

THE **small** BUSINESS BIG **MARKETING**

show

INSANELY EFFECTIVE
MARKETING

Episode #468

How to slow down and
build an empire, with
hat entrepreneurs Loz
and Alex



www.SmallBusinessBigMarketing.com

Loz Williams and Alex Knorr Interview Transcription

Tim

Loz and Alex from Will and bear welcome to the small business big marketing show.

Loz

Thanks for having us.

Alex

Thank you.

Tim

Now big question to start with where did you guys meet?

Loz

On Tinder. Actually.

Tim

Really?

Loz

Yeah.

Tim

Just like that. I'm trying to figure that one out one of you swiped right?

Loz

Yeah. I wonder who did it first. We actually have no idea but it did take me about a month to reply to him.

Tim

Really?

Loz

Yeah.

Tim

Playing hard to get or just kind of thought he's a bit weird?

Loz

I was like I'm over Tinder. I'm gonna get rid of it. And I started it back up and I was like that guy is pretty cute. Maybe I should say hi.

Tim

Love it. Alex got anything to add to that you've been very quiet?

Alex

No. Just knowing what she was going to say.

Tim

You mean you guys live in a van and you haven't had this conversation yet. You must be running out of things to say.

Loz

We talk about hats quite a lot.

Tim

No doubt. That's why we're here. You both escaped the cubicle one was a mortgage broker the other a product designer. What were you thinking at the time?

Alex

Yeah I mean for me I was working freelance design pretty early on in my career. I switched up out of the 9 to 5 pretty early and I kind of got used to that lifestyle. And I got sort of working as a freelancer on art. The back end of lots of different businesses which was really nice and go to work with founders and all different sorts of marketing managers and so I got in contact with a lot of different people and a lot of businesses and that kind of gave me like a really good insight to how this business is run.

Tim

So Loz you're selling mortgages so you just knew you needed to get out you're bored?

Loz

That's about right. I've actually been at the bank for 10 years. By the time that I'd left and as I said it was very different to what I do now but like looking back since we started will and bear there's so much of what I learnt there that I kind of brought across to will and bear business wise and I do a lot of the admin and the finance stuff with business so it did actually help

Tim

Well I guess the reality is no matter where you are in the world and where you're running your business from some of the fundamentals whether you're a sitting mahogany office in a bank or whether you're sitting in the back of a shag pile covered Kombi van but that's the vision I have in my mind. I actually have a soundtrack playing for you guys which is kind of like Xavier Rudd follow this kind of maybe a bit of you know Angus and Julia.

Loz

Yeah that sounds right.

Tim

I got it?

Loz
Yeah.

Tim
Good good good. Now the impetus for starting a business together you guys meet on tinder. You fall madly in love where the idea to go into business together come from?

Loz
So it was actually like about six months after we met. We went on our first holiday together and so we went to Tasmania middle of summer and I'd always worn hats and I brought my heart and I noticed that Alex didn't have one I was like you need a hat like it's like so hot. We are in Tassie. It's gonna be too hot to not have one.

Tim
What was it about. It was about twelve degrees was it?

Loz
A little over twelve getting a real hot.

Alex
Were living in Melbourne nine times a year. Nothing like Noosa.

Tim
Nada. I know that. Yeah. So Alex not wearing a hat. You are. You're thinking Hey we could start a hat company.

Alex
Well I actually found it quite difficult to find one. So I couldn't I explore all the brand and I couldn't find one that I really connected with.

Tim
So what do you mean by a hat that you connected with?

Alex
I mean exploring all the other brands.

Loz
We went to a few different shops and as he was trying them on it was really obvious that he wasn't really confident to try like the big ones on. I could tell that he felt a little bit weird even to head off to try it on like there wasn't a brand that we knew that we felt comfortable with. And I think it was that process that got me ticking in our brain that was like Oh that's so strange like we wear hats it's like you need them in Australia isn't it so strange that we don't know a hat brands we would go and buy a hat from or that the fact that Alex wasn't

really comfortable to even try them on. That was where the initial idea came from. Was like OK.

Tim

And were talking what three years ago 2016 so was the hat market Loz back then. I don't know what the markets like.

