

PODCAST 40: THE POWER OF YOU – PERSONAL BRANDING FOR AUTHORS WITH CHRIS DUCKER

James: Hello and welcome to podcast number 40 from the Self Publishing Formula.

Voiceover: Two writers, one just starting out, the other a best-seller. Join James Blatch and Mark Dawson and their amazing guests as they discuss how you can make a living telling stories. There's never been a better time to be a writer.

James: Life begins at 40, right Mark?

Mark: If you say so, and I think I've probably said that a few times myself.

James: I'm going to be saying life begins at 50, at some point, in the next few months. I know. So we've got quite a lot to get through today before our interview, and our interview is with somebody who is an encourager and an inspiration for entrepreneurs online and particularly authors.

He's a book writer as well, but also he is very big you as a brand, and spending your time doing that, and we talked about the fact that for quite a few authors this might be taking them out of their comfort zone and he's got some advice on that. Now particularly if you've got non-fiction he's got lots of ideas of how to monetize that and the areas you should be working at and the mindset you should have as non-fiction author, but not just non-fiction, anyone who is online and selling their products.

His name is Chris Ducker. He is coming up in just a few moments.

Before then we've got a few things to announce, and one is the competition. So we ran the Reedsy competition over a few weeks. We had loads of entries for this. I'm not surprised we had loads of entries, right

Mark, because the prize is great.

Mark: Yeah, it is really ... I can't remember how much it was now, it was \$3,000?

James: \$3,000 worth of author services from Reedsy, and that was the first prize. And then there were specific second prizes. \$600 for cover design and so on. Okay, so I can announce the winner, with a little bit of a drum-roll, and the winner - pulled out random by our machine - was Celina. Celina has already been in touch, we've been in touch with her via Reedsy to collect her prize and we have three runners-up who are Shaedarkspain, Andrea and Rebecca who writes under the name R.J. Theodore. So congratulations to all four of you.

You've got a fantastic prize and you've got some money there with Reedsy to really put into the professional side of your books. Commiserations to everybody else who entered. I know it's disappointing to enter and not win a competition but we had, as I say, many many entries for that, so thank you. And thank you to the guys at Reedsy who do a great job and making it very convenient and a one-stop place to find professionals who will make the difference between your book being indistinguishable from the Harper Collins and Penguin stuff next to it.

Mark: Yeah, a great competition and, as you say, we had several thousand entries, so congratulations to those four for being picked out.

James: Okay, now, talking of being professional, are you being professional, are you being professional with Amazon this week, Mark? You're sort of in between Amazon gigs, aren't you in Dublin a couple of days ago. What were you doing?

Mark: Well, they had an event with Writing.ie, so they basically flew out about half a dozen Amazonians, me and another author called L.J. Ross, Louise Ross, and a couple of Irish Indies. We were basically there for the Saturday from 8 till 5 for a kind of in-person event, Q & A presentations and things.

It was also streamed live online and given some push from KDP, and I think it went quite well. It was long day. I got there; I flew out on Friday and then flew back on Saturday and the hotel we were staying in, it was a bit ominous because New Zealand were playing Ireland on Saturday night in the Rugby, and the hotel we were in was where the Irish Rugby Squad was staying.

James: All right. Okay.

Mark: So that could have been interesting. And Shaun Payne was there as well, so that was entertaining.

James: Shaun Payne and the Irish Rugby team, I mean, that is a recipe for fighting if I've ever heard one.

Mark: Probably. It was very good. So that was fun, well-attended event, very professional. It had a full kind of broadcast rig there, with streaming it live on YouTube, so it was with three cameras. You would have been in heaven, and James, it was really, really pro.

And then tomorrow I'm going down to London for another full-day event in the morning. I'm being interviewed by someone from The Guardian about small business and what platforms that Amazon can do to enable you to reach customers in scale, so I'm talking about books obviously, and there is other people talking about other things.

