

## Episode 2: 5 Reasons Why You Should Be Blogging Today

Welcome to the *Launch Your Blog Biz Podcast*. I'm your host, Lauren McManus. I used to be a full time tax accountant and CPA with a whole lot of limiting beliefs, and "I can't"s whenever I thought about starting my own business. Fast forward a few months, and I quit my job after starting and growing my first blog to six figures in just a year. This is my space to share, and yours to listen and grow, about how to build and scale your own blogging business and design a life on your terms. Let's get started!

Hey ya'll! Welcome to our second episode of the podcast. I'm so excited. So I want to start out this episode by saying that it's not just going to be for brand new bloggers. So if you are just getting started, or even if you've been at this for a few months, or even a couple of years, it doesn't really matter, because wherever you're at in your journey this episode is going to be a really great reminder of why you're here in the first place.

I think that it's going to remind you of some really important things that you've faced along your journey. Some of the fears, doubts, uncertainties, those feelings of "I can't", and just generally when you're feeling like you're not realizing your full potential in your space. I think that this episode is going to do a lot for your motivation and inspiration to help you push past some of these roadblocks.

Now, perhaps you're going to keep listening now because you've already experienced some of this. Or, maybe you're in what we call the "poop phase" of blogging. If so, if any of the above do apply to you, I really encourage you to just keep on listening. I really think that you're going to find this episode super helpful.

During this episode, I'm going to talk about some very real expectations that you can have. I'm going to try my best never to glamorize certain aspects of this lifestyle, or ever make it seem like something that it isn't. I'm just here, sharing my personal experiences from what I've learned, and I'm going to try to make them as relatable as possible for you. And, as I said before, what I really would love from this episode is to help you realize your true potential in this space.

Ok, now, one of the first things that I want to talk about here is not, actually, money--which is probably what a lot of you thought I was going to start out with. I know that money is often the first reason that I would start with whenever I talked about some of the benefits of this lifestyle, and it is definitely a good reason; but what I've learned that is even more important than money is actually something called freedom.

And I think that this is often something that we confuse money with, because money can buy you some certain degree of freedom, right? But in this case, I'm really talking about freedom in many other different aspects. So, freedom from a 9-5, from some of those rules and limitations that you experience in a 9-5. Freedom from certain limiting beliefs, salaries, limited vacation time, we're talking financial freedom, time freedom... Honestly, this can mean so many different things, and I want to challenge you to think about what freedom means to you as I start going through all the stuff in this episode.

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For me, some of the limitations that I felt really weren't just from my salary, although I did attach that to also limited vacation time, and not being able to actually afford vacation. What I actually felt the most was not being able to spend more time outdoors. For me, spending time outdoors and in nature is really important, and I just remember those days of sitting in my office, and looking outside, and just watching the sun and the cars go by, and the leaves blowing in the wind, and thinking, what I wouldn't give to be outside right now. To just feel that sunshine on my skin and to just do the things during the day that normal people did, I guess, that didn't have a 9-5.

Those things that you have to tackle solely on the weekends, because you only have two out of seven days a week to really get out during the day. And I really remember being in Dallas, and right when the weather would turn really great from the winter time is when we would hit tax season. That would be when I actually worked much longer hours. And I remember for weeks on end leaving my house in the dark in the morning, and coming back in the dark in the evening. And, it was just really tough, because I just really, really felt like I was just waking up and rinsing and repeating every single day.

So for me, some of those freedoms were really what I wanted most. And, not even just to feel the sunshine, but some of the smaller freedoms that were really important to me was, like, getting to work out and exercise during the day whenever I really wanted to. I've always been really passionate about health and fitness, and it's something that really matters to me, so not having to reserve my workouts for crazy early in the morning or really late in the evenings because that's the only time that I have outside of work, but instead being able to go to the gym during the day, or run outside in the middle of the day. For me, working out during the day is what makes me feel the best.

One of the other really great things is being able to grocery shop or go to the mall in the middle of the day, when nobody else is around. For me, I really, really like to be able to not stand in lines. I've learned to really value that time that I have. And, once you get used to not waiting in lines, not sitting in rush-hour traffic every day, you become hyper-aware of the time that you spend doing those activities.

Those were some of the even smaller freedoms that really did mean a lot to me. And, just one more to add here, I'm a morning person, as well. So, for me, when I first quit my job, one of the things that I relished most was being able to get up in the morning, and just have a quiet, peaceful cup of coffee without having to run and jump in my car and head to work. I don't know what it is for you--what simple, small thing that might mean a lot like that in your day; but for me, that cup of coffee is still something that I cherish very, very much.