Loz

Not a huge market in Australia to be honest.

Tim

Isn't that amazing given the sun we have

Loz

There's a couple really big brands. They've been around forever but for the young market like the market we're looking it really wasn't huge. There was a couple other brands that we found out that were kind of more fashion based. And I mean we wanted to have practical reasons but we didn't want to spend 300 bucks on our first hat. We weren't committed hat wearers but we are now.

Tim

So you didn't have any other ideas. You didn't have a big whiteboard and trying to brainstorm what business can we go into.

Loz

What happened was after we bought the hat because Alex is a photographer and we both love being outdoors and we bought the hat and we started taking these amazing photos of Tasmania wearing the hat outdoors and we're like you know what. There should be a brand that connects nature to hats and encourages people to be outdoors and look after the environment because that's the place you need your hat in. That was where the idea really kind of cemented.

Tim

OK so you go let's do a hat business. You leave your jobs. What do you do first Alex you're a designer. Did you put a few designs down or just simply gone buy some hats somewhere?

Alex

It wasn't that simple. Because we couldn't actually leave our job at the start. We were still working full time. I was working almost twelve months in and still working to starting the business and then Loz was still working about six months in.

Tim

So this a side hustle?

Loz

Side hustle. Yes. And we had a few other side hustles going so there was very minimal sleep lots of coffee.

Tim

What were other side hustles?

Loz

I was doing the mortgage broking and then I was also doing social media marketing. So I'd started that for one of the brands. And we started doing it pretty early on to test our concept of will and bear as well. So before we launch a few things that we did was obviously we started sampling pretty quickly and Alex had a really good idea. We thought will and bear was a great idea. You know hat's nature will do nice photos and it made sense to us but we wanted to kind of see if everyone else likes the idea. So we started a social media account called them. Babes in hats six months out from launching and I was spending a lot of hours on that everyday kind of testing the photos we want to use the messaging if people even wanted to see people in nature with hats. So that took up a lot of time before we launched.

Tim

That's a great idea. So that is a bit of a testing ground simply for the idea.

Alex

Gave us the ability to see what photography styles worked what messaging worked. What worked in terms of growing your following engagement all that sort of stuff. So what our audience would really like.

Loz

It actually like we didn't plan for it but because we had six months before the business to kind of talk to people. We ended up making a lot of friendships and a lot of ambassadors that we work with that we met through that account

Tim

What did you learn from that six months with babes in hats?

Loz

We learnt to be real.

Alex

To be authentic.

Loz

And to tell a story instead of just putting pretty people in hats. So people like the real stuff which is why we now tell our story from the road and it's the whole concept of the brand is like hey this is us. Anyone can be a part of this brand. It's a really inclusive

Alex

I mean it was a big thing for us to be an inclusive brand and I think authentic storytelling was always a big part of that. What we learned from babes in hats also it was like who we wanted our brand ambassadors to be. So we worked out a key market pretty strongly in photographers and that was what we set out to do once we launched

Loz

So as soon we launch we send about 100 hats out to our favourite photographers all over the world and we said look you don't need to do anything for us. We just want our hats on amazing photographers. Because that's what we love. And that really helped build the story of will and bear. Like now it's kind of like a lot of people that buy our hats are photographers which means that we get this like epic stream of content that we can share.

Tim

That's a great idea. So let me understand that in order to launch you identified your hundred favourite photographers in the world send them hats and asked nothing of them?

Loz

We just send them all the hat and said we don't want anything. Just want our hats on your heads and then of course they ended up in photos and we're still friends with a lot of them have done some trips with some of them and it was really good in the end.

Tim

What a great idea.

Alex

That seemed natural for us because we're both very creative and we gravitate towards these people. So some of these people were almost our heroes in a sense. And it was amazing you actually see like a post come through a month or two later. As said we're friends with a lot of them now and we're all kind of working together which is great.

Tim

Just understanding the logistics of that for others who may want to do. Because I'm a big fan of asking you know I think so many small business owners we don't ask because we're too scared of hearing a no.

