

00:00:00 Welcome to the hair of the dog podcast. I'm your host, Nicole Begley. And today we have an incredible guest on with us. He might've heard them as the LinkedIn guy. We're not talking about LinkedIn today. Instead, we're talking about how to build your brand value and your branding, and just build your business in a way that clients are ready to spend more money with you and how to manage all your time while you're doing it and set the proper goals.

00:00:30 So stay tuned today. We have Jeff Brown on the podcast and it's a great conversation. Welcome to the hair of the dog podcast. If you're a pet photographer, ready to make more money and start living a life by your design, you've come to the right place. And now your host, pet photographer, travel addict, chocolate martini connoisseur, Nicole Begley.

00:00:57 Hey everybody. Welcome back to the hair of the dog podcast. I'm your host, Nicole Begley. And today we have an incredible guest. I'm so excited to have him here with me to chat with you guys about all sorts of goal-setting time productivity things. It is Mr. Jeff Brown all the way over there from the UK and his business is focused on marketing,

00:01:19 but a lot of people know him as the photographer's mentor. So Jeff, welcome to the podcast. Thank you. It's been a pleasure to be on. Yeah. So excited to have you here before we get started. I always kind of love to get the background a little bit of from our guests of how you got into photography and kind of what your photographic journey has been like.

00:01:43 Yeah, well, so, so I've always loved photography. So when I was a young lad, I used to do a lot of fishing and fishing men getting up early in the morning, beautiful sunrises. So got myself a little Instamatic camera and got into that, that way. And then my journey progressed to buying our first camera, which is a Canon<inaudible> and film photography.

00:02:04 And then I went on later to work for Dickson's camera shops in the UK, and that was there for about two years. Then one crazy day, I walk, I went to new castle to buy a shirt from, from, from a shop, a shop, just a dress shirt. I went in and I bought the shirt and I came out the shirt and right next door to the sheriff,

00:02:24 the shop was armed forces career's office. And I just on the spur of the moment, I'm just going to pop in and have a look. And I popped in and had a look and came out and I'd signed up for the Royal Navy for 22 years as a, as an aircraft engineer. And I went and joined the aircraft engineer and to become an aircraft engineer for two years,

00:02:44 for 22 years, I did two years service. And then once you get to a certain point in the military, you can join. What's called sideways entry brunches. And I found that they had a branch of military photographers and I thought, oh, that's brilliant, but you couldn't have joined that from off the street. You had to be serving military member to do it.

00:03:00 So I applied for the mercury photography branch it's yeah. They jumped through

a lot of hoops to get in there. Cause it was really small. There's only 80 people in the entire armed forces within that and, and passed the tests and got in. So I became a serving military photographer, which was brilliant. Funny enough, the first ever military job I did on my own,

00:03:21 I have to pass in through the six months training, which was six months, 28 exams. It was very, very intense. Came out, went to work on a nuclear submarine base for three weeks, shadowed by another photographer. And then my boss called me in and says, Jeff, we've got a job for you weekend. It's your first weekend to go out your first job on you on Saul.

00:03:43 And I went, oh great boss, what is it? He says, right? He says, I want you in early on Sunday morning. And he said, I want you to drive up to spring bridge at the top of Scotland is a command or Memorial air. And it's a, it's the remembrance parade. And he says, you're going to be prince Phillip's official photographer.

00:03:58 Oh my God, military military, Chuck you in at the deep end. The biggest mistake I ever made. I remember the parade pulled up with, with his Royal Highness. He got out of the car was I'd been there for about two hours, almost a polished my lens and my hero over 50 times, he came out and I was banging bang and taking loads of pictures,

00:04:19 walking along next to him, running ahead of him getting different shots. And I remember thinking in my mind, oh my God, I've got loads of amazing. I've got tons, tons, hundreds of amazing images. And then it dawned on me when I thought I've got hundreds and actually put a fellow in, Never made that mistake again in my life,

00:04:39 say you learn by your mistakes. So then I did debt after that, after, after eight years in the military, I went to work for the intelligence services because they are very, very closely linked to the photography. Branch did two years with them. Loads of people used to come into my office and Jeff, the other military photographer and you and I was like,

00:04:58 yeah, yeah. And I think, great, I've got an intelligence job. Can you photograph me dog? Can you photograph my daughter? Oh, my daughter's getting married. Don't do family portraits. And then I suddenly thought, you know, I wouldn't mind doing this as a full-time job. So two years later I left and I'd met a guy in there.