And then in the afternoon they've invited people interested in writing, so that would be me and one other author, Tammy Roland. We're doing two presentations in the afternoon. So then it will be pretty full day tomorrow, so early start back by 8:00, and of course there's other small things on our plate as well that we're trying to do as good a job as possible with books and course launches and all that kind of good stuff.

James: That's good and good for you for your profile and so on, so obviously Amazon, you have been a bit of a pinup boy for them at the

moment, which is nice to be in touch with the biggest bookseller on the planet.

Mark: Yeah, they're great. Obviously, I've been working with them for ages now and it's lovely to be invited to those kinds of things. It's nice to give something back.

James: Good. Okay. For our people who want to rub shoulders with Amazon, if you're in the UK, they have a good presence at the London Book Fair, and there is no doubt that I think we'll be there again this year, and I know a couple of people have already told us that they're coming over from the States for that this year, so I say this year, it'll be 2017 of course in the spring.

That's a really good opportunity, isn't it, for authors to stand and talk to people from Amazon and pick their brains a little bit because they'll be on the stands all day, find out what's in their minds for the future, get some hints and advice from them and generally some encouragement. If you do fancy, pop along to the London Book Fair and come and say hello to us as well, but we'll talk more about that closer to the time.

Okay, as Mark says, we are really in that bit now in NASA parlance, they've done all that training up in Houston area, they built the stuff on the West Coast in California there. They did all the training in Houston, but now they all migrate down towards Florida for the launch.

We're at that bit now where we're starting to get into launch control for the 101 course. It's been a huge effort. We've never had more people working on a single course than we've had for this one. We've got people around the world who've been contributing to it and now are working through the testing phase. We're still putting stuff together.

I think people will be surprised when they see some of the screenflows. The dates on the screenflows are something like the 21st of November as we're going through doing stuff, thinking, "Wow, they did this quite late," and we

did, we are working up to the wire on this because we want the process of launching a book and it to be very real.

And a little spoiler is that the beta testing, which we were nervous about of course because you work hard on something and it goes out to strangers, but the beta testing comments have been fabulous, and we're quite excited now.

Mark: They have been encouraging, so it's always nervous when you something out and we've had a couple go through from start to finish and have really gotten lots out of it and we're rolling it out slowly to a couple of other beta testers as well, so it would have been tested extensively before we put it out properly, and comments will be taken into account. We'll make some changes.

Yeah, it is an interesting time now when we're just getting ready to launch. And you are very geeky for making that analogy, but you know that already.

James: Yeah, it's a good analogy.

Mark: It is a good analogy. One thing worth noting, it's not just me - we could have roped in some industry experts to also present segments for us, so Stewart, he is my cover designer, has done a really brilliant session on cover design. Bryan Cohen has done a great session on writing blurbs. Really pleased and excited to say that BookBub are going to do a session for us as well, so we're just in the process today of having that recorded, but Book Pub themselves are going to present their session on their featured deals and their ads platform, so that's going to be tremendous value.

For those people who don't know BookBub, they are an absolutely superb company and really powerful when it comes to broadcasting your books out to millions now of interested readers. They are very well known as the best of those kinds of email list service companies, so we're delighted to

have them actually telling us about how to get BookBub deals, how to use their ads platform, really excited to have them onboard.

James: Yeah, and that's a coup for us to have BookBub on. When I say, "a coup for us," what I mean, the whole community, because obviously we create courses, we host podcasts or we create Facebook group, but the SPF community, I think people are now looking at this community as being a place where a significant number of the authors who are pushing forward with their careers are now gathering, and it's a fantastic place to be at the moment, and we are honored really that BookBub immediately said to us, "We want to be a part of this," and we've got their material in-house now and that's exciting.

That module by itself I think is the module that's going to appeal to people at every stage of their author career, even the more advanced will want to hear from BookBub personally about how they advise going about their various aspects.

Okay, let's press on because we've got this interview with Chris which is in video, so if you're watching this on the YouTube website, you'll see Chris from his home, in which the opening looks like, I think I point out, it's 17 Acacia Avenue, Portsmouth or something in England, but he's not, he's thousands of miles away, although he is very English.

