

## Episode 12 - Make Money Blogging Pt. 1

### What Not to Do

Lauren 0:01

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" 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.

Lauren 0:35

Hey, y'all, welcome back to the podcast. I have an awesome episode for you today. Not just because we're going to be talking about making money, finally, but also because I didn't think that I could tell the story without my business partner, Alex Nerney. Welcome, Alex.

Alex 0:55

Hello, hello. It's good to be back on the podcast Lauren.

Lauren 0:59

So y'all, it's pretty early this morning, Alex had a busy week and so do I because I'm flying out to Europe in a couple of days. So we had to book this podcast episode in at 8am. And

Alex 1:09

You can tell them the truth, tell them that I made you wake up this early.

Lauren 1:12

Yes, he did. He did, he gave me 8am or 8pm and I'm just no good at night. So thankfully, we're in different time zones at the moment so it was 9am my time. But either way, it's early, forgive us. Hope y'all are having a great day, and today, y'all we again want to talk about money. We want to talk more about what not to do, because in the next couple of episodes, we're going to talk about the things that went right, and how we're making most of our money now.

Lauren 1:42

But we really can't tell the full picture of the story without painting the picture of what it looks like in the beginning. That's because we know that that's where you're at, you're probably trying to make money and looking online researching, trying to figure out how it all works and how it's going to work for you. I can tell you that when we first started, our first real strategy was to look at what other people were doing, and just try to duplicate that without actually knowing what we were doing. Right. Does that sound right, Alex?

Alex 2:12

Oh, yeah. I mean, that was the whole thing. It was stealing like an artist before we knew what we were doing and it was just looking around at other people and being like, "Oh, they seem successful." There's tons of examples in there, but that was really the main idea. Looking back at it, I'm not sure it's the worst idea for when you start. But it's also funny how many silly things

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that we tried at the beginning. I think there's just gonna be a lot of fun things to talk about in this episode.

Lauren 2:41

Yeah, it was more just looking at other people's websites or courses and thinking, you know, "I can do that. I can write an article like that." The thing is, there's so much more to that picture than just what you see on the outside. There's so many steps to get there, and you can definitely try strategies that are working for other people but if you don't do it at the right time and in the right way for you, it makes all the difference. And that's really what went wrong with us.

Lauren 3:07

None of the strategies that we're going to talk about today were wrong, they were just wrong for us at that time. And y'all at the time, we were desperate to make money and really anything would have sufficed. At that point in time, we were actually just googling how to make money online and how to make money online super fast. I'm sure that was at the end of it.

Alex 3:26

"How to make money online blazing fast," Really complicated Google search. It's funny, because I remember scrolling through articles like that. There would be just all these random ideas and some of them were terrible. Some of them were like, sell your clothes online. And we were like, Well, I mean, that doesn't sound like a business to us. That just sounds like selling our clothes, and then we don't have any clothes.

Lauren 3:52

Yeah, and that was another part of the problem. We just didn't identify ourselves as bloggers, and we weren't following advice from people who had websites like ours. So it was just like, the depth of all the content on making money online, and every which way, and we're just trying a lot of things that just really didn't fit for us and fit for what we were trying to accomplish with our blog. But we also hadn't yet really identified who we were and what our own goals were and what we were trying to achieve.

Lauren 4:21

So there was just a lot of gray area there. And y'all we were intentional, in that we were trying really hard at everything that we were doing, but we just didn't have a solid plan or really any end goals except to make money, right. We didn't have end goals, like connect with our audience and things that are a bit more tangible and more specific than just making money.

Alex 4:43

Anything it can be hard sometimes when you look at the computer because it's just ends up being just numbers on a screen, you know, so sometimes it dehumanizes the relationship that you have with somebody that is on the other line, on the line with you essentially. So it becomes sort of this game of just numbers and like, "Oh, we just make this and then people show up." And you just almost can completely forget about, no, there's another person across the screen,

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and they want to have a relationship with you, they want to like you, they want to know that they're getting good information.

Alex 5:16

But again, at the beginning, in this process, we're so amateur at this hour, and this place that we're talking about that we just had no clue, we didn't know what we were doing in a very, very real way. And that's where we started.