00:05:17 Who's another military photographer who lived in my local area. And we decided we'd go into business together. But he was married and had two kids. I was still, I was dating a girl, but I wasn't married. So he, he says, right, you go first, you go first, you get, you set the business up. And if it works,

00:05:34 then I'll come out. I went out, set the business up. But when you look in the military, you get a seven and a half grand to spend on, on training. So I thought, well, I'm fairly well trimmed as a photographer. Why don't I spend this money on marketing and branding and

learning how to run a business. And then six months later,

00:05:51 Kev came out and he got seven and a half grants a week. We spend 15,000 on training, which is more than some spending their entire life. And consequently, because of that, the business just took off from, by that was 2004. Within three years, we had five photography businesses, each doing six figure sums. We had a, a wedding business.

00:06:11 We had a portrait one, which was under the wedding business. We had a school nurseries and kindergartens type business. Then we opened the Boudreaux maker over doing the laundry side. And then we have the commercial side as well. And it was doing absolutely fantastic. And then in 2015, we split the businesses up and I stupidly bought a Pope. I've always fancied buying a food pub.

00:06:35 And I thought, I think that's a dream. A lot of people have. And then they're like, oh man, the food service stuff I spent, I, cause we did, we had done very well. You know, so I had quite a lot of money. So I thought, so I invested 160 grand into this, this field. And it was going to be a bit of a wedding venue as well.

00:06:57 And I literally lost the whole lot in 12 months, less than of the 60,000 on top. And, and I suffered from depression. I've tried to actually, I've said this before. I don't mind saying that I tried to drive my car off a bridge Drunk and I ran away to Northumberland today to, to the middle of nowhere where I live now.

00:07:15 And I thought, right, you need to refocus your life, get yourself back in order. I was still doing weddings at the time and the consequently the whole breakdown of the Pope, I ended up getting divorced as well. So it was, it was a very tough time and I restarted my life and thought about creating a trend in business for photographers on marketing on mindset as well,

00:07:35 because I'd overcome the depression and got through it. I went through a very dark time myself and create this program. And now it's, it's absolutely phenomenal. You know, my entire life has changed. I can't remember the last time I was, I was miserable. I was unhappy or I'll raise my voice. And I've, I've, I've created a,

00:07:52 a program that is, you know, it gives me more freedom. I've got weekends to spend with my daughter. That was one of the big reasons I went for that after the divorce, because I couldn't be doing weddings every weekend because otherwise I wouldn't see my daughter. So The last wedding was last year and now I'm photography free. I'm just purely mentoring and marketing ambassador for about eight different companies and sponsored by Lux,

00:08:15 these labs in Glasgow. So Yeah. Wow. Wow. That is definitely the most unique story that I've ever heard for how someone got into photography. It was not just like, oh, I

started taking pictures of my kid or my dog. And then like somebody asked like, no, I joined the military. That's incredible. That's incredible. Oh man.

00:08:39 Yeah, I love it. So I mean, during all that time, when you're running, how many different brands, so it's like four or five photography brands, you probably also had to have a pretty good handle on some time management and creating systems and things like that. So were you, were you, I mean, you guys probably had associate shooters then for some of those or were you guys the two of you doing all the photographing for those different brands?

00:09:11 No. So we had to be at, in the end at our height, we had four photographers and then there was me and Kev. And do we end to the photographers? Did, did like the research team and the editing and we had to two makeup artists and we have a guy who was full-time marketing on calls for us as well. He was,

00:09:29 he was, he was the guy who's who, who took the knock-backs phone in a places to get us in places. He, he saw a lot of our commercial jobs, you know, for construction and hotel photography. So he would do it for enough and try and get us meetings with people. Nice, nice. That's fantastic. Is that, is the,

00:09:46 the time management piece, is that something that you've always found, something like as it's easy for you or is it something that like the military instilled with you or how did you kind of start to get a handle on we able to manage all that? I think to be honest, I'm a little bit of a weirdo in the fact that I, one of these,

00:10:06 these people who, you know, I'm extremely OCD, so yeah. Control enthusiast, not STD control enthusiastic. And my girlfriend gets in the car and she turns up the volume in the car to salt lake 19. I start sweating and I just can't leave it out. I have to have it on an even number. It has to be 20 my car just,

00:10:25 I just changed my car the other week. And I was worried that I didn't want to change it too early. Cause I would've got a 71 plate in the UK. And so I ended up getting a brand new 22 plate that so relieved as I couldn't have an odd number and my number plate I am, I am very open, you know, with one of the things about being OCD.

00:10:48 One of the benefits of that is that, you know, everything has to have its place. So I have to do things in a logical order. Now the I'm one of these like irritating people who get up early in the morning and I, and I'm at my peak first thing in the morning and I have this little club it's very unique because I don't think anybody else in Northern blends in it.