Loz

But you know what. At the start I was scared I'm like Oh my God we're so small they're so cool and I had everyone up on a pedestal. But one of the biggest lessons I've learned from social media is like everyone's a person just like us. Everyone's just a person. Most people are nice.

Tim

Yes. Well said.

Alex

No matter how many followers you've got. What coolest people are in the photos. Everyone's really willing to basically help small business.

Tim

Yeah just understanding the logistics of the Instagram idea and sending the photographers. What did you do? Did you reach out to each of your photographers and say hey I want to send you a hat. Can you direct message me your address?

Loz

Just some of them but because I had the idea of doing that pretty early on when we started babes in hats. I kind of started forming relationships first. So I would follow them make sure I was commenting on all of their photos and then I'd start a conversation. And I wanted to become friends with them. A lot of them as well. Talk about their travels and what they do what they'd like to get out of things as well. So a lot of them I tried to make a really personal effort with before we launched the brands and when we launched it wasn't just completely out of the blue. So there was a lot of time in relationship building at the start.

Tim

That's a classic. You know Gary Vaynerchuk the social media guy out of the states it's the classic Jab Jab Jab Right Hook strategy. That's exactly right. So you're giving giving giving giving giving and then the right hook comes and goes hey we're going to see you ahead put a photo out of it. We'd love that.

Loz

It was something that we thought about after we launched it. Obviously we love that it was hats. We love hats but we're really lucky in the fact that we had a product. If you were in a photo and you were wearing it it was so easy for the hat to be in the photo like you didn't have to take a photo of your foot. It didn't look awkward like hats just naturally are in photos because they're on your head.

Tim

Correct. I had a chat. I mean your product is made for social media. Previous guest a few weeks ago is Victoria Beattie from the beach people she's the inventor of the round beach towel. And again social media marketing was so easy because everyone wanted to take a photo of themselves on their round beach towel down the beach

Loz

They nailed it.

Tim

They are smashing it aren't they. So we've tested it babes in hats has worked lots of great feedback. You've sent off 100 hats to your top 100 photographers around the world

you're getting some action on social media there. You'll launch the company and what happens?

Alex

One of the best stories when we started we had a small market in Melbourne and there wasn't much activity online.

Loz

I was so nervous I couldn't function.

Alex

And I made my entire family of six people in Melbourne to come. Made them come and then I made three of them buy a hat and we sold five hats the entire weekend.

Loz

And his mom doesn't wear hats

Tim

She bought as a present for him. You could easily lose hope in that. Clearly not. It's a long game right.

Alex

We didn't know what to think.

Loz

It was funny because compared to now. It was crickets. But if we got one sale we were so excited that it didn't feel like crickets. It was like Oh my God. Someone we don't know bought our hat it was crazy. Then it kind publicly took the first year. So we launched in fifth and then it was kinda ticking along nothing crazy. And then we started doing the Finders Keepers markets. So they're really big markets in Melbourne Sydney Brisbane. And we did one of them in October after we launched maybe like eight months later and that went bananas. Went really good it was like the most hats we've ever sold.

Tim

What do you think did there that you hadn't done elsewhere?

Loz

Oh I think they've been building that market for years and they've got such an amazing customer base.

Alex

Up to 50000 over the weekend.

Loz

Yes I think it was visibility like we didn't have any visibility because we were so new. We're doing these tiny little markets but then all of a sudden all of these people were in front of us and they could see the product and we knew that we had a good product. So I think it was just like the visibility that we got at that market.

Alex

And good timing it was spring coming into summer. For a small brand with a good product and we invested pretty heavily into doing a nice market store set up after our.

Loz

We got the biggest market.

Alex

After the first attempted that small market I talked about earlier was pretty pretty drab to be honest. So we went again and we went harder and we did a nice beautiful setup. So we invested some money and time into that.

Loz

And I think it was also like the whole time we were doing those markets. There wasn't one another store that was selling the same hats as us. There was no one else doing it which really helped.

Tim

And what point do you decide to go online and create an e-commerce play?

Alex

Well that was there from the start.