So Chris, he has a background probably known to a lot of people for virtual assistant, so started a VA company. A virtual assistant is something that if you have a digital company whether you're an author or anything else, at some point you're going to start thinking that you need some help, and it's little bit of a mind throw to negotiate.

We've been very lucky with SPF and the VAs that we've had join our team so far, but more than that, he's about brand. He's about how you build your presence, and in particular as I said, if you're a non-fiction author. So let's listen to Chris and we'll be back after that.

Chris Ducker, okay look, thank you so much indeed for joining us. What looks behind you as a very normal English scene I would say, you could probably be somewhere in Sutton, England, Acacia Avenue in Southampton.

Chris: Complete with the toilet roll for cleaning the desk as well. I thought I'd leave that in there.

James: And an English phone box, but let's start by saying but you're many thousands of miles away from your home.

Chris: I'm based in the Philippines. I've been here 16 years, but I'm about as proud of Brit as you've all come across. There's a lot more British paraphernalia behind me. I've even got a Smeg fridge over there in the corner full of beer, and no, I'm a very, very, very, very, very proud Brit. And look, even the Queen's Guard looks after me on my desk.

I was going to say, the very large majority of the stuff you see behind me though, it's actually being sent to me by my online community which is great, I mean, I love getting all that sort of stuff, so there's a lot of Union Jacks in this house but we probably need to start paring back to be honest with you.

James: Can you first of all give me an introduction to who Chris Ducker is?

Chris: I'm a sales and marketing guy. That's what I am. That's what I do and that's what I've always done. I dropped out of uni and decided to go into the publishing world, not book publishing, but periodicals, so the company I was working for in London, big, big firm, and Pimlico and I was with them for almost eight years.

We did everything from, you know, the British Medical Journal down to Laundry monthly, you name it, and it was a very, very big firm and I did very

well as a sales guy. I was running sales teams for them. That's kind of what brought me to the Philippines initially in the year 2000.

I was basically hired by one of the international banks here to come in and kind of help them with their local efforts on their personal loans, their credit cards and that type of stuff. And within a few years of being here I created my own network, my own contact list, so to speak, and I started consulting for the majority of it was American firms setting up call centers and things like that here, and eventually I said, "Well hell, if I can do it for other people I might as well do it for myself."

So that's exactly what we did and then I got active online in 2010. I still own the outsourcing business. I still own the call center and virtual staff, the VA Hub and although I'm not day-to-day involved with those businesses anymore, what I focus on now is blogging and podcasting and coaching. And that's ultimately content creation, one-on-one stuff, and helping personal brand entrepreneurs, such as authors to build their brand further online through creating high-quality, consistent content online, and then not only to be able to sell more books, but also to be to market themselves as an expert in their niche, as well as obviously monetize that expertise as well.

James: Chris, 2010, from modern digital entrepreneur, that makes you a veteran.

Chris: I'm a dinosaur.

James: You are. I don't mean to be rude about it but a lot of the guys who are very big, well-known names in this space started two and a half years ago, but you obviously saw it early on.

So from your early adopting stands, tell us how it's changed and were things easier at the beginning than they are now for people getting into this?

Chris: That's a really good question, and I think overall, things ... I don't know ... easy? It's kind of 50/50 because it was easier to stand out because there wasn't as much competition, right? I mean I'm coming up on almost seven years now, so yes it was easier to kind of grab the market a little bit more and become known a little faster, because there wasn't as many people in your niche, in your industry and market whatever doing, what you are now doing.

But that being said, the game has changed so much with social media. Yes, Twitter and Facebook and everything was around back seven years ago as we all know, but it wasn't the way it is now. And particularly with something like Facebook advertising, you know I'm not a big fan of Facebook, but I love those adverts. I love the hell out of those adverts, so you can get traffic a lot faster than you could back seven years ago.

You can get traffic to your landing pages. You can build your email lists a lot easier, because of the paid advertising, but particularly Facebook has been able to open that door. They've made it easier to build your lists faster, although I don't necessarily think building your brand is as easy as what it was back seven, eight, nine, ten years ago, if that makes sense.