00:11:07 And I call it four, four, four club. So my alarm goes off at 4 44, cause it's all even numbers and I get up and that's when I'm at my most productive. And I do my important jobs of the day are what I call my consistency jobs early morning because by the time it gets to two

o'clock in the afternoon, I can barely function and a half after I have a baby now and then get up and have a coffee,

00:11:29 you know, but it's that consistency and knowing what I'm going to do and having things mapped out because I have a bigger goal, but the bigger goal is broke down into tiny, tiny, tiny, tiny little goals that I do every day when I get up. And that automatically fills the bigger goal. Right. Right. Yeah. I think that is definitely a huge thing that not everybody looks at is figuring out when they're most productive.

00:11:56 And you know, I know quite a few people that morning is not their most productive time for me. It is maybe not quite 4 44, but like 7:00 AM, 7:00 AM. It's more my jam and I am, I am good. But definitely first thing in the morning is when I always try to block off, if I have to do like any, any heavy brain work,

00:12:19 like creating or writing or something like that, I do that in the morning. And then the afternoon becomes more like admin editing just like wrote stuff that I don't need a lot of brain power because same thing. And one after dinner I'm done, I'm just toast. Like I can't really function on anything important where I know some other people that like their day doesn't even get started,

00:12:43 their creativity doesn't start until like the wee hours of the morning. So like their total night owls, you know? So I, I think it's all about working with your energy and there's no, definitely no right or wrong, but knowing where it is, It's your circadian rhythm, isn't it, there's three different types of circadian rhythm, you know, it's early morning or you're this,

00:13:06 or like the mid day type of person or you're the evening person. And there's no point in finance in P you know, you read loads of books by like gurus and influencers who say, I gotta be up at four o'clock in the morning and then meditate and have super smoothie and run 20 miles. If you know that person don't do it, you know,

00:13:26 do what works for you. And for me know, I, I, now I don't set an alarm just, I start to wake up at half four. It's just my natural time. Even before I was in the military, I was, you know, I found the military side, right. Quite easy, you know, when you have to organize your kit and I was,

00:13:42 I was in heaven, this is brilliant getting up early. And all, everybody else was like in tears, you know, in basic training, this is, this is supposed to be hard. I love it. I think one of the big things about goal setting is that most photographers what they do. And, you know, I work with photographers in about 20 different countries around the world from all different types of issues.

00:14:13 And, and they'll say, have you set goals? And like, oh yeah, yeah. I wanna, I want

to shoot 50 weddings or I want to shoot 500 portraits and I wanna make 150 grand and I'll be like, right. Any, anything else? No, that's it. That's my goal. So usually a photographer will say either a financial goal or shoot goal,

00:14:36 and then that's it. And obviously I'm, well, what are you doing to reach those goals? And I think the most I've written the goals down on a piece of paper and that's it. Right? So I said, don't look at the monetary goal. Don't look at the turnover course that that is, is something to achieve. Look at another goal that will help you achieve that goal and then work towards that goal.

00:14:58 And I've got a brilliant example of what are called deconstructing goals. So I was working with a headshot photographer called Karen Richards. So Kevin Richards has got a studio in Nashville, Tennessee. And when<inaudible> first started working with Karen, we sat that, you know, where do you want to be? Where do you want to get to? But I want to be,

00:15:18 I want to be shooting less than I want to be making a lot more money and I want to make X amount of dollars per year. And I might, right. Okay. So what we need to do Canada, first of all, we need to get you. We need to set you a branding goal. So we need to bring you your brand to be elevated.

00:15:34 You got to look premium because if you want people to pay that amount of money, they have to have a perceived value. So they've got to land on your website, they've got to see your bushes and go, wow, this is quality. This is an experience. It's not four to a ship. So that's one of the big things. First of all,

00:15:48 setting that perceived value. So because if you want people to pay more money, they've got to believe that the value is there. They've got to have that perceived value. So that'd become one of Karen's first goals was to, to build up the brand now. So we thought of a way around this and, and Karen came up with an idea of,

00:16:07 she wanted to get a hundred five-star Google reviews. So in order to get that 105 star Google review, she had to have that premium brand, but she also had to have a service that was second to none. And she didn't deliver a thought or shoot. She delivered an experience right down to the things that, you know, she went out and bought a really nice coffee,

00:16:26 Missy machine. So people had a coffee and enjoyed a proper coffee before the shoot. She got a steamer, she got a, a trouser press. You know, she sent people a pausing guide and you know how to smile, smile, coaching guide, and all this sort of stuff. So right from the journey when somebody booked in, they were like,