Lauren 5:32

I love that point Alex. I've never quite thought of it that way before. Because we talk, I talk, in this podcast so much about connecting with your audience and building your relationships with your audience but I hadn't yet thought about it in that way that when you first start, they are just numbers. The people are just numbers, and I don't think that it really shifted for us until we really started to connect with our audience and make a point to ask them questions and listen to them and hear them and actually make changes to our business based on what they were saying.

Lauren 6:04

I think it's a good reminder to have that mindset from the very beginning, that you are working with real people. If you can see them that way, from day one, not afterwards, when you get, start getting the money, start getting the traffic, if you can think about it from that perspective, from day one, you're going to automatically or immediately be speaking better to people. Your communications are gonna be better and your content, your marketing is going to be better. So is that a good point

Alex 6:28

I was gonna say that you will speak to them differently. Like when you view that just as, again, the ones and zeros are the numbers, you just talk differently, you almost talk like you're talking to a computer. And one of the best things that Create and Go gets comments on still gets comments on to this day, and I'm very proud of us for always, is people have always felt like we were authentic, honest and real. That was because of the way we communicated from day one on Create and Go, and so it becomes such a valuable skill to be able to just talk honestly.

Alex 6:28

That just matters so much in a world of these random articles we'd read online on these health and wellness websites that really felt like they were written by a robot. You know, like humanizing, some of that was definitely one of the right steps in the right direction at the time.

Lauren 7:20

Yeah, for sure. Don't, don't be random y'all, be human, be intentional. Alright, y'all, on that note, let's talk about some of the failed endeavors that we had. And it's really, it's not meant to always start out with failures, it's more that like, this was our process and we did try everything. So we're going to talk about some of these different ways that you can make money and first, we're gonna show you how not to do them.

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Lauren 7:46

I think one of the very first ways that we started out was with ads, because that's pretty much where everybody starts out, because it's one of the easiest ways to make money and, but it's not not one of the best. I'm gonna let Alex lead some of the conversation with some of these methods, because at this point in time, Alex really was the captain of our ship. I was still working my job full time and he had odd hours as a personal trainer so he was the one really leading the ship, and I was the first mate just trying to help him implement everything in my spare time.

Lauren 8:19

So Alex, do you remember trying to put ads on our website and thinking that we were going to rake in, we probably had a thought of maybe a couple \$100 a month? Yeah.

Alex 8:28

So at the time, I remember the whole, I even remember the thinking behind it. We had built Avocado at this point, and we're starting to get some initial light traffic, our initial visitors to the site. And it just goes back to when we saw some guy on the internet talking about ads, and I was like, "Oh, he's making, you know, five grand, 10 grand a month just from ads. How awesome is that? You know, don't make a product, don't have to do anything."

Alex 8:58

And so we learn kind of pretty quickly. It was like, Oh, it's really not that hard. You just insert some code and get in the right places. We did a bunch of research on like, where to put it. Okay, the header. Okay, now a little bit down from the header. All right now, that's the next best ad placement. We spent a lot of time on that. And then yeah, then we just hoped and we prayed.

Alex 9:16

I remember the first day that the sales came through, I remember reading them and being like, "they're probably just setting up."

Lauren 9:24

"It probably takes a day or two to adjust, right?"

Alex 9:26

The money, the money is waiting to roll in. Like obviously, I think we made like 10 cents. And I was like, well certainly not, obviously need some time for the algorithm. I can even just imagine myself as the captain at the time convincing the first mate like 'No, that's not an iceberg. No, no, no, it's it's it's just a small rock.' Yeah, it's like 10 cents and the second day I think it was like 17 cents. I think I remember calculating like, so how much is that in a month? Exactly, and it's like, well, we can afford a taco bell taco and that's about it.

Lauren 9:46

Yeah, I think that the ads for us ended with estimating we're gonna make like, you know, seven to \$10 a month or something. It made our website look like crap, And it wasn't making us any money so we ultimately abandoned that pretty quickly. I think that one of the next things that we

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did was some affiliate marketing. We did, I think start out with writing reviews and promoting popular weight loss products at the time.

Lauren 10:28

We saw other health and wellness blogs, weight loss blogs, writing product reviews, comparing products. Y'all these people now looking back on it, I think we were just like looking at the people that were at the top of Google search. And obviously, they were making money, because they're at the top of Google search for these popular terms on weight loss programs. But the average person just trying to write content like this and not ranking and not really getting enough traffic, you need tons and tons of traffic to really make money in this way.