So, now, ya'll, I set alarms for myself--not for my boss. And I can tell you that that makes all the difference. So having this kind of blogging business will provide you an incredible amount of freedom to completely design your day exactly as you want it.

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So, regardless of where you are, I want you to think about what kind of freedom might look like to you, what kind of freedom might mean the most to you. So, it could be something like wanting to travel more, it could be wanting to spend more time with your kids, or having more control over your schedule. It could be something as simple as, maybe you want to sleep in every day, because maybe you're not a morning person. Think about what kind of freedoms that you would enjoy from being able to completely design your schedule, and think about what that would mean to you.

Now, the next thing I do want to talk about actually is money. Because I do know that it is a really big factor for many of you. I was no different--I definitely got myself into credit card debt for a little while when I was an accountant, and I definitely remember living paycheck to paycheck, and slowly actually getting into credit card debt, because I did prioritize my social life and other things over paying off that credit card debt. And it was something that I felt tremendously at the time.

So I definitely felt the pressures of the glass ceilings that I was going to hit with my salary, and I could kind of see where the next 30 years of my life were at the CPA firm that I was working at. Like, I knew about an average salary to expect at each, you know, five year, ten years, or whatever. And of course, if I had gone off to create my own company, or become CFO of some massive company, of course I could have definitely pushed those boundaries in some way. But I definitely still felt it.

Before I get too deep into this, I do want to say that I don't really want to dwell on the money aspect of it; and I really don't want you to, either. Because I really don't think that money is a really great motivator here. I think that it can cause us to take a lot of wrong turns, and make a lot of wrong decisions, and really run our businesses in the wrong way if we're not careful. I think that getting too hung up on money and wanting more of it as quickly as possible is going to keep up focused on the wrong things. So, a whole lot of wrongness if you haven't gotten my point now.

And trust me, ya'll, I know this because I've been there. I've been there myself, Alex and I have made those mistakes in our blogging career, we have been way too focused on money, and not enough focused on our audience, and some of the other important aspects of our business. And it has caused us to make a lot of wrong turns, make a lot of mistakes, and ultimately cost us time and money in the end.

And really, my point with this whole money thing is that I want to impress upon you that you can create your business and run it however you want. You can write articles and record YouTube videos; you can create a podcast; you can become an Instagram influencer if that's your thing--it's certainly not mine. I learned that a couple of years ago.

But my point is that you can make anywhere from honestly, and extra \$300-\$500 a month, cover groceries, or, you know, spend on some extra vacations. Or, you can grow it into something that makes you thousands of dollars every month.

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But it's entirely up to you! If you only want to make a couple extra hundred dollars a month, that's perfectly awesome. You might be super busy with kiddos, and you know, whatever you have going on with your life, that you don't want to actually reach for the stars, right? That is perfectly okay. You do not have to make this a full-time job, and you don't have to reach for the stars if you don't want to.

I will say that Alex and I did dream of the stars, but for us, we did have a monetary goal of earning \$10,000 a month with our first blog. And, we settled on that number because for us, that number meant that--we were splitting it, of course--but that number meant that we would be able to quit our full time jobs.

So, that was the number that we settled on. And honestly, we started growing it much higher, and higher, and higher, once we started digging much deeper and deeper into it and we learned how much we loved it.

That was the moment that we really started reaching and reaching for the stars, and just to tell you--just to give you an idea of what is possible--Alex and I have taken two blogs now to earn a combined \$100,000 per month blogging. And, it's a number that we've sat pretty consistently at over the last couple of years.

But I will say, ya'll, that it did take us a lot of time, and money, and work, and tears, and mimosas. It took us a lot to get there. But the best part is, is that you are in control of this aspect of your business. You don't have to wait for any more raises or any glass ceilings. In less than two years, I quadrupled the salary that I was making as a CPA. Which is pretty incredible!

So, I just wouldn't have been able to reach those heights at the current place that I was at--and especially not with the same mindset that I was at.

But as I said before, I do want to always be realistic about this. I'm not going to promise you the stars, and I'm not going to promise you that they are easy, so there is a flip side to all of this control. And that flip side is that you are responsible for making something of this. The burden and the pressure of growing this and becoming something successful really does lie on you, and it is a lot of responsibility.

The possibilities absolutely are endless as far as time, investments and returns are concerned, so if that's something that you want, you do have to put the work into it.

And the last thing that I want to say here is that when it comes to the money aspect of it, and you think about how much money you might want to make from this, I do think it actually is important to set goals. Because that \$10,000 a month goal really did give us something tangible to work towards, rather than just working towards, you know, general success.