00:16:44 this isn't like any other photography. It isn't experience. So as this happened as how she, as she was hunting for these Google five star reviews, which became a main focus, she

had to provide this amazing service in order for people to leave this amazing review. Their reviews started coming in as a subsequent benefactor of the reviews, as the reviews came in,

00:17:07 her Google rating went up. So our website became to the top of, of Google. She's now ranked in either one or two for headshot photographers in Nashville, Tennessee. She's raised our prices four times and she was on a call with us last night within the awesome photographers group, my own group. And she says, I'm going to have to put them up again because she's only now because she's got the premium brand and she offers the premium service only type of people who she's gain,

00:17:36 but her ideal clients who are buying into that. So all the tire kickers, all the freebie hunters, all the people that want a headshot for, for like \$50 on \$99 on the get on her website. Oh, that's too expensive me in the good way. So she's just, she's attracting and she's offering an experience. Not that she would, she sell on the benefit.

00:17:55 So that one thing of looking for that those five star reviews helped her elevate her brand, create an experience, not a, or shoot ranker is number one in Google for our area. And she is now the most expensive headshot photographer in Tennessee. So she's the top price, but she wasn't, she wasn't focusing on the money. Then she spoke to me and obviously I can't give you figures,

00:18:17 but she spoke to me last month and she says, Jeff, I've done more in February than the whole of 2019. And I was like, absolutely amazing. She put a little post in, in our private group and shared a bit more of the numbers last week, but everybody was like clapping on the back. And Cindy, you know, that is,

00:18:36 that is phenomenal, you know? And she doesn't come from a photography background. She, she comes from a corporate background and she's, she's only been doing this about three or four years, you know, she's, she'd done the Peter Hurley training for headshots, but she wouldn't have got there without that, that focus on that, that those five star reviews became the main thing,

00:18:55 the main drive. Now, if you just focus on making money, all you're going to be doing is changing the money. And if your brand doesn't change, if your service doesn't change, if it often doesn't change, have your client's expectations of you on elevated, raised, you're gonna, you're going to find really hard to chase that money. And it's also hard to get up every day and say,

00:19:14 right, I'm going to make two grand today or five grand today because you don't know how you're going to make it. So you do other things within your business and the money starts coming in. Naturally. I love that because I think one of the things that people pet photographers or just photographers in general struggle with the most is how to, how to get

that value across to potential clients.

00:19:39 Because I think we sometimes get in our head of like, oh, of course I'm offering beautiful images and beautiful, you know, archival wall art and things like that, but actually being able to deliver what we do and the benefits of what we do in a way that somebody, when they come to your website is like, oh, I see this is different.

00:20:03 And in that education, being able to explain to them, you know, and help them see what that value is. And then that does, like you said, weed out the, you know, the tire kickers, like looking for everything for 200 bucks versus the people that are like, oh no, I, I like to pay for value. And I see the value here because I get a premium service.

00:20:25 Yeah. That makes a big, big difference. I think one of the other things too, that I love that I've between your, a commonality between like Karen and you and other people that are successful is that you focus on more than just, oh, how do I learn this latest photography technique it's actually learning on how can I run a better business because we're all in business,

00:20:53 you know? And, and so many photographers I see that are just like, they're so excited to learn the craft, but they don't want to spend the time or the investment to really like dive into that business piece. But man, it is so, so important. I'm, I'm personally a business nerd. I got into the business of photography. I always loved photography,

00:21:15 but I really, really loved business, such an important piece. But when we first started up and meet me and careful going out, and we're going to weddings and originally doing the wedding fairs and getting, getting in the wedding begins, you know, after about six or eight months, because the business started to develop sort of quickly, we started to get a bit of a name,

00:21:36 you know, and, and people will come into us. And we were, you know, back in 2004, we were charging two and a half, two and a half grand averaging for a wedding. And that was quite a bit of money. And in our area, in the Northeast of England, we weren't based in London. So we'd created this premium round where you were getting a lot of bookings,

00:21:50 but we could fail. It was quite a bit of a resentment from photographers, other photographers, other competitors, we'd go to wedding France, we'd walk around and say, tried to try and say hello to other people. And they'd start closing their albums. And because they knew who were work and, you know, and I says to careful, dare says,

00:22:07 I feel, I feel a bit of a cheat and I feel a bit of a fraud because you know, most of these people at this reading fair, I've actually 10 times better photographers than nurse. And that says to campuses, yeah, look what we've been photographing for the past 10 years. It, you

know, he'd been in long, much longer than me.

00:22:23 You know, people run around with guns and ships and helicopters. You know, this is the first of a bribery did, was for the, his wife's meat. You know? So it was like, these people have been doing it for like 10, 15 years. They had amazing skills, but their brand wasn't connected with the bride and they didn't have the marketing to do it.