Loz

That's where the most crickets were

Alex

We set ourselves up like I have done an ecommerce for clients before. Worked on web design as well. So when you said product design I started in product design and transitioned across more to branding and web graphic design. I just sort of slowly transitioned myself. So I had to be experienced in that. I'd set up a world commerce store on Wordpress and we hadn't really got handle around online advertising at stage. We kind of built this site and it was really nice and beautiful was really hard to use in the backend and actually upload our products and stuff like that. So it was a bit difficult to run for us but we kind of built it and just left it.

Loz

Yeah. And then this market happened. That summer came around we partnered with the store and we have a few of our hats in a newspaper

Alex

We over open up the paper one day and there's a double page spread that one of their photos.

Loz

That summer it kind of kicked off and then we started doing digital marketing and started doing a bit more of the storytelling. It's started flowing and then we went did trade show and got like I think we're going six months ago fifty new retailers and it's kind of started expanding from there.

Tim

No more crickets. First try van life I understand was a bit of a big failure. So you spent a year establishing yourselves in Byron Bay is that right?

Loz

Yeah. So when we moved into it we were in Melbourne and we used to travelling around quite a bit and we decided we wanted to do it full time it. We just made the decision and kind of jumped into the van. We didn't think about the logistics of running the business or having the van set up to be able to run the business well. So it was pretty tough actually.

Tim

When you say you just decided to hop in clearly you'd like to go off on weekends and and do some vanning. You're running your business out of Melbourne. Did you just think hey we'll pack up and hit the road?

Alex

We kind of packed everything up for trailer for our van.

Loz

Carried our hats

Alex

Carried our stuff up and down the East Coast for a while. But we didn't actually figure out that being in a vintage van and we didn't realise the complexity of breakdowns and reliability like having deadlines for a market and being on time like we just had to work all that stuff out. It became very stressful.

Loz

Just before we move to Byron we ended up in Melbourne for a trade show. We were living in a van it was the middle of winter and we were sleeping in thermals in friends backyards and we were like you know what. We don't have to be anywhere what are we doing here at the moment. So we decided to move to Byron and settle for a little bit and work it out.

Tim

And what did you work out in Byron that then allowed you to do what you're doing now which is you back on the road running a million dollar hat business?

Loz

Well at the start we we're gonna settle down we're gonna get an office we're going to get full time employees and get everything running and then we went to Africa.

Alex

So we donate to tree planting projects over in Africa. We went to visit them last year. This was mid setting up the business in Byron so we thought we had to get an office. We thought we had to do all the things that we saw every business do. And that includes hiring full time employees. So we then had a trip scheduled to Africa which was a really amazing trip to say there's a tree planting projects we donate to. So we got back from that and it was a really humbling experience.

Loz

So we didn't need to say yes to everything just because we thought we had to like I think we got back and we were like Okay cool. Maybe we don't need everything we think we need and maybe we don't need to be as big just for the sake of being big as a business. So we kind of sat back it was the first time since we had the business that we like had space to evaluate where we want it to go. What we want to do how we want it to benefit us as individuals as well.

Tim

That it's beautiful when you had that realisation that you don't need to say yes to everything you don't need to build an empire. Do you find that your business went to another level?

Loz

Yes. The Empire started building. It was flowing because we were happier and we weren't doing everything black because we were like you know out of fear. We weren't saying yes we thought it wasn't gonna work. We were saying no because we're it's okay if that doesn't work.

Tim

So it did go well the other one said it didn't. Clearly it sounds like the business. However you want to measure it. It was a better business for you both as a result of that decision.

Loz

I say it's better for us and the business is actually going better.

Tim

Isn't that awesome. You've had triple digit growth year on year. Does that concern you? Do you sometimes think how do we put the brakes on? It's getting too big.

Alex
Yeah.

Loz
Yeah. That's what we did last year. So when we made that decision of OK we don't need to keep growing because we actually don't want to have a business that we can't maintain ourselves and we're only two individuals. So we did slow things down and we're like OK cool online can grow as much as we want because we have our warehouse that's all set up. We know the figures. We've already got 120 wholesale stores. Let's just cap that. We don't need to get bigger in wholesale because that creates much more work for us. So it's like we're in allowing ourselves to grow in the sections that are simpler for the business.

Tim
What a great relief so many business is just chasing growth. Go go go go.