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But I want you to think about why you're doing this. Again, think about those freedoms, and think about what kind of role money plays into that. Think about the life that you want to live, and what kind of money that you need in order to do this.

Maybe start with the bare minimum, or the amount that you feel that you'd be comfortable with. Or if you do want to just reach for the stars from the get-go, that's absolutely okay, too. Just make sure that your mindset doesn't become obsessive about money, because this should not be the most important why for why you're doing this.

Okay, next: I would ordinarily segue into travel here, because travel was a really important reason for me. And I will talk about the travel aspect of it. But there's something that I want to discuss that's more important first. And I think that it's more important because it's a better motivating factor for you to continue pushing forward. And I think that the rewards are, maybe not higher than travel, depending on where travel lies on your list of reasons, but for me, it's become super important, and something I'm super passionate about.

And this reason is that you will learn an incredible amount of new skills through starting a blogging business like this. The honest truth is that it will challenge you in the best of ways, and it will help you learn new and transferable skills. Skills that can help you in different businesses, or in your personal relationships, or in your relationship with yourself. Literally, it can help you in every aspect of your life. And, maybe this part sounds a bit boring to you. And if it does, please just hold on, because I have some stories that I want to share that I really think will help some of you push past some of the projects and places where you really get stuck in your business.

So, I want to use myself as an example here, because I think many of you might be able to relate. I know that it can be easy to think of Alex and I as these professionals, these experts, who really knew what they were doing, and were just born to do this. And, maybe you don't think that, maybe you think that we're just screw-ups, and we got lucky, I don't know. But, I think that you might think that, because I often thought that about some of the people that we looked up to in the beginning.

I felt like they looked beautiful on camera, they were great public speakers, and I'm just an accountant who isn't good at those things. But, I want you to throw out all of those things out of your head right now, because I want to tell you where I started.

So, I was an accountant, and when Alex and I first started our first blog, he wrote every single piece of our content. And I mean, I'm talking about every single article, every email, and every bit of communication with the outside world. I was over here editing. I added photos, I researched, I researched social media, I handled the operations and all the finances on the back end, and that's really just the way that it was for the first few months. Because I didn't think that I could write. I constantly told myself that I'm not good at writing. I thought that Alex had a great voice, and that he was a good writer, and I really just said, you know what, you're better at that, so you do that.

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But ya'll, this is what is called a limiting belief. And it is honestly one of the worst enemies to growth and success in absolutely every area of your life--your business, your relationships with others, your relationship with yourself. Those words of "I can't," "I'm not good enough," they have more power than you could ever imagine.

And there's another big, scary one underneath that that we don't often like to admit, and that one's, "I'm afraid to do this," "I'm afraid to put myself out there, because I don't think I'm going to be good enough." This is what truly holds us back from realizing our true potential.

And honestly, I'm so incredibly grateful for my blogging business to have been able to show me this. Because it is something that I have been able to help put into place in other areas of my life, like my personal life and my relationships. But the good news is, is that this is simply a belief. It's not fact, and it's not truth by any means.

Because, ya'll, I can tell you that now, I write pretty much all of our content. With of course the exception of the YouTube content--that's definitely still Alex' domain. But I have since taken over writing every article, every email, every podcast episode, and also most of our course content.

And I can tell you that there are a few reasons for that. One is that I just needed to do it for my business. There were things that Alex was also better suited for in our business, and other areas he needed to learn--for example, YouTube. He became very passionate about that, and he needed the time to be able to learn how to get on camera and produce videos. So someone had to pick up that slack. I had to start learning to write.

But through that process of needing to do it for my business to grow, if I wanted to continue to see growth, I actually found that I wasn't horrible at it, and the more I worked at it, the better I got.

And also, on top of all that, I actually found that I really, really liked it. And we know that we all like to do things that we're good at, right? But I personally believe that that personal connection to our audience, to you, is more important than anything else. And it's a part of my business that I absolutely love taking ownership of, I love that responsibility.

So, on top of that whole writing thing, I've also been super terrified to go on video. And I'll be totally honest in that I haven't quite gotten over that one. I have in the sense of I record videos all the time for my courses, but my face isn't them, so it's definitely a bit different. But my first time that I did record a video for our YouTube channel...I think it took me multiple hours, probably countless attempts, to try to get this right. Because I didn't even know how to record, or edit, any kind of videos, so I would try to get it all right in one go without doing any edits whatsoever. So, I spent forever on it.

