

## SELF MADE MAGAZINE

No one likes being wrong. Especially when even the smallest of errors or verbal blunders can be shared, retweeted, and openly criticized in front of the entire planet in an instant.

While the internet has its perks, it can also be a mean, brutal place where anonymous keyboard warriors hide behind their Twitter handles and lose all sense of civility. Words can hurt.

Back in 2007, when I first began uploading educational health videos to my YouTube account, I had initially positioned myself as The Expert with the task of taking complex matters of health and simplifying them in a way that the average person could understand. And I did it well, quickly building a legion of followers who hung onto my every word and shared my content with their friends and family.

However, as my channel became more popular the excitement I felt when clicking the upload button was soon superseded by anxiety. What if something I said was completely wrong? Who was I to be giving advice on matters as important as health?

Making matters worse, with popularity came the inevitable band of critics and “haters” with their incessant name-calling and hate mail. Eventually, the responsibility of being the expert wore me down. I shut down my channel and walked away from it all. But not for long.

The responsibility of being the expert is what keeps crowds of internet entrepreneurs on the sidelines, stuck in the seemingly never-ending process of getting themselves ready to enter the game. Very often it is the trepidation of “not knowing enough”, or the fear of being wrong, that fuels their inertia.

There will always be more to know. There will never be a shortage of courses to complete, as one leads to the other and then to another. It’s endless. And the truth is there is no amount of specialized knowledge that will ever circumvent the brutish realities experts face almost daily online.

But there is another way, a safer and potentially more impactful approach for building a thriving online business seldom considered by the aspiring entrepreneur, and that is the role of The Connector.

Realizing that I might have never grown skin sufficiently thick to cope with my critics, or to ever feel like I “knew enough”, I gave my business another shot by relinquishing my expert status in favor of becoming the shoulders on which experts stood.

I went from expert to curator, providing authors, speakers, and thought leaders with a platform to share their knowledge, build their lists, and promote their products to a

demographically-targeted community of listeners, viewers, and of course, consumers. All the while building strong relationships with some of the most influential personalities in the health industry. It is the best business decision I ever made.

Leveraging your role as The Connector is not only far less mentally taxing than playing The Expert, but it can also be more lucrative. Consider the fact that an expert can produce, package, and successfully market only a limited number of products each year. However, a connector can promote a new product to his or her followers almost weekly by simply “making the introduction”, while taking a handsome commission for each sale.

For example, on my Underground Wellness Radio podcast the majority of my guest interviewees have their own high-quality online programs and courses that they (and I) are more than happy to promote. Typically, these products are attached to an affiliate program that pays anywhere from a fifty- to seventy-five percent commission. Not bad for never lifting a finger to create the product myself!

As the show host, my role is to introduce the expert to my listenership and email subscribers, prepare myself well enough in advance to have an engaging discussion that builds trust between the audience and my guest, and to facilitate the offer and prospective sale.

It is a business plan based on reading books (something I would have done anyway), picking the author’s brain (what a privilege!), and then inviting my listeners to decide if they wish to go a step further by enrolling in a program. Pretty sweet gig. And far less stressful than my old Expert days!

This strategy is also highly effective for generating sales through live webinars. In fact, hosting webinars can be much simpler, as the guest usually prepares their presentation and offer in advance. My only job is to get my subscribers signed up, kick the webinar off with an enthusiastic introduction, get out of the way while my guest makes his or her presentation and offer, and then facilitate live Q&A to overcome objections from our attendees.

My business earns several hundred thousand dollars in yearly revenue by selling other people’s products, while at the same time educating my tribe on what matters most to them, their health. Not by being out front and in the line of fire, but by making the introduction and connecting my tribe with the experts that can help solve their problems.

And if your plans for your business include someday creating your own products and programs, the relationships you build through supporting your peers is often rewarded when they return the favor by introducing YOU to their community during your big product launch. Reciprocity wins the day.

If you’ve been standing on the sidelines eternally working up the courage to get in the game, know that there is a much safer way to get started. Become The Connector. Launch your own

podcast. That's what I did almost 7 years ago, using a \$29 headset and a FREE BlogTalk Radio account. The experts you follow and admire are always looking for the opportunity to share their stories. All you have to do is ask.

Of course, building your audience will take time. What matters most is that you're in the game. Maybe not the way you expected, but in a way that is more suitable to who you are and what you're willing to tolerate.

When your mission is to lift others, you too shall rise.

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