Loz
We got one really good bit of advice once. So we met some friends where we were staying in airbnb and the people that owned it. A little branding bar. And they said that the one thing that they could tell. Everything they learned in business is you either like don't get to big like be small and sustainable an just don't get to big

Alex
We heard that more and more as we went along from other businesses and that's kind of what gave us the confidence to actually make that decision

Tim
How old you guys are?

Loz
Thirty one.

Tim
Okay so here comes a question from an old guy. Is that a millennial thing that you just talked about?

Alex
I don't know.

Loz
Maybe like we're thinking more about like our quality of life over the business. I'm not sure maybe the mindset is different.

Alex
What do you think?

Tim

I think if I look at my generation of friends and colleagues and the business owners that I've spoken to I'm 52 and I would say that growth you know you wouldn't hear what you just talked about earlier not saying yes to everything and not being as big as possible. It's not a conversation that happens in my generation or at least not often. It's a conversation I hear more and more in my kids generation my kids are like early 20s and they're much more interested in a quality of life in sustainability in managing the planet and living an authentic life and they probably see their parents who work their rings off and don't want to be like that.

Loz

Yeah that's probably a really good point.

Alex

I think a lot of people like our age let's be honest. It's hard not to get sucked into the property market and all that. But I made the decision to stay away from that a little bit in the sense that so I could do something like this. So there are some social pressure that you get from general society around that. But I decided to go down this path.

Loz

Like the money that we used to start will and bear could have be in towards a house deposit. we thought this was a better investment.

Tim

You're in Byron and you had your epiphanies you've got yourself sorted out. It's time to hit the road jack don't you come back no more no more no more. What were the complications before you hit the road?

Loz

Well the first thing was so because we'd learned so much from living in the van the first time the first thing that we wanted to set up was like OK if we're going to live in a van how do we actually work. How do we manage a team. How do we live when we have time off in the van. One of the first things was setting up and making sure we had the right team members. So we've always been really big in outsourcing the things we can't do. Because there's no point wasting our time. So we first made sure that we had like one dedicated team member who could also work remotely from wherever they are in the world for each aspect of the business that we want to manage by someone else. So that was the first thing we setup.

Alex

We've got a wholesale manager in Byron we got a designer in Norway.

Loz

Pr agent in L.A. A web dev in Melbourne digital marketing in Melbourne supply chain in Palm Beach and then we set it up so every one of those staff members are on contract and

they can work from wherever. So the whole team is kind of living the ethos that we are living.

Tim

Couple of questions around that. So you got a team all over the world how have you found them? Logistically how have you found them?

Loz

Honestly most of them we've actually found through friends. Friends of friends.

Alex

Recommendation.

Loz

So some of them have been with us a bit longer. But yet apart from the designer the rest of them we found through friends of friends which is quite easy when we were in Byron because such a huge network of people doing similar.

Tim

Okay so you've got them all over the world. Are they a team that talks to each other? Have you met each one of them?

Loz

Some of them have. Some of them haven't. Most of them have. There's a lot of them were started in Byron and then moved away.

Tim

Awesome. Okay so you got your team all over the world. What other hurdles did you have to conquer in order for vanlife?.

Loz

We ended up restoring the van because we lived in the van previously we had some upgrades we needed to do.

Loz

We wanted to make it feel amazing like a space we wanted to be in instead of a tiny little van.

Tim

So I describe it to us take us on a tour of the van.

Alex

Well.

Loz

The two front seats that also turn around to face the back when you want to turn it into a lounge. Behind the back seats there's a bench that has a kitchen. So a little sink a full functioning fridge. And then behind that there's like little wardrobes we can keep all of our food and our clothes in. And Alex has built me a section for all of my candles and crystals when I need to calm down and meditate.

Tim

Alex you are a romantic.

Alex

Yes. So we had a lot of stuff that we've kind of wanted and so we ended up basically restoring.

Loz

So this is a funny story. So originally we're like you know what we'll give ourselves a month. We'll just restore the van in a month and then we'll hit the road in January. We ended up hitting the road in May and the van took six months.

Alex

Turns out you going to do way more sanding than I thought. To repaint the van.