James: Yeah, it does. Let's talk about building your brand because this is something we talk a lot about how authors are not necessarily going to feel comfortable being business people anyway. I mean, it's not the same thing as the creative talent of writing and some will always struggle with it. And even within the business, even when they've got their head around Facebook advertising, and doing the blurb and setting themselves up technically, the bit you were talking about, this kind of almost a Haiti's, the expression X-Factor because it's been used to death elsewhere. This brand building, that is an area that's taking some people out of their comfort zone, but it's so important, all right?

Chris: It is, it's very important. I call it the business of you, which was the keynote that I did for the first time about three years ago at a very, very

large conference in Vegas. It ruffled up a few feathers at the time, because I was saying even if you don't want to do it, even if you don't want to stand out, you must as much as you possibly can, because being different is better than being better. It's not just about being better than your competitor or having more experience than your competitor. You gotta be different different. You gotta stand out. You gotta be you. You gotta do you.

And so it's very, very important to build your personal brand, particularly as an author. I mean, probably two of the easiest ways to be able to monetize your brand as an author is through coaching and through speaking, and really they're one and the same if you think about it. Almost everything I do in my coaching sessions with my clients, I'm doing it on the stage and on keynotes and vice versa. And so, I think it's very important to build your brand.

I think, really the main reason why people should be focused on this is because what I call my 'P2P' philosophy to relationship building, and that means people to people. Business to business, business to consumer, but 'P2P'. People nowadays, more so than ever, particularly with the social web being the way it is, we are more likely to know, love, and trust somebody that somebody we know already knows, loves, and trusts, right?

We're more likely to go ahead and start following somebody based on the recommendation of somebody that we already know and trust ourselves, but even more importantly we are more likely to do business, we are more likely to spend with somebody that we know, love, and trust.

And that right there is exactly what every author, what every personal brand entrepreneur should be doing, is focusing ultimately at the end of the day in becoming somebody's favorite. We want to be somebody's favorite productivity, or favorite business coach, or favorite whatever it is. That's what we need to do. We want to become somebody's favorite.

James: The familiarity thing, and this goes back actually all the way to the seven touches of selling, those familiarity steps along the way to somebody feeling comfortable enough to make a purchase from you, I guess. The big question is, Chris, we always try to provide some value to our podcast listeners.

How do they do that then? What are the practical steps an author, for instance, should be thinking about?

Chris: The first thing they need to do if they're not doing it already is they gotta get their social media platforms built out properly. It never ceases to amaze me how lazy people are when it comes to their social media. They have different profile photos on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn. They have different cover images. They use different rhetoric on different platforms, different links, and all these things. The consistency in the same profile pic, the same cover pic, and it's fine to change it if you want to promote something at a certain time, go ahead and do that. That's absolutely fine, but the bottom line, is that idea of having that consistency from one platform to another, no matter when anyone finds me, they know who they're finding and it's very, very, very clear. So that's the first thing they need to do. Get your social media in check. ASAP.

The second thing is that, particularly when it comes to authors, you need to start creating online content on a very consistent, regular basis. Just because you're written a book that's got 60,000 words in it doesn't mean that you should not be blogging once a week at 600 or 700 words. You must be creating content for two reasons: number one, to serve your audience because we must serve before we have the ability, or quite frankly the right, to be able to sell in the twenty-first century, right, you gotta serve first, then sell later.

The second reason why is because it's that consistent, high-value, original based, focused content on solving people's problems that would ultimately have them getting onto your email lists, coming to your live events, buying

your coaching product, pitching in when it comes to your next book launch, and so on, and so on, and so on, and so on.

Get your social media in line, start creating good quality, high-impact, original, online content on regular basis, and it doesn't need to be blog-posts. It can be a podcast. It can be a YouTube video once a week. It doesn't matter what it is, just consistency is key. You want to be front of minds all the time.