Lauren 10:56

So for us who were you know, we were nobodies at the time, we were trying to write these reviews and have people care about us, right, care about our opinions. And we hadn't yet built an audience, nobody did. Right Alex, you remember those weight loss products? It was like Bikini Body guides, and wasn't there some kind of like Venus, Venus something. We saw something just super popular.

Alex 11:19

The Venus Factor, the Venus Factor. It hurts me sometimes when I even remember the names of these cringy products. Honestly, we were just in that place of that mix of desperation and not knowing what you're doing, and a lot of wild energy towards something. Obviously, one of the things we're doing right at the time is experimenting, but it was sort of things were doing wrong at the time. We're looking at these articles that are ranking, we see these products, Kayla Itsines, I believe had a decent product.

Lauren 11:52

Yeah, her product was good, but that's the thing though, you can promote a great product, it doesn't mean that you can make money from it.

Alex 11:59

We had zero connection with our audience, we had zero, you know, things, we just saw these, again, I would call them almost robot articles just like put together like which one is better. And we did some of this and this attempt to rank and make money and to actually get people visiting our blog, because it seemed like people would search those topics, all these things that we wanted to rank for.

Alex 12:22

But because we had no relationship and nothing with our audience at the time, it just ended up being just such, again, like a funny failure, where you look back at it. On the inside, it makes you crawl a little bit like knowing what you know, because you're just like, oh, man, you know, like, that was just not the way to do it. It's not the way to connect with someone, it's another way to connect with a real person. Those articles are probably making some amount of money, but you

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know, not actually that much. We were just going with what we saw at the time. And that was just another one of the series of mistakes that we made.

Lauren 12:55

Yeah, that's another thing. When you look at other people's content, you don't actually know what's making the money and what's not. There are certain tools and things you can find out which articles are more popular than others, but you don't really know. We just spent a lot of time writing that content, a lot of time researching the different products trying to become affiliates for them and then writing that content. And you know, the products just really weren't great products for us in our audience whom we didn't even know yet.

Lauren 13:20

So just trying to throw up affiliate products and make some money from it just isn't the way to go. From there, y'all, we then tried our next big failure, and it was a big one, was the stage that we were at with the launches and webinars. So we bought courses on launches and we bought webinar software, that was way more expensive than we could afford at the time, but we saw other people launching all these products and making all this money and we're like, that's the way.

Lauren 13:49

They have these massive webinars and they launch it to their list and they make all this money. And they're like, yeah, you only need 20 people on your email list to make money from this, we did have more at the time. But Alex, do you remember? Do you remember that webinar? Our very first webinar?

Alex 14:04

Don't, don't do this to me. These are emotional scars, I've buried deep within my cerebrum trying to keep away. But yeah, it stands out so much in my mind, just because of linkle webinars a little different. You can throw up ads on your website and get results pretty quick and stuff like that. A webinar takes a lot of time and a lot of preparation.

Lauren 14:26

Preparation. Yeah and a lot of you. It's not just writing content and passively having people view it. It's you, it's all you.

Alex 14:34

It's a lot of you on camera. And at the time, no YouTube channel, nothing. I don't even think I had any experience on camera at that point. And we were like, okay, we need to do this webinar. So we spent a good month preparing for it.

Lauren 14:52

And the product y'all, we hadn't yet built our weight loss product, but we had built some version of it. It was going to be more of a coaching thing because Alex was a personal trainer and could coach many people on weight loss. So it was gonna be more of a kind of private coaching along

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with like, I think some documentation stuff that we had prepared but that was our way of not spending so much time yet creating the product and actually just you know, using some of his knowledge. So more in the line of coaching just wanted to add that before we keep going and what we were actually having the webinar about.

Alex 15:26

Yeah, it was in one of these launch books or courses or whatever we were buying and looking at the time. So we prepare, we do all this stuff, we have a small audience, we're like, "Alright, now we send out this email blast to get these people there." I think we get like 50 or so people.

