which is harder to get into, so there's that curve, which is great, and maybe lasts a little longer and all that fun stuff, and you can make money faster, which one would you choose now?

Steve: So the reason why we started with ecommerce is because we wanted to replace her income in a year. And so if you want money

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faster, ecommerce I would say is the way to go. If you have like a much longer timeframe and you're not in a hurry, I would say the blogging slash building an audience route is probably better in the long, long, long term, right? Because once people know who you are, no one can really copy you or take that away from you. Whereas with my linens business, you know in theory someone could just knock us – it'd be really hard now since we've been doing this for so long and we have a brand, but it's similar.

**[00:44:00]** Ecommerce you can make money a lot faster, but building a brand takes a lot longer. Whereas with blogging, you're still building a brand, it's like a personal brand, but you don't have that stuff to make money immediately with. If that makes sense?

Jamie: It makes perfect sense. Do you feel like – because those are two very separate business models – do you feel like there's a lot of crossover when you're looking at marketing and business models and all that stuff?

Steve: Oh, yeah, totally.

Jamie: So what is the crossover, what are those things that you got really, really good at that made a difference on both businesses?

Steve: Yeah, so for my blog I would say email is probably 85, 90 percent of the business. And I transfer all those email marketing skills over to my ecommerce store. Well, so we blog about weddings, and so I've been writing the email auto responders for weddings. It requires a different mindset. I have to like pretend I'm a girl. But anyway, it's like when someone buys something, I have a post purchase sequence that introduces them to other products that we sell that are kind of related, with the hope that they'll buy something else.

**[00:45:00]** I have sequences where I, you know I have pop-ups where I try to get them on an email list. We offer an arts and crafts book. And then we send them out crafts that they can do for their weddings and that sort of thing. So it's very similar, except I enjoy writing for the blog more than I do for the wedding store.

Jamie: You know, you can hire a copywriter that's a woman that's about to get married, you know that, right?

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Steve: Yeah, you can do that. I'm just really anal when it comes to anything copy related. Like, I'll contract out like Pinterest or social media stuff, but I tend to be very hesitant to contract out copy.

Jamie: Well, you know your audience really well, and you know how they react to things.

Steve: Yes.

Jamie: But that's the piece that I think is so interesting, when you know what that it is nobody can take that away from you. So tell me more, because especially on the email side, because we were just talking about PushCrew and stuff like that. Do you feel like email is going down? I was talking with Noah **Cagen** in Bangkok about this, too.

**[00:46:00]** Like, email I feel like everyone's like get on the email bandwagon. And yet open rates seem to be going down, deliverability is going down, everybody is kind of annoyed with all this. So where do you see email going considering it's making that much of your revenue?

Steve: It still makes a ton of money for me, so I don't think – I think it's like every year I read some sort of post that says email is going to die, but it just never does. I think it will get diluted because there's so many other ways to get alerts. Like, for example, like Facebook Messenger, people are starting to get people to sign up for that.

Jamie: Which is kind of like email anyway, it's so annoying.

Steve: Yeah, it's kind of like email. The whole PushCrew thing is kind of like email. It's interrupting you with something to click on as you're browsing. So it's going to get diluted, and I think the best way to deal with it is to try all of those things and just see what sticks because different things will work better for different platforms.

**[00:47:00]**

Jamie: How do you make 85 to 90 percent just on email, like are you doing launches, campaigns, can you give us some tips that would be awesome for that?

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Steve: Sure. So I have a 30 email sequence that sells my course. And just to give you a quick breakdown, like the first seven steps or so is a very detailed video tutorial on how to get started. And then the remaining parts is just getting people to get to know me and my personality and what some of my students are up to. So that's one way, and that just generates sales of my class on a daily basis actually. And then also with that list, like maybe once a month I'll do a webinar, where I'll just get on and I'll teach everything live, and I'll answer questions live.

And sometimes I'll offer some sort of discount or a promotion to get people to sign up within a certain deadline. And so between those two things, including Facebook ads is how I make the majority of the money on the blog.

Jamie: Okay, so good. So you have new people coming into this funnel. It's not just the people that are going to your site and sort of finding you that way.

**[00:48:00]**

Steve: Right.

Jamie: You actually go and do pay traffic, too?

Steve: Yes.

Jamie: And then you warm them all up and then you sell them the webinar.

Steve: Yep.

Jamie: But it sounds like you've gotten way better at this as we go, so what's one or two things that you've learned in this process that was really fruitful, whether it be like a subject line, or whether it be like I changed this, and it made all the difference in the world.

Steve: So are we talking about ads, or just email, or?

Jamie: The funnel, so cold to sale.

Steve: The funnel.

Jamie: Yes.

Steve: Cold to sale. Okay, so one of the keys, and this seems really obvious now, but it wasn't to me at the time, was go ahead and ask people why they aren't buying your stuff? And then write a post in your email auto responder sequence that addresses each one of those points thoroughly.

Jamie: I love this.

Steve: It sounds dumb.

Jamie: No, it sounds – yes, exactly. You're like: oh, it's logic, huh, who knew?