James: It's a great time to be a consumer on the other end of this because the way that you talk, that's the way certainly SPF runs and other organizations like and work with run, is that they put out lots and lots of stuff for free, lots of value-added stuff, and there will be thousands of people who have contact with you who will never buy anything from you, and yet will grow and learn and become better business people as a result of that.

I understand this, so I'm converted by this, but some people will say, "Well that's a lot of time and effort you're giving away for free."

Chris: It is, but you shouldn't think of it as giving away time and effort away for free. You gotta hit the pause button right there. If you're the kind of entrepreneur that I want to work with, then you don't think like that. You think long game. Everything we do, as you well know James, it's a long game. You must have that long game approach to creating content, marketing your brand, coming out with helpful courses and products and services, spending time on the speaker circuit. It's a long game approach. Relationships should be treasured - not used.

If all you're looking to try and do is get that quick buck all the time, and by the way, people can smell that level of BS from a mile away nowadays. We are way, way smarter today than we were ten years ago as a global consumer base, right, so it's that long game approach.

It's not about giving stuff away free. Should you ultimately stop doing that and then start charging for certain things, yes, absolutely, don't be shy, you should absolutely want to make money doing what you're doing. But you also have to appreciate and understand that to be able to get to the point where can put a price tag on something, you gotta understand what your customers want. And creating content and getting blog comments, and tweets, and Facebook messages, and Periscope conversations back from them in real time, that's gold. They'll give you everything you need to be able to produce a product that you can put a price tag on because you're providing a solution to someone's problem.

James: Now for non-fiction authors, I think this is going to work very well. How do you adjust this for fiction authors, for the vast majority probably of our listeners write novels. I mean the speaker circuit and so on is perhaps not the same to them, but there are other things they can do, right?

Chris: Yes, certainly. I've worked with a fiction author before actually as a client, and her big issue was that she is not a salesperson, she is not a businessperson, yet she obviously needs to make a living. And so, we went from her really just making royalties - she was doing very well from a royalty perspective. She was doing audio books as well where she was reading the books herself and doing quite well selling her own audio book versions of her books, but that was kind of it.

We produced a number of coaching slots for her on a monthly basis. I think we started with three, and then she doubled it relatively fast because she she had such a huge interest from her readership in wanting to learn how to write great fiction, and so she started doing coaching sessions. I think she charged like \$400 an hour to begin with and I think she is now up to almost \$600 an hour. Then she put together her first little 'From zero to fiction' type course where she talks people through developing characters and worlds and all that kind of stuff to be able to come up with all these great ideas from a fiction-based author perspective, and she is

actually now just about to run her first, in-person, two-day, fiction authorship mastermind event, workshop kind of thing.

There are still certainly plenty of ways to be able to monetize your work as a fiction author above and beyond your writing. And here's the thing, and you probably know this already, that a lot of your viewers and your listeners probably might think that this is the case but they don't have unequivocal proof.

I'm going to give it to you right now: people are happy to pay for access to other people more so today than ever before because as a society we value experience and success for the right people obviously. We value that experience and that success more so than we have done before, because we can see clearly on the internet who is doing things right and who is doing things wrong.

It's clear to see in a way that you put yourself across, the things that people say about you, and so on, and so on. So to give your time up for things like coaching and live events, it becomes a bit of a no-brainer for any type of author, quite frankly it's the lowest of the low-hanging fruit out there, you know what I mean?

James: Okay, let's move on to one or two practical things. So you're out there in the Philippines, I'm here in the UK, and we talk to people who work in this sort of digital space who are wherever they want to be. And that's actually for me one of the glorious things about this, more than anything else, more than actually using money as a metric, is working from home and living a much more flexible life than I've ever done before.

To get this working and set up properly, one of the things I know you've become a bit of an expert at in the past is virtual assistants and finding a team that's going to help this work, and I know a lot of our authors are getting to the point now where they need help.

What's your advice to them? What should they be looking for?

Chris: You gotta be looking at building a team rather than just getting help. I think that's the important thing. If you need help then you hire a freelancer and that's what you get. You get someone to come and help you do this task or that task.