Lauren 15:44

I think that's generous, I thought it was more like 30 or 40. And with webinars, you get a lot of people that sign up, and generally only a third or less bother to actually show up. That's just like industry standard, tons of people sign up for webinars, but only a fraction of those people actually show up to the webinar. Then from there, you have people dropping off from the webinar that aren't interested. So we did, maybe we started out as maximum 50, I don't know. But we only had 30 or 40 that actually joined. And it was like watching those numbers tick down.

Alex 16:15

So again, all this preparation, like I sweat so much when I'm on camera. I don't know what it is, in day-to-day life, my pits are good, they're never like this, but for some reason, as soon as the camera got on, I could just feel it in my body. It was funny too, because again, it's a live event, right? So it's almost like giving a speech in front of a small group of people. Because it's just like, suddenly the cameras turn on and you realize, "Oh, this is live, I can't go back."

Alex 16:54

So after changing a T-shirt, I get on the webinar. So the best part of that, too, is kind of in the webinar and in the training sequences, they're like, yeah, you have to engage with your audience and be like, "Hey, where are you from?" And, you know, four people respond and it kind of becomes awkward for both parties. Because it's awkward for the person watching because they kind of know, they're the only ones there. And it becomes awkward for you, because you know, like, there's not that many people there.

Lauren 17:24

I think the worst part is y'all is that you're starting off a webinar like that, knowing that it's gonna be a failure. But you show up and you have to present, you have to be very animated and pumped up. But especially because when you're like that on camera, it often doesn't quite translate to people on the other side so often being over animated. So you're, like, all pumped up and excited and you know that it's going to be a failure, because most of the people that you expected there did not show up, but you're on camera now and there are live people so you have to just keep going with it.

Alex 17:54

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The worst part, I do this entire webinar sequence, I go through, make this sales pitch. and I am just drenched in sweat, just absolutely covered, and at the end, the only kind of remaining people in there are mothers. Both my mom and Lauren's mom attended the webinar. Yeah and they're like, great job.

Lauren 18:20

God. I'm cringing right now never

Alex 18:24

I've never felt more defeated. I don't think there was a day in my life. I think I remember leaving after it was done, being so hot, like my whole body was just boiling over and just needing time to just sit. I was just like, so defeated from that process. I was just like, "Man, we're just never gonna make it. This is just never gonna work." You know, I just remember that so palpably getting that moment. Just me just drenched in sweat and you just being like, you did kind of good.

Lauren 19:00

I think I just had pity for you at that point. I think it was just not pity but sympathy, sympathy. I was just like, he just walked out and I was like, oh, man, I can't even. I was watching it, and it was painful to watch, but to have to do it to do the thing. Oh, y'all, it was painful. And let's move on, because we've talked about the failed webinar for a long time. And part of us telling you all this is because all of these different things that we've done, we have actually done them successfully.

Lauren 19:28

We do webinars all the time now and we love them, we enjoy them. It's more because people show up and they like them. But you know, this was part of the process, putting yourself on camera for the very first time and sometimes not having people show up. It's part of the process and it's what helps to give you experience and helps shape who you are for when you are finding that success. So, really important things that we went through and from there, things began to look up a little bit.

Lauren 19:56

Like that was definitely, I think that was rock bottom looking back on it. Because from there, the next thing that we tried was, Amazon Affiliate. So we went back to affiliate marketing in a little bit different of a way. And I think Alex came across some people making, you know, tons and tons, \$10,000 a month with Amazon affiliates. Looking back on it now they were the people that were again, number one on Google Search getting millions of views from expensive products. But they're the people that were on top of Google search, getting millions of views a month. So then we thought at this point, we're going to be millionaires from Amazon affiliates.

Alex 20:34

Obviously.



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Alex 20:35

Obviously, again, it was just like in this series of failure after failure, this one had a little more flavor to it. It's interesting, because it feels like each thing you try, fails, but it fails a little bit less than the last. You kind of have to cling on to that feeling, because that's where the hope is, and if you don't have hope, you'll never make it. And so it's just like this one was a little bit different.

Alex 21:04

This one, we put up a few Amazon links, and we saw back in our account, I think the first day we had made like \$1. And it was just like, well, that's the most we've made online so far. So what if we put it on all of our articles and all of our things we put it everywhere. So we just spam the website, essentially, with Amazon affiliate links.