**[00:49:00]**

Steve: And here's the other thing, I produce a video, and I also write a -- so in one of my emails I'll have a video link, and then I'll actually write it out in text also. And occasionally I'll have a podcast too because people like to consume things in different ways. Some people just like to read, like an old guy like me I like to read. Some people like to just watch a video, and so you got to cater to all the different people that are on your list.

Jamie: I just had a client do the, it's kind of like **[inaudible]** **[00:49:22]** why didn't you buy, or did you hate the email or whatever? So we did that same thing, just a really small email list, hundreds of replies. And then we just took that copy and made emails for the rest of it going like: oh, you said this. Because we calculated how much people said of what and what their language was, and then you just use that. Nobody can give you that information, that's the thing.

You can listen to a thousand podcasts, somebody can be like use this subject line, you actually getting the information from your people of exactly what they care about or what they don't care about is mind blowing. So see, what were some of the things that you implemented, which made all the difference in the world, and what did you see for –

**[00:50:00]**

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Steve: Yeah, so it's just simple survey that you send out. And people were asking how much time is going to take? How many of your students are successful?

Jamie: Great question.

Steve: So I just sent out a survey to my class, how much money they're making and – so here's the thing, so I did that, and I should have done it a long time ago. It turns out that 59 percent of the people who had signed up for my class, been with me for a year, who actually launched a product, are actually making at least four figures per month. And 9 percent of those people are making \$50,000 per month. And so I was like okay I'm adding that to my copy on my sales page, and you know stuff like that, right?

Jamie: Heck, yeah.

Steve: It seems obvious, but most – I didn't think about doing it until people started asking me those questions.

Jamie: But that's the thing that I feel is so interesting is that we sort of get in our own little rut, and we're like this is how we do it, and we go to conferences and we learn stuff. And they're like yeah, you should do this stuff.

Steve: But you're actually going: oh, by the way this one thing changed everything for me, that's the stuff that we need to be talking about and paying attention to, because there's literally a thousand other things that people could be doing. And you actually giving them what they want is amazing. The fact that your course actually does that much, too. Because no offense most online courses are kind of crap, and most people won't do them, or won't even implement half the stuff that's there.

If you can sort of dangle the carrot of somebody making \$50,000 – or a lot of people making \$50,000 a month, I bet they're going to be like: okay, we'll actually commit for three to five years if it actually will work because it's that belief that's the beginning that they need to change. I love that. We do have to start wrapping up because I had no idea that it was this much time. I know, right? So let me ask you the last question I always ask.

And we'll have you back on the show because I feel like you know so much about the ins and outs of the little pieces that you've

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tweaked from a really long time that I would love to dive even deeper into some of this stuff. But what's one action listeners can take this week to help move them forward toward their goal of a million?

**[00:52:00]**

Steve: You know, you warned me about this prior to coming on.

Jamie: And then you forgot.

Steve: And I had some ready and I just forgot all about it. Okay, so one thing that they can do to take action. Okay, so I would say that you should look at what you're offering and figure out why it's better than everyone else's, and then make that front and center above the fold on whatever landing page that you have. I can't tell you how many people don't do that.

Jamie: Me neither. Oh, my gosh, everybody that's listening do that, or put it in your calendar to actually do that, your conversions will go up. I swear this is what I do as a coach is just going: hey, you should maybe do this because that's what you said they care about and you just put it there.

Jamie: You should maybe let you know like what you're good at, like as soon as they –

Jamie: Well, we get stuck in our own heads and we forget about that stuff, so thank goodness you said that. Everybody else and of course if you have questions let us know, but make sure you go ahead and put that on there.

Steve: It should be blatantly obvious as to why yours is better. We know why yours is better Steve because people actually do stuff and actually make money, huh, who knew? Thank you so much for coming on today. I really appreciate it. Tell us your links again, so that everyone can follow you, or Twitter, or Facebook, or wherever you are socially, so we can love you also.

Steve: Yeah. I mean, the easiest way, and if you want to look at my email sequence, you can head over to [MyWifeQuitHerJob.com](http://MyWifeQuitHerJob.com). You sign up right there on the front page. And if you're even remotely curious about ecommerce, that will kind of give you a really good

intro. And if you are getting married, I can hook you up with some hankies at [BumblebeeLinens.com](http://BumblebeeLinens.com).

Jamie: That was smooth, man. That was super smooth.

Steve: Oh, yeah, and since we're talking about this, I also run a conference about ecommerce, so if you're really interested in selling physical products, it's called [SellersSumit.com](http://SellersSumit.com). It's going to be in Florida in May of next year, so you can come and hang out.

Jamie: And a bunch of my clients went to your event and loved it by the way, just so you know, so a little testimonial for you there.

**[00:54:00]**

Steve: Awesome.

Jamie: I really appreciate it.

Steve: Cool.

Jamie: Thanks so much for coming on the show today Steve, I really appreciate you.

Steve: Yeah, thanks for having me.

**[00:57:14]**

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**Duration: 45 minutes**