But if you have the mindset of wanting to build a team, you're going to be looking to hire for the role rather than the task itself. And that's really the biggest thing, now understand that hiring people to help you virtually is no different in any way whatsoever than hiring people to come and work in your office.

People are people, employees are employees, and actually you got an open planned office with no walls nowadays, any office space in the planet nowadays. The very large majority of communication internally, even if they're all in the same building, is via things like Slack and Gmail and instant messaging. They're not even really talking to each other all that much, so you don't really need to be in each other's presence now. I think the big thing is to understand that one person cannot do the job of five people. Yet the problem is that particularly online, a lot of people claim that the person that can help manage your website, help design your graphics for social media, help upload your YouTube videos, help edit your podcast, etc. And it's not the case, not if you want it done properly. You wouldn't hire a plumber to come and fix your roof and vice versa. And so you've gotta look at it like that. Be very, very pragmatic in the way that you break down the roles that you need to be able to grow your business, but ultimately, start with that mindset of hire for the role, not for the task, unless all you've got to delegate is a one-off task and then it's a different ball game obviously.

James: And where do people find the best VAs?

Chris: There's really three ways to hire people. The first way is task-based, so let's say, for example, you wanted to get a transcription done of this conversation, it's a one-time job, it's a task is what it is. You would then go

to one of the job posting websites out there like Odesk or Upwork I think it's called now, or Freelancer, or something along those lines, or maybe even just a good old-fashioned transcription service, and you give them the audio file, they type it all out, you pay with your money, thank you very much for playing, one-time task.

The second way to delegate and outsource is to do project-based outsourcing. Perfect example would be, say, a website redesign. It needs more than one person, right, so you might have a graphic designer to help you with the layout. Then you need to get an actual developer to do the coding for you. Maybe you bring onboard copywriter to help you with sales copy if you got products or landing pages on the site as well.

You'll have two or three people maybe work in one project, it is still a onetime things, but it's not going to take a week. It might take three or four months until you're happy to hit the go button. So with that case, you know, you might have to pay people on a monthly or a retainer basis. Possibly if you can, you pay them just for the project, and that way you know they're not going to be stringing things out on you.

And then the third way is my favorite way, and that is to hire team members. Actual individuals to come on-board in your business either part-time 20 hours a week, full-time 40 hours a week, and ultimately build that team of people around you. Graphic designer, web developer, copy writer / transcriptionist, audio video editor, and so on, and so on.

You get this team of people around you to help you do all the things that you want to do. And I mean, look, I'm not going to turn it into a pitch-fest but virtualstafffinder.com, one of my businesses, was clearly set up to bridge that gap between stressed-out entrepreneur and high experienced virtual assistant in the Philippines, and that's exactly what we do. It's a recruitment service, that's it. Honestly, there are plenty of other VA companies out there, but I wouldn't be the type of entrepreneur that I am if I just talked about mine only.

James: Quite happy for you to do that, Chris. In the brand work you do with people, what's your gauge on how big and growing this industry is? I mean, it's funny we work in this space, but all the stuff I hear, I listen to Radio 4 every morning here in the UK, and they talk about business, and it's almost as if they have no idea this is going on.

They talk about Brexit, and steel production, and car parts being exported, and stuff, and there is this billion dollar industry that never gets any airtime on mainstream radio, and my friends don't even seem to understand it, but you must see it all the time, more than I do, how big it's growing and fast it is.

Chris: Yeah, because of the majority of the speaking that I do is in the United States, it's kind of where I'm known as a speaker within the personal branding business space. In the UK - I'm moving back to the UK as I mentioned to you next year - so I'm hoping is or try and start bringing it home, quite frankly. It's a hug market.

The UK is ripe for it and I don't know what level of percentage your audience is in the UK or anything, but you know Brexit for example, should not be concerning entrepreneurs in any way, shape, or form. You want to know why? Because you don't need anyone but you to make your business a success. That's my thought process on it entirely.