00:22:42 You know? So we, I felt like we'd actually cheated. And we didn't really, from a photography point of view, did deserve to have as much success as we did because a lot of people out there would dumpsite better, definitely in wedding photography than we were. Yeah. Yeah. I see that a lot. I see, you know, people that have amazing work,

00:23:04 struggling to find business and people that have good work, it's, it's technically correct. It's good work, but it's not like earth shattering, like doing great in business. And that, that really is just the common denominator there. What tips do you have for people that maybe are like, yes, you know, I'm building this higher and brand. I want to have this experience,

00:23:27 what tips you have for them of, of the best way to, to elevate that brand? Well, the first thing I say, when I work with people is because what photographers tend to do no matter what niche you're in, you know, they start, they start looking at other photographers. So I'll copy him. I'll copy her. And then the next thing they do is to start looking at the cheap off photographers and then the star,

00:23:48 oh my God, that guy down the road's doing an Italian family shoot and all the images for like \$99. Oh, oh, oh. And then, then they get that. I'm not, I can't, I can't compete with that. I can't bought assets to people is that that's, you know, cause people will come on on calls with me,

00:24:03 Jeff. Yeah. But you work with people in London and New York and Paris and stuff. I live in X area. Right. There's no money in that area and asset that's rubbish. Absolute rubbish. Yeah. Abbott this guys down the street charging 99, 99 pounds for what would she have now be like, that's fantastic. Now, what do you mean? It's fantastic.

00:24:22 Well, what they're doing, they're doing you a favor because they're getting all the tire kickers and the time-wasters and the people who were pain in the ass and they're servicing them. So you don't have to because you're going to become a premium brand. So you're not working with those people who are, you're working for people who value you for what you do.

00:24:39 You're not working with people who are buying on price. This is a stop looking at the bottom and the end of the market. If you're going to look at any photographers at all, look at the top photographer in your niche, in your geographical area, then look at the top

photographer in your country, then look at them in the world and then check out their social media.

00:25:00 Then start to think of the particular brands. So thinking about dog photographers, right? So if you're going for doggy type people, people tend to find a lot of dope people. Even in the UK, there's certain brands who will go for it, you know? So they tend to be very outdoorsy type of people. So these are people who maybe,

00:25:20 you know, like things like at north face or Baba or Belstaff. So, you know, these like high-end fashion brands and then you start to look at the sort of cars. Oh yeah. Jaguar range Rover. You know, so you start to look on the outer. The, the, what you want to do is you want to look at brands that are premium,

00:25:36 that go with your ideal client type. And what you'll start to see is a common commonality in the colors, the font, the wording, and what you want to do is you want to move it and remember yourself on these sort of brands, not on a photographer, because what you're doing is you're selling a premium experience. And if you think about it,

00:25:58 right, if you walk past a board like a restaurant and you've never seen them, it you've never been in this restaurant before you were in a new city. You'd only think about it and you walk past it. And it looks amazing from that side. And it's beautifully done up from our side and the signage is all high end and premium. You know,

00:26:15 the fonts look really, really contemporary and the colors are great and they're got nice hanging baskets and stuff. And you're like, oh yeah, that looks like, then you walk in and you pick up the menu and you start reading the menu. And when you read the menu, the first thing you said to your partner, wow, that sounds nice.

00:26:31 It sounds nice. Right? Because, because the wording creates desire as well. So by, by the look on the outside and the wording on the menu, you are now happy to pay 30 pounds for fishing chips where you could've gone in a restaurant down the road and paid five pounds for fish and chips. Right. But you're happy to part with six times the amount of money because of the perceived value.

00:26:54 Might you add? So, so with Brandon, the Brandon is about your colors, your fonts. It's not, it's not your logo, it's everything you want your clients to think, feel, and believe about what you, what you offer, but more importantly, what you bring to them. And, and that's, that's the whole thing. And when it comes down to,

00:27:13 you know, you dog photographers, what you're doing is you're capturing that moment in time. You're capturing an image that in years to come will become the older, that image you get and becomes more of a priceless investment that you can never replace. I've got a

photograph on my stairs of my daughter when she was two year old sit sitting at the base of Ben Nevis,

00:27:36 which I took, and I haven't lost that image. So that picture that's on the wall framed. I can never get that picture back to that picture is now priceless because that can't go back to that time because my daughter is now 14 year old, you know? So the emotional connection with that picture is even stronger because if I lost that in a fire,

00:27:53 I couldn't replace it. So this is what you are creating for the clients. You know? So you've got to communicate that because, you know, I'm a dog owner, myself, every dog has, has a unique personality that makes them different than the last dog. You had. You capturing your dog's unique personality, the things that you love about them,