And I still--I don't think I'm ever going to forget this, but after we hit the publish button on that first video, within the first few hours, someone left a comment and told me that I had something called "vocal fry," and something along the lines of, you know, I was a difficult person to listen to.

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Now, this led me down a rabbit-hole Google search of trying to figure out what vocal fry even is, which then led to many tears after I learned that I did, in fact, have vocal fry, and that I don't sound very good on camera. So, this person was right, and that stung. Because it took a lot of courage for me to put myself out there, and I knew that I wasn't a great public speaker. It was something that I was struggling with a lot. So as soon as someone confirmed that for me, and put me down, it was tough. But, the whole negativity of that isn't really what I'm trying to say. Because there's always going to be haters, and nay-sayers, and negativity, and thankfully they are few and far-between. And the thousands that will give you that positive feedback are so much more important, those are the people that you should focus on.

But the point is that I did put myself out there, and then I did it again, and again. Despite the fears that I felt that I just couldn't do it. And guess what? I did get better. At least while recording the course lessons. I still do let Alex hold down the fort on the YouTube channel. But another example is that I actually tried to push Alex into this podcasting role for a couple of years, because I thought that he'd be better at it. But behind that statement was actually the limiting belief of, "I don't think that I can do this," or, "I don't think that I'm going to be able to do it well enough." And even deeper than that was just the fact that I was scared. I was scared that people wouldn't receive this podcast well, that they would make fun of my voice, or whatever. I was just scared, and I felt like I wasn't ready. I didn't know if I could ever make that next step.

And, ya'll, here I am. It's episode two, and I will tell you that I am still learning every day with this, I know that I'm going to get a lot better with time, but it does feel really good to put myself out there and to get positive feedback.

So I will say, on that note, if you find this episode at all helpful, and if some of this is speaking to you, please do leave a review on the podcast and let us know. If it doesn't speak to you in a positive way, and you just think that I have "vocal fry" and you're over it, please do keep your negative comments to yourself, because they do hurt, and we should always be spreading more and more positivity in this world. I'm aware that I have a lot of room for improvement, and it makes me excited.

I absolutely love this growth process, and this is what I want from you at every stage that you have along this journey. I want you to be able to start to recognize when you do feel those feelings of, "I can't," or, "I'm scared." I want you to think about them, and I want you to do your best to try to push past them. And all of the different why's that we are discussing in this episode today--those are the things that are going to make you push past this stuff and go the extra mile.

The bottom line here is that I went from an accountant with a financial and very spreadsheet-heavy background, to an entire new skill set of writing, marketing, sales, public speaking, and so much more. So please don't ever feel like you aren't cut out for this. If an accountant--a tax accountant, at that--and a personal trainer can do it, you absolutely can, too.

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All right, ya'll. Another area of growth that I want to talk about is actually travel. It's something that has been a really big area of growth for me since starting my blogging business.

I don't know if it's going to be a big reason for you or not, but for me personally, I always dreamed of being able to travel more. But I definitely, at my old job, felt those feelings of A), I don't have the time to travel, because I have limited vacation days; and B), I can't really afford to travel.

At least I couldn't afford to travel beyond the beach vacations that I often had. I grew up around the South my whole life, living in Louisiana and Florida, so those were the only really accessible vacations to me. But what I really wanted deep inside was to be able to really travel. And I mean to Europe, Asia, Australia. I wanted to be able to see the world, but also to be able to see it while I was young enough to enjoy it. Younger than being 65 or 70, and finally retired and able to travel.

So, when Alex and I did reach our goal of \$10,000 a month, we actually booked our first international trip to Nicaragua. We went for a whole month long, with a community of other remote workers called the WiFi Tribe.

If you follow me on Instagram at all, you're probably familiar with this group of people that I travel with, because I've been travelling on and off with them for the last, at least five years now. And my passion for this part of my life really was ignited on this very first trip with the WiFi tribe that Alex and I took in Nicaragua.

Because we were able to wake up and have that great first cup of coffee in the morning overlooking the beach and the coastline. We would hop on our computers in the morning and work throughout the day, and then in the evening we would have the best fish tacos I've ever had in my life, and be able to watch the most incredible sunsets in the evenings with some really awesome people from around the world.

This kind of travel is an incredible way to discover the world. I generally spend about a month at different locations, sometimes more; and I've now been to over 30 countries in the last four years, working from cafes everywhere from southern Chile to Iceland, Prague, Vietnam, and Bali. And I don't know if any of your travel dreams are quite this big, maybe you have a family to consider, or maybe you even want to take your whole family with you. Or maybe you're a homebody, who doesn't even care about travellings, and I've just missed the entire boat with this reason. That's entirely possible, too.