Tim

Tip number three. Don't underestimate the sanding. So you're on the road. You've overcome that. What's van life like these days for you?

Loz

It's been great.

Alex

Amazing. We find that we just want to get away from everything and just by ourselves. Mostly it's really interesting like we find it really nice just to be remote and just on our own.

Loz

I think one of the reasons we like that so much is because the decision that we made to just actually not say yes to everything and to kind of make decisions for our own life is easier to make when you're kinda not influenced by as much and when we're out in nature it reminds us just to be sure to our decisions

Tim

So how do you actually run the business?

Loz

So we use a program called asana. And so all of our staff members are on there and we set up tasks probably three to six months in advance. Everything that has to be done. Obviously those time frames change but just so everyone knows what's happening. And

then I'll jump in probably twice a week to talk to everyone to make sure they're cool. And then probably once a week have a call with each staff member as well to make sure that everything is so good.

Tim

All the hats at warehouse now obviously somewhere central. Did you say Melbourne?

Loz

Sydney.

Tim

Sydney. So you're not carrying hats. You're not doing markets anymore?

Loz

No that was one big thing actually so we decided that we can't do any events for the year that we're living in the van because otherwise there's timelines and if the van breaks down it's going to add stress and we don't want to have to be in any capital cities for too long. So no events this year.

Tim

Let's talk marketing. What's been the most effective marketing you guys have done to date?

Loz

Storytelling through social media. Definitely.

Tim

So what's that look like?

Loz

I think the reason that our marketing works is because if it's not a story of what me and Alex are doing. It's a story on what maybe some of our ambassadors are doing and what they're doing in the hats. So it's kind of less about the hats and more about the lifestyle.

Tim

So give us an example maybe the most popular post you did on Insta or Facebook in regards to storytelling.

Loz

The most popular posts are always the ones from our van life. When our van's broken down. People love it when something goes wrong and you tell them it's so strange j.

Tim

Paint a picture Loz like it's a photo underneath you've just told a bit of a story of where you are and what's going on?

Loz

One of the ones that did the best was actually when we started the trip we did a Instagram vs. reality post and it was a really pretty picture of us and our van and the sunset. And then next to it was a picture of our van with no canopy on. The wind had blown the canopy off and we had a convertible van and it was just telling the story of how like the photos we see is different in what happens in the background. That was one of our best posts.

Tim

What do you think about that. I've looked at your social media. It's beautiful. I had a question around how does a hat label get 70000 followers on insta. But I can sort of get it because you pics are beautiful. But social media. You know the nature of it. You do depict your best life and you guys do that more than depicting your worst life and I get that. But what's your view on all of that?

Loz

So if you have a look at our Instagram Stories they probably depict our real life more. So we have we a strict policy with the curation about Instagram feed because both love really good photography. But we share a lot of our personal stories and the brand's personal behind the scenes stuff through our stories. So we're kind of comfortable in having those two different platforms.

Tim

That's a great distinction. So your stories are real. They're on the move. They're authentic. And then you're insta feed is that the terminology where you're sharing a what would you call it the glitzy it's just the more kind of manicured?

Loz

Instagram feeds more art to us. Yeah like that's kind of like our art that we love. But let's say for instance when our van broke down we did like a three minute video of us talking to our mechanic. And what was going on and we put that on Instagram story and that got really good engagement. And people were like Oh my God you need help do you need somewhere to stay. And it was really nice.

Tim

Oh that's awesome. That's awesome.

Alex

And so it's kind of a nice outlet for us. So it's more about behind the scenes and it's a bit more less curated and it's easier for us to communicate with our audience on those different platforms. Like being very curated on the front end of Instagram is actually a really difficult task but being real and honest and a little less polished on the back end is a really nice outlet for us.

Tim

So with the art. As you call it that you send out on your insta feed. I mean they're beautiful photographs. You clearly both are into photography. Is there a plan? Do you sort of driving across the Nullarbor and really plotting and planning what that next pics going to look like. And then is the setup like a proper shoot?

Loz

No. An example would be the kid shoots.

Alex

Yeah. Some of the best content is just trips that we organize with friends and family. So we're launching in your kids range coming out very soon actually. And we just did a trip with Loz niece and nephew. .