00:28:13 you know, that th th th th the funny way, the tilt the head, the funny way that the curler lift, when they're looking at you, that sort of thing, and you create that, and it's not just an image. It becomes part of the home. It becomes a bit of furniture in the home, the wall art, you know,

00:28:28 it's an investment. So all this needs to be communicated. You're not selling the pictures you're selling what life actually does for the client. And that becomes very powerful. And then when people read that the buying into the whole experience and the buy-in into how it's going to make their lives better. Yeah, absolutely. And I think the other part of that too,

00:28:46 is they're buying into that, that experience piece of it, you know, where the whole experience from the initial contact and your console and the session and the sales session all becomes part of that experience. It's like the same thing of eating at that 30 pound restaurant versus like the five pound, like, you know, get it in a bag and go where you're at the restaurant,

00:29:09 it's a beautifully, you know, designed area you're sitting, you're like slowing down, enjoying the night out. So for your session, you know, we're enjoying the session, we're making it fun or making it fun for the dog. We're making it fun for the client. And, you know, we're delivering the products in a beautiful way. If you're meeting them for sales,

00:29:30 it's done in a beautiful way. And that doesn't mean that you have to have, like, you know, a high-end studio space that you rent. I mean, I went to people's homes for the first five, six years of my business. And, you know, look at, look at all sorts of other industries have a high level of services coming into someone's home.

00:29:51 So, you know, I want to squash that if anyone's out there saying I don't have a space, I can't do that. No, go to that. Yeah. Well, funny enough. So tomorrow morning, Friday mornings at my, my kickboxing torch comes to my house and we would take bucks on the patio,

but he is, you know,

00:30:06 he's well known within the area within the industry is building a great brand. He's got a really good brand, you know, so I'd much rather come and work with his brand and go into a gym and do the same thing in the gym. Yeah, absolutely. For sure. Gosh, we kind of went on a tangent about brand name, but I think it was really,

00:30:22 really important and a really good conversation. But I do want to kind of bring it back around, circle back around for a little bit of that kind of goal setting, because you totally nailed it before where people set these kind of arbitrary, like wide goals. I have kind of two thoughts here, and I'd love to hear your thoughts on my two thoughts.

00:30:43 Number one, is that people tend to set goals like that. I'm going to have this many number of new clients, or I'm going to have this much in sales, which, you know, I like to initially think of that, but I don't like to set that as my goal. I like to then look at that and say, all right,

00:31:03 if I want to hit \$150,000 in revenue this year, what actions do I need to take? That's ultimately out of my control. So it's like, what actions do I need to take monthly, weekly, daily to get these many leads that will convert to these many clients that will convert to that much money. So that I try to bring my goals down into like my actual actions that are completely binary either I did it,

00:31:31 or I didn't do it, which I think a lot of people don't, don't quite take it that far. Is, is that something that you kind of do too, or do you have another table I want to do with my clients is that I, I wrote a book last year. I put everything I knew into this book called the ambitious photographers journal.

00:31:47 And it's it's, I think it's the only one of its type. You've got all these rules set in books. I've wrote one just for photographers and put it down so that people would make this a habit. And I tell people to break their, their doors down into eight different segments. And the first one covers the, you know, the turnover number of ships.

00:32:07 So that is the, that is the bigger, higher goal that you're going to achieve as a culmination of all these other things. Now, some of these other ones include like Brandon and then another one comes maybe website SEO and blogging. So, you know, I'm going to write, so if I set a goal to write, you know, two blogs a month,

00:32:26 that's 24 blogs and all that from that goal, I will probably, that will help my website rank better. I'll make better connections with potential clients. And from just writing those blogs, I would probably get new clients come in and they will add to my email list as well.

So four things might happen from that. One thing, another one of the goals is social media goals.

00:32:47 So it might be, am going to push 16 times a month to LinkedIn, 30 times a month to Facebook. And we're currently sitting at 2000 followers on LinkedIn. I want to have 4,000 followers by the end of this year, I've got X amount of followers on Facebook. I want to have this sort of set down those physical. Don't say, I want to grow my LinkedIn.

00:33:08 That's not, that's not, you know, give a different definitive goal. And then other goals that actually put in, I put in like reward goals. Like I want to buy this particular car by. And I actually wrote down the make and the model and the type of the car, and actually ordered mine last, last year. And I got it.