Lauren 21:25

Buy rice, buy rice on Amazon! Like nobody buys rice on Amazon, but we had some recipe articles, and what else were we going to link. So it was like "Buy this great kind of rice!" You know, oh goodness.

Alex 21:37

We had recipe articles and were like, well, I guess we should give them like kitchen supplies or something.

Lauren 21:42

I used to link my Creole seasoning, it's from New Orleans, and I love this Cajun seasoning.

Alex 21:50

Oh she doesn't love it, she puts it on everything.

Lauren 21:52

I put it in all the different articles because so many of our recipes had this Cajun seasoning in it, and so I will link that on Amazon too. But y'all, the cool thing here is like Alex said, we were failing a little bit less each time. We were, at this point, starting to make some progress, that we still had some traffic and the Amazon thing was cool. Because while we didn't make \$10,000 a month, we did make our first 170 bucks or so in that first month.

Lauren 22:18

It was also at the time, January, which is our highest traffic month. So that was cool because that was our first bit of real money. It was like oh my goodness. We realized Amazon's not going to be our main thing, but we have made some money. We can do this, we just haven't found our thing yet. And so yeah, that was cool.

Alex 22:36

That was a weird win, obviously \$170 isn't to live off of or life changing money or anything like that, but it was so important. It was such a monumental thing for us. We recognized, "Hey, like, this is not it. But we are making some money online." By getting to that point, honestly, even

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looking back now, I know how hard it is just to get to that point. So it was like we had come pretty far, we just hadn't realized it yet.

Lauren 23:08

Yep and at that time, we did have a goal of earning \$333 a day because that was what that equated to \$10,000 a month. That was what we would feel comfortable with not having to worry about going back to our other jobs, that was like our, our success point of like, we can live off this. And of course, there are two of us, so we had to split that.

Lauren 23:30

So it sounds like a lot more money than it actually is when you think about splitting it and taxes and whatnot. You know, we did have a day where we'd make \$10 a day, that was at the time a significant dent in the \$333, more significant than anything else we had achieved yet. And that was just the very beginning. From there, we did actually experiment more with affiliate marketing, we got more into email marketing and affiliate marketing, and we did create our own product.

Lauren 23:56

That was when we actually started doubling our revenue for the first five months of business. But y'all, even creating your own product, we did immediately sell but we were still testing out lots of different stuff and we still had some failures along that process as well. We were also reading a lot of material at the time from companies like digital marketer, and those guys are awesome. They really know what they're doing.

Lauren 24:18

But they're a very broad website and that, like digital marketing, covers the span of all kinds of websites online. And so we were trying a lot of things that really weren't good for us. Alex, you remember that trip wires and the upsells?

Alex 24:35

Yeah, it was our first instance I think of, I think we actually had two instances of this, but it was definitely like one of the more palpable ones of this is working but this isn't us.

Lauren 24:46

This is making us money, but it doesn't feel right.

Alex 24:49

Yeah, exactly and it was a very interesting moment for us. Because the ethicality of business and how we were going to do things had to begin somewhere. You know, like you're trying everything and then suddenly you look up and you have to go, Is this right? Is this wrong? What it was, was this sort of tripwire, which was really popularized by digital marketer, and then also ClickFunnels. And these guys and not to throw shade on them. But hey, they're promoting something shady at the time. And I think it should be known, I think.

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Lauren 25:20

I think it depends on the audience though, that you're marketing to and what you're marketing. I think one of our biggest problems is that we were marketing to an audience that wasn't used to trip wires and upsells. And digital marketer, they use that stuff on marketers, so they use it on younger people who are more savvy and who understand a bit more about the ways of Internet Marketing. So I, you know,

Alex 25:42

I mean, I respect Lauren volleying back. They're good people, and they are, especially digital marketer, but at the time, clickfunnels, and the guy who was promoting, it was just something that we didn't agree with. In the funnel that the guy had was for, like pills for older people. So it was obvious that he was just sort of getting older people to click on a tripwire really quickly, to get a monthly income coming in. So we tried to do it and we did it in a more ethical way. We're like, okay, we're gonna do this, because it obviously really works. But we're going to explain it better and like, make it more ethical. And you'll do it in a way that would feel a little bit better.