I'm not concerned about Brexit and I don't think anybody else should be, quite frankly, if you're an entrepreneur. Now, if you're in the steel business, maybe, but I'm pretty sure the majority of your viewers and listeners and fans are not in the steel business. They are authors writing either fiction or non-fiction books.

So, the grand scheme of things really honestly is I think the UK is approximately three to five years behind the United States when it comes to pretty much everything digital entrepreneurship, not just personal

branding, but I think also content marketing, I think live streaming, I think YouTube video marketing.

Do you know how much potential there is on YouTube for entrepreneurs in the UK right now? It is wide bloody open. Because there is hardly anybody doing anything in the business space on a very, very, regular, consistent basis.

Yeah, you got these bloody teenagers and these twenty-something bloggers that are doing great and everything, but creating no real content, they're just showing lives and people fall in love with them. But the fact of the matter is that there is a lot of opportunity in markets like the UK and we are behind. We're just behind. That's honestly what it is, and I feel like the UK is very, very ready for this. The problem, like you say, Radio 4 and the other mainstream media, they ain't talking about it.

They're just not bringing it to the people. It's down to you and I, and people like us, to go ahead and people like us to go ahead and do that in our own way, in the way that we feel like that we can deliver and serve the best.

James: I completely agree and you know, people join our Facebook group from wherever they are in the world and some people buy our online courses, and it's completely transparent, it's whether they're in Austria, Washington DC, or the United Kingdom. And then when people say to me, "How is Brexit going to affect your company?", and I'm thinking, "I have no clue how the EU affected it before, how is it going to affect it afterwards?" You know, it's meaningless.

We live in a global business not restricted to anywhere.

Chris: It really truly is a global economy nowadays. You know the stock markets freak out, but other than that I don't think anybody should be overly worried about Brexit any more than they are a Trump administration or any other big political slash governmental change.

Change is a constant. It's always death, taxes and change. They're the only three things that you can really be a hundred percent assured of in life. And if you don't learn how to roll with the punches, if you can't learn how to pivot and change when the need arises, then you're going to have problems, and I feel like particularly with things like Brexit for example, a lot of this stuff is blown very much out of proportion by the mainstream media. They need to report it. They're sometimes maybe a little weak on content and they try and string things out a little bit I think.

James: Yeah. Well, think what happened and talk about change and how disruptive it is and uncertain the world is today, and I think, "Well, look back to the 20th century, look what happened in the first 16 years of the 20th century." A million and a half were dead in global conflicts and boundaries of countries had changed. By the middle of the century, by 1950, 45 million people were dead. I mean, what our grandparents went through, they'll talk to you about change. And yeah, I agree. Changing the trading relationship with our neighbors or who is president who is slightly eccentric for four years is really ... we should get our feet back on the ground. I completely agree with that. And I think we're in exactly the right space to exploit perhaps other people's perception of uncertainty.

If you offer solid products that they're going to change people's lives then from that world, release them from that nine to five.

Chris: Agreed. I believe the only change we should be focused on as entrepreneurs is the change that we can bring the people that we come into contact with, and obviously, we're looking for positive changes, not negative changes in that regards.

James: Yeah, absolutely, and there is nothing better in the world for us to see than somebody who's been writing, and writing, and writing for a few years and finally makes that breakthrough and suddenly has their partner working for them ...

Chris: I love it.

James: ... and they're at home. It's the best thing in the world.

Chris: I love it. You know, just as a quick aside, a very quick tale here. I was working with a dental practice owner, of all places Jamaica, as a client a couple of years ago, and she had been a dentist her whole life. She was in her probably mid-forties or so, and she to me and said, like, you know, "We're doing really well." She had five different places based out around Jamaica and neighboring islands and all the rest of it. She came to me and she said, "I want to build my business, but I don't want any more locations. I don't want to hire more dentists. I want to help other dentists build their businesses, and we're doing really well with Facebook ads, I think we could teach other people how to do this."