00:33:26 And then it fell through last month because you couldn't get it for another three months. I ended up buying a different one, but then I'll have like holiday goals. And one of the other things I have as a goal is, is a lifestyle. And it always comes down to me a particular, it it's getting harder. I'm 52 now is a particular level of fitness because if I don't feel energized,

00:33:45 you know, if I go to the gym and I'll come back, I'm really, I'm much more productive, you know, so always have that fitness goal because in fact, if I'm feeling fit, if I'm, I feel happier, better amount, my mental self, because I've always had weird problems, I suppose, since I was a little boy boarder and I'm being a little bit chubby.

00:34:03 So wait, if I keep my weight down, if I keep myself fit, I'm a lot more productive. I'm a lot more happier and I feel more energized. So that becomes a goal as well. So I set myself a goal, you know, go to the gym. And I think I remember reading this sin that I felt it was absolutely brilliant.

00:34:18 And the same as there's no such thing, you know, if anybody says you don't have the time, that's absolute rubbish, which is, we all have the same time. We all have 24 hours in the day. The fact of the matter is you have the time, you just not making that particular goal a priority. So like a good analogy to do that is to think about the gym.

00:34:40 What, you know, cause it's easier to think about the gym, then the business side of things. And I, what if I want to lose a stone, but if I had just sit on my backside everyday and don't do anything about it, it's not going to happen. But if I'm making it a priority to go to the gym at seven o'clock in the morning and I'm back home a eight I'm only there 45 minutes and I come back that has become a priority and I've done it.

00:35:00 And I've still got the rest of the day. Right? And I could get about seven fat around on Facebook for 45 minutes, drink a few cups of coffee, flick on the TV. And I've just wasted the time that I could've been making, getting fit and getting healthier. I go to with my

clients, I say to them, you know what,

00:35:17 set film goals and do them straight away. So one of the big things I say is, you know, that consistency, consistency, reproducers like going to the gym. You know, you will get you, you don't go in and do a massive workout and come out. And you're like, oh my God, like little dropped a stone and downloads the muscle.

00:35:33 I think that's the biggest piece though, that, that people get frustrated with the gym and also with their business because that business building piece is such a long game. It's kind of the same thing as the fitness in that you don't notice things day by day, but that cumulative effort. Oh my gosh. All of a sudden now you're like, what happened?

00:35:54 My business is really busy. Now I have to raise my prices. I have too many too much demand because you stuck with it. Yeah. I got, I remember one of my clients who's doing really, really well. She personal brand photographer and Thomas and she's probably cheese say she's probably one of the least experienced photographers in my group and a,

00:36:13 an ex teacher. So she's only been doing photography for a few years, so, but really driven, you know, really focused. She does CrossFit. She's like anxious. She's<inaudible> she does cross fridges squats every day and stuff like that. And I should probably be driven person. So she was literally everything I told her to do. She was lapping up on the program.

00:36:30 So we got a brand. So she was great with the wording, for getting all the desire, wording, right. For our brochures and website, she used to be an English teacher, so I wouldn't miss it. So then I sat her away with the social media goals and the posting goals. And then I always remember now I wish because we joked about it,

00:36:48 me and Anna about a month ago. And I said, I wish I'd kept that email. Cause I, I remember getting up one morning early, bottling my laptop. And he's a, an email in the table, my heart sunk and the title is Jeff. It's not working. And I could see it was from ad. I'm sure that no matter what you do,

00:37:03 it's just not working. I haven't brought any money into my business, blah, blah, blah. She sent this, spent this much money on my program, so, right, right. Like we need to call so jumps on a call. And I was like, tell me what you're doing. I'm doing this. I'm doing that. I'm doing it.

00:37:17 Brilliant, brilliant. How long we've been doing this, but it's six or six or eight weeks. Something like that. So I'm doing everything right? I is. Imagine you've got a really, really, really long haul is right. And it's stretched out for ages. As soon as you turn the tap on, it's going to take a while for,

00:37:31 to come out the end. And that says, this is what your social media posts and this, like I says, how many times you post into LinkedIn? And she was like, oh, four times a week. I know that's good. That's good because you'll still be standing in your space. I says, but if you update, you might get a little bit more what you've done necessarily.

00:37:47 She went right. That's it. Jeff, I'm going to do seven times a week. So she made it a point to do seven times a week. And she does it every morning, like religiously seven 30. It's the first thing she does before she, before she even opens her email, because email is really dangerous because you open up email and post to Facebook or hang on,

00:38:06 I'm just going to check my email. Oh, hang on. I responded to somebody up. There's an offer from a particular shop. I'll just check. See if that jacket's still in stock. Right? So she, she does that before. She does anything else post to social media. So she started doing that up. The consistency consistency is the key.