Alex 26:19

And so we tried. So we did it, we put it on our website and essentially, it was a monthly program. So when somebody bought our course, they would get offered kind of this quick bonus thing, when they clicked on it, and signed them up for a monthly subscription. At the beginning, it worked, and it worked really well. We're like, oh my gosh, we're getting all these monthly subscribers now that are going to pay like \$10 a month, this is really going to add up.

Alex 26:42

But then the email started to come from people that were like, what is this? I didn't know that I signed up for this, why am I getting charged \$10 dollars and all these things. Lauren and I had to make a very important decision to keep in mind at the time, we are not making hand over fist money. We're making enough to continue digital marketing for the moment and to do this, but this is going to be life changing money. And Lauren and I have to kind of have a powwow and talk about it. I remember Lauren was actually the one on the severe volleying back, like I don't feel good about this, we need to cancel this.

Alex 27:18

And I was on the train of like, Yeah, and I don't think I feel good either, but these big guys are doing this. We had to have a lot of back and forth until we finally, I think we were in Florida at the time and I remember taking a walk around the neighborhood and us just being like, we can't do this, we can't be these people and having to give up that paycheck. And again, shout out kudos to you. Because I remember, you know how obstinate you were to it, was what helped me see more of the light.

Lauren 27:47

Because you are a marketer, you are way more of a marketer at heart than I was and like I was still learning marketing. The thing with these upsells is that the whole point of them is to make

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someone decide in a very pressurized situation. They've just purchased a product and you're giving them a very quick immediate offer to save all this money by buying something else.

Lauren 28:10

So they have to make the call right there, so they're already feeling a lot of pressure. But on top of that, the best practices in this industry to make these successful to get a higher take rate, a higher conversion rate and these upsells is to make the cancel buttons and the no thank you buttons and those links almost hidden or as small, as small as they can possibly make them but having them still there.

Lauren 28:35

When you tend to have an audience that is a little bit older or, or anyone that's not quite as tech savvy, they don't always understand or if they have to obviously find that link, then they're not going to think that somebody that's paid, you know, so they do get a little bit confused. This is how we structured ours so we have like a very small cancel link and I don't think that there was anything not quite ethical and in our intentions. In that we had an upsell, there was a Cancel button, we were offering a valuable product because it was access to this like massive resource of weight loss stuff and whatnot.

Lauren 29:10

So it was a valid offer, and it was valuable. It's just that, when we got the feedback from our audience that they didn't even know they had signed up. It was like, okay, we did something wrong, that's not that's not what's supposed to happen. Yes, we're getting money in the bank, but people have been signed up for a couple months, and they don't even know. And so that was the biggest problem there.

Lauren 29:29

There are people doing this in the right way. But generally episodes always make me feel a little bit meh, because you have to kind of find that balance between you can make a lot of extra money. But how much do you want to badger the customer along the way, as they're making that decision to get started with you.

Alex 29:46

For sure. Just one again of the many mistakes along the road to looking so successful. I think maybe one of the bigger takeaways from this episode in particular and something that I'm you're continually reminded of, is that when you look at people who are successful on the outside, it can be very much like, Oh, they have it all figured out. Maybe in a way we do have a lot of things figured out, but the truth is as well is that we started from a place of literally just guessing at it.

Alex 30:19

Guessing at it and trying to listen to our moral compass or listen to the feedback that we're getting from our audience, the most important thing is what people are saying. You know, it's like, well, somebody's saying, "Hey, I don't know what this charge is" Then there's probably 10

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more that don't know what the charge is but haven't said anything yet. So it comes this really important process of just, we're just failed, just failed through it and we always kept moving forward.

Alex 30:47

And I love this episode, because it's always great because I feel like it dethrones the high and mighty, successful bloggers, and it's showing you guys like, this is just, this was not pretty at the beginning. This was sweat filled shirts, and pity and problems, and failures.

Lauren 31:07

Yep, absolutely. Well, y'all, I think the real blessing though, in this was that Alex and I, we did fail a lot, but we failed very quickly. And learning how to do all of these things in the wrong way was such an important step for us to learn how to do them in the right way. Even if you follow our strategy, step by step to do all the things at the right time and the right way, you will get stuck somewhere along the way. Because everybody's different, every business is different, but our goal is to ideally not have you get stuck as many times as we did, or as often as we did.