So we sat down and we derived a strategy for her on how she could teach other dental practice owners how to grow their businesses and their practices via Facebook ads. To begin with she launched a little four video course at like \$297 or something, and out of the gate she sold like 300, like that. Didn't even think about it.

And now she's just put the finishing touches on a course, which I believe she's priced up at I think \$800 or something, and in her first week she made \$33,000, serving people in her industry based on nothing but sheer, plain experience.

And that's what I'm saying. People will pay for that access, and if you're doing a great job they'll be happy to pay for it. So, there's definitely that positive change that we can affect then. When you see people move their own needles like that, it is very, very rewarding. You are absolutely right.

James: Yeah, fantastic. Okay, look, we're going to finish up, Chris. I think it's worth just reiterating quality needs to be there. There is a lot of things need to be in place but it's absolutely essential that what your product is offering, when you do ask for that money, this is stuff that is going to have an impact

on people and them, right, because there are without question ... this space is also open to people who don't have the quality behind them ...

Chris: Oh yeah.

James: ... and that can be exploitative and we need to be weary of that.

Chris: You know, it's a good and a bad thing. That entry barrier online is at an all-time low. I don't think it's ever been any lower, and because of that, like you very clearly point out, there's a lot of shall we say slightly more unscrupulous people out there. They want to try and pull the wool over people's eyes. They want to try and make a quick buck, and these are the people as we all know will come and go in the night, and very few people will really even notice it.

Unfortunately however, sometimes they'll leave that dent in one person's life that you and I know we could help, and they're very trigger-shy. They're gun-shy. They don't want to go ahead and pull the trigger because of the bad experience they've had before in the past, and it's unfortunate but you're absolutely right.

It's down to us good guys; it's down to us to set that bar higher and even, actually if we have to physically move the bar ourselves by doing live events, by speaking, you know physically actually help move that bar higher, that's what I focus on. I genuinely want the bar to be as high as can be in any industry that I want to touch, because I know if I bring value, and consistency, and originality to that, then I'll win every single time based on these other jokers that are out there trying to make a quick buck.

James: Chris Ducker is coming back to the UK, Mark, and I live in Cambridgeshire and you live in Salisbury, and he said to me the two areas they're looking at are Cambridgeshire and Salisbury.

Mark: Coincidence? I don't think so.

James: Well, he told me first, so one of us is going to have him on our doorstep, but yeah, there are a few people who have this sort of unending amount of energy and laser-like focus on the digital area and how it works, and where it's going, and how to make the most of it. And Chris is one of those people that you could listen to him for hours really, and it's important to listen to him and hear his tips and the areas he thinks you should be working at.

And we talked a bit in the interview about the fact that this is a burgeoning industry, it's a blooming industry. It's worth billions. It's largely ignored by mainstream press, largely ignored by mainstream industry, and that will probably be the case for another decade, at least another decade yet. There is huge scope for people who've got their eyes open, their head switched on to make merry in this area. And for authors in particular, well just look at the difference some of the authors in our community are making to their careers once they start to understand: unlock the secrets of the digital space.

Mark: Absolutely. I've been listening to Chris for a while, and one of the things that I did or I still do, I've got to broaden my education now so I listen to podcasts and I read blog posts and get involved with communities outside of the traditional book publishing space. Because even though this is digital marketing that we're doing, we can learn plenty of things from other experts in other areas of the market.

I'm excited about going to this thing tomorrow with Amazon because there's going to be people there from all kinds of digital industries, and you know, we can talk about things like customer acquisition and that's as relevant for an author as it is for someone selling widgets, or Uber, or people delivering food with apps, and all that kind of stuff. It's all relevant. Lead generation is all the same kind of thing. So, yeah, I listen to people like Chris and go beyond what we would normally say would be a way you should be getting your education from as an author because you can learn things from just about anywhere these days.

James: Great. Okay. Excellent. Thank you so much for listening. It's an exciting couple of weeks ahead for us. We're not going to focus too much on one-on-one. That'll be done really online through our Facebook groups, but we will keep you in touch with how things go.

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