But I just want to say that it's truly changed my life. I'm currently recording this episode from Puerto Escondido, Mexico, where I'm staying for about three to four months. Right now, I'm trying to record this between the stray dogs barking and the obnoxious roosters that are crowing, and this weird music that keeps playing on the street. So I'm having to pause, and restart, and hope that none of this comes through on the audio feed, but that's just how I've chosen to run my business now, because it makes me really happy.



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Alright, ya'll. We've talked a lot about our personal growth--well, so far, I suppose my personal growth--and what you can expect in terms of your own personal growth. But what about not just what we can get out of these experiences, but what about our readers and listeners? Our student, our clients?

So this next reason, I think, is one of the most rewarding. And I think it's one of the reasons it's actually going to push you to go the extra mile in your business.

Once you start building an audience of people that are actually listening to you, and actually care what you have to say, and you can start seeing the ways in which you can help them--that's when the magic really happens.

Alex and I have now helped thousands of people lose weight with our diet programs, and earn money through our blogging courses; we've had an impact on many people. But even more awesome than that is the people we have had a truly life changing impact on.

We've now helped some women lose over 100 pounds in less than a year, women that have had trouble losing weight and getting pregnant. They've been able to turn their diets around, lose that weight, and actually, finally conceive.

I still remember when Alex and I received our first video testimonial that we had asked for from our weight loss program. It came from a woman named Shauna. I think at the time, she had lost thirty-something pounds, and at some point she lost even over fifty. But in this video, she just thanked us.

And at one point, she got a bit choked up, and emotional, because she was talking about how much that lost weight meant to her. And honestly, Alex and I immediately started crying when we watched this video. We watched it multiple times, we ended up sending it to our parents, because for us it was such a huge accomplishment of everything that we had been working for, and we really witnessed the way that we had been able to touch this other person's life and that was something that was incredibly powerful.

Since then, we've also had blogging students that earn over \$10,000, even \$20,000 and \$30,000 a month with our courses, and they've been able to actually quit their full-time jobs.

That is some serious, life-changing stuff, and at the end of the day, it's really why we are here. That kind of positive feedback, and those kinds of rewards are what will keep pushing you to keep getting better and better for you readers and your listeners and your students. It's honestly one of the major reasons why I started this podcast, was because I felt that lull in the content that I was sharing with ya'll, with my readers, and I wanted to be able to have an outlet in which I could finally speak to you guys consistently, on a weekly basis. And I really do believe that this podcast will help my students, and my readers and listeners, achieve more.

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Okay, and one very last reason that I want to leave you with is that starting a blogging business like this really isn't that difficult to get started. At least, not compared to any traditional type of business.

It used to be that in order to be an entrepreneur, to start your own business, it would have to be some sort of brick and mortar store that required tons of time, and money, and honestly, it was quite risky. But thankfully, we live in the information age, the internet age now, and we have more information at our fingertips--arguably, too much information--than we've ever had before.

But this does mean that it is easier than ever before to start your own blogging business. And one of the great things about this type of business is that you don't need a whole lot to get started. You really just need yourself, your voice, and your experiences. You do need a decent computer, of course, a desktop or a laptop is perfectly fine, and you need a website. But we can help you with that last one.

And ya'll, I'm not going to sit here and tell you that this is super easy, and that everything that I've talked about in today's episode is going to be super easy for you to accomplish pretty effortlessly. On the contrary, Alex and I did put a lot of time and work and energy and tears and mimosas into getting this business off the ground and growing it as quickly as possible. But we did face quite a few failures and mistakes along the way, many of which we will definitely talk about throughout this podcast, but the point is that you can choose your path, and we are here and happy to help you for any and every step of the way. In this podcast, on our blog, and in our courses.

And if you do want to know more about how you can get started, you can check out our step by step guide to start a blog on our website, which will also be listed in the show notes.

And ya'll, I just want to end with this: I want you to think really hard about your reason and your why for why you want to start a business like this, or why you have already started and are continuing to work super hard for what you have achieved so far. This is what is going to keep pushing you forward, it's what is going to help you push past those, "I can'ts," or "I'm not good enough," or "I'm afraid"--all of those terrible limiting beliefs.

I want you to remind yourself of these important reasons in your time of need, and absolutely celebrate it through all of the wins that you do achieve. For each one of these reasons and these why's that you do reach, it's going to feel so much better when you do start finding that success.

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