Lauren 31:42

Or to make sure that you're questioning what you do and why you're doing it more than we did in the beginning. Because we didn't know that our audience was so important, we didn't know that relationships with them were going to be so important. We would have paid a lot more attention to them from the very beginning, communicated and talked to them from the very beginning, if we knew how important that feedback was going to be to actually finding success. And it's a good thing, it's a good thing that you're questioning things.

Lauren 32:08

It's a good thing that you're failing because you will learn how to do it right. And it took us 100 times of doing it wrong before we started to figure out some of the right stuff. And y'all the cool thing is that everything that we've talked about in this episode, the ads, the Amazon affiliates, the affiliate marketing, the launches, the webinars, creating your own products, even the upsells. We have done all of this in the right way, at the right time.

Lauren 32:33

We've been successful at all of these things after we had already failed at all of them. And some of them took a couple of years to actually find success with them. I can tell you what, the webinars specifically, we didn't do another webinar for maybe two years, maybe three because we didn't want to, we were burnt out, it didn't feel right. You know, Alex was still damaged. But we do them all the time now and I actually really look forward to them. I even do them. And I thought back then there's no way I'll ever do a webinar.

Alex 33:03

Look how far you have come McManus! We do need to do an entire podcast just about you and your development.

## Episode 12 - Make Money Blogging Pt. 1

### What Not to Do

Lauren 33:10

But they get that in every episode now. So they're probably tired of hearing from me, we need to have more of you on here. But yeah, y'all that's the point is that we have been successful in all these areas. Some of them actually took a couple of years to find that success in them because it just wasn't the right time for us. Throughout all of this process, we've learned to really listen to our gut and what feels right. And especially as we've started to make money, we've been able to start choosing the paths that feel the most right.

Lauren 33:39

So there are certain things that would still make us money, you know, that make us a quick \$500,000. And we're like, no, it's not worth it. It's not worth it either because it's not the best thing for our audience, or it's not the best thing for us. It's not the style that we like to run our business in and to where we've been able to really choose that. And that's been fun.

Alex 33:57

And to be clear she meant five or \$1,000, not \$500,000. Okay, I think you said a quick 500,000

Lauren 34:06

Oh, is that what I said? I still speak too fast, not \$500,000, 500 or 1,000.

Alex 34:11

Yeah, yeah.

Lauren 34:12

And y'all a couple of these major successes is really what we're going to be talking about in the next couple of episodes on still making money blogging, but we're going to be talking more about affiliate marketing and selling your own products because those are far and beyond the ways that we have made the most money and we've had the most success in. There's a couple of things that we think are the most important to focus on on your journey to making money blogging.

Alex 34:39

The cool thing as well, too, is actually like looking back at all these things is that each one of these failures, we've turned into a success. So the ads we made, you know 17 cents off those first ads, we've made a 1000s of dollars per month on ads, these affiliate products. There were plenty of times where it didn't make any money from them.

Alex 35:00

Today, we can make well over 10 grand on affiliate products, well over that amount on courses, and we have upsells in our products, and we do them ethically and understand, hey, if we're going to do an upsell, and if we decide to do it, here's how we do it, here's how we know it will feel right, here's how we know that the customer will like it, and be happy that they got a discount on something. So we can turn all these failures into successes over time.

## Episode 12 - Make Money Blogging Pt. 1

### What Not to Do

Lauren 35:26

Yep, for sure. Well, y'all, that is gonna wrap up our episode today. We hope that this helped you on the path of how to make money blogging, but really what not to do, and especially with some of your mindset, and also managing expectations. You probably know now from listening to this, that Alex and I had our expectations, not quite in the right place all the time. But it's important to also make sure that you don't want to have sky high expectations.

Lauren 35:55

But you do want to have high hopes, high enough that you keep going like Alex touched on earlier in the episode and that if we didn't have that hope, if we didn't have that gusto and excitement with every new thing that we tried, if we felt more and more beat down. Some days we did, but we would have not tried as much, we potentially would have given up, but we did. We did have hope through all of it. And we did our best not to let it get us down. So well. Alex, thank you for joining us today.

Alex 36:26

I'm just happy to be here, Lauren. Thank you for having me.

Lauren 36:29

All right, y'all. We will see you next time.

Lauren 36:34

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