Loz

Ten days and so we plan out instead of photo shoots. We try to plan like weeklong trips with people so the content we get is more authentic and we actually had a good time getting it. And it turns out to be so much better than just planning a day photo shoot with models.

Alex

We've tried both to be honest only what we feel most comfortable with putting out is the real authentic credible stuff. The stuff. We're on the trip with them we're experiencing it and it comes through in the non models because they're having such a good time that they forget about the camera.

Tim

So you guys are smashing Instagram. What role Facebook and Pinterest?

Loz

We do use Facebook and we do a lot of ads on Facebook as well like digital marketing.

Alex

For us largely Instagram was the first entry point for anyone. It's where we feel comfortable but really what else is driving growth is like online advertising as well.

Loz

Yeah. Google Ads.

Alex

Google ads making sure our SEo is up to scratch. All that sort of stuff. So we invest heavily on that.

Loz

We do a lot of e-mail e-mail marketing as well.

Tim

Tell me about that. You know I hear business owners go email marketing that's dead we're all spammed our inboxes are full. What makes your email marketing convert?

Loz

So we try to do the storytelling through the email marketing. So there's a lot of content that we have on our blog that we maybe don't share everywhere else. So I think that's the difference on email marketing and what you see here is there's like more in-depth stories if you're interested in that.

Tim

OK.

Alex

You might find stories a little bit more in depth about sustainability or a trip that Ambassador Steffen has done through Mongolia on horseback. So if you really want to get a deep dive into sort of what we're about. That's probably the best spot.

Tim

Yeah. Back to Facebook and Pinterest. More paid advertising on those platforms vs uploading original content?

Loz

We've never really nailed it. We've got Pinterest set up and we use it a fair bit but we don't actually see much a very good conversion so we haven't spent a lot of time with pinterest. It's more Facebook Google and Instagram for us.

Tim

Interesting. What about content marketing? Blogging YouTube anything like that?

Loz

Well the plan is to start a YouTube channel because we're going to we're going to do a story about working from the road. But it's also like we said we didn't want to take on too much weight. We're thinking of maybe hiring a videographer to help us with that. But YouTube is definitely something we want to do.

Alex

YouTube I think for us we'd be one of the biggest platforms for us to invest in. I think it will go really well for us.

Loz

Well it's actually crazy when we were on the road with my niece and nephew they're so little and they use YouTube. They use youtube and I think there's something in that. A lot of the younger people.

Alex

It's a little scary. It's probably just the way it's going.

Tim

No doubt. I can ask you both but Loz what's the most favourite part you're three years out of being a mortgage broker. What do you most love about running the business that you have these days?

Loz

I love the community the most. So one of the reasons I wanted to start it was to be able to involve the people around me in something that makes kind of everyone's life better. And I love it. Now I get to go on trips with my niece and nephew and my sister is one of our employees also she's our customer service employee and she has more freedom because she works for us and she gets to be involved in it. And that's definitely my favourite part.

Tim

Alex?

Alex

I always wanted to sort of have a business that gives back and we are adding the tree planting project that we haven't really touched on but that has always been a big goal for me. Something that can contribute to greater society rather than just being personal. I think that's very important.

Tim

We haven't touched on what it is. For one hat sold you plant 10 trees in Africa and I think up to now you've got 10 hectares of trees planted in Africa?

Alex

The number of trees is four hundred thousand trees

Tim

And clearly for you Alex it's a feel good thing. Is there a commercial reality to that?

Alex

Yeah I think you touched on before about the next generation through I think they're a bit more aware of this stuff. They want to be able to give back as well and really use a platform for our customers as well. Like for them to know that we're willing to put money up for these causes and that potentially buying a hat can contribute. I think that's really wonderful.

Tim

That's awesome.

Alex

And the programs that we donate to. Largely environmental but there's also humanitarian that the tree plantations provide food for a lot of hungry people in Africa as well. So it's a really complex interesting ecosystem that's over there.

Tim

Well guys I think it's a great story. It's a business in the making. Three years in I think we should talk three years down the track once you got your gearbox fixed. All I can say is hats off to you.