00:38:28 Anyway, two weeks later, the message comes in, oh my God, Jeff inquiry send him. The prices is young for this top package. I was like, marvelous, brilliant. Three days later, oh my God, Jeff, another inquiry. And then this started to happen. And then when she was investigating and talking to these people, same thing,

00:38:47 I've been watching you for about two or three months now. So, you know, on social media, somebody sees you today. If you, if you connect with somebody today, what were on there. And on the last day of March, you connect with somebody today, they could potentially be your client in maybe July, but what you keep this consistency up in,

00:39:09 Joe, you, so you get the people who your new client in July, but the people who see you in July, if you keep that consistency, you're only going to be fine since September. And what happens like, you know, like with, with, with my business, it then eventually it just becomes a constant role, you know? And funny enough,

00:39:27 I, you know, I pushed LinkedIn all the time. I've got a 32,000 followers on LinkedIn. I've probably the biggest in the industry, in the photography industry on, on that platform three weeks ago before the, the big photography convention where I was speaking in London on a couple of days, I was sort of busy. I couldn't post to LinkedIn for about two or three weeks.

00:39:47 Then I put us to the LinkedIn by my post, just bombed because I'd, I'd gone out of people's news feeds. You know, you've gotta be seen because there's somebody else who would be more tempted and more interested in we'll come in your place. If you don't keep that sort of visibility is credibility and credibility leads to authority. And when you grow up authority,

00:40:05 you can charge what the hell you want. You know, you can get that more

money. But if you visibility, if you think about images and posts in that is like the digital currency, you know, every influencer, every person who has a million followers started with one, they start, they put out their first post and didn't get a, like,

00:40:24 didn't get a comment, but what made them different is that just kept on with it. They didn't say, oh, this doesn't work. You know, it's that consistency. It's like the people that keep going to the gym joins Jones's gym every January and, and finish for full year. I didn't have it. I got to do it. Oh man.

00:40:49 That's funny. Yeah. And you know, I think it can also kind of work with your habits too, of trying to create those kind of self rules. I know for me, if I don't do, you know, any workout type stuff or things that aren't fun, like for me, business stuff is fun. And I'm like, oh yeah,

00:41:08 I consider this computer all stinking day to a fault. And then I'm like, oh, well I can go for that walk later. Oh, I can do this later. But later is never going to happen. If it's a priority, it needs to happen in the first thing in the morning. And then it, it becomes, I don't know.

00:41:27 I don't know what the like technical, there's probably some technical, actual psychological term for this, but like, you get that early success in the day and it's like, oh man, I can do anything today. I've already done this. So you're starting your day with so much momentum. So yeah, I think for me, at least, and I know some other people too,

00:41:47 it becomes a challenge of choosing what the actual priorities are because there's so many things vying for our attention and only so much time. And like you said, like, we all have the same amount of time. So if you're not getting something done, you've not made it a priority, but we have to may simply prioritize our priorities for lack of better term.

00:42:11 Right? How'd we get down with, with my clients, as I say, what we have is it goes back to that thing. Visibility is credibility. So the first thing, regardless of what jobs you've got on that week, don't break the visibility cycle. Don't break the chain. So before you get out of bed, grab the coffee, you post to social media,

00:42:30 you've done it. It's done. It's literally takes you 15 minutes. That's it. If you're on LinkedIn, you might spend another 20 minutes reaching out, send a new connections. Then what I do on a Sunday night is I create one, I must do this job. It must be done by the end of this week. So if I've got to work till midnight,

00:42:47 the following Sunday to finish this job, I've got to do it right. But it can be done any time over the course of that week. So you might say, right, what am I must do jobs this week? I always say break things down. You know? Cause what people do is build a new website,

right? And then there's this thing that,

00:43:04 oh, I've got a kind of a new website today and it just gets put off. So you bring that down. So you're not going to build a new website this week. What are you going to do this week is you're going to get your homepage sorted out. So Monday you're going to set aside an hour and a half. I'm going just to source the images for your homepage,

00:43:22 Dawn. And then when you've done that, I said, go and treat yourself with a bit online shopping or scrolling through Facebook, traditions and outs, right? You've done that bit. Then, then Tuesday or even Wednesday, you're going to write 500 words towards your homepage. If something, you start breaking stuff down. If you haven't, as of now,

00:43:43 one, one thing I do like when I did my last book, I knew that my book was going to have, you know, 45,000 that the LinkedIn group was going to have about 45,000 words. Cause I broke the chapters down over if the knew how many words, word count per chapter. So the way I looked at it is the thought of me coming in here every morning,

00:44:04 early morning when it's dark in the winter, writing was a bit of a nightmare and also think thinking of writing a book. So what I would think is like each week, I think of a particular chapter because I knew each chapter probably had about two and a half to 3000 words. So I thought right, if I can write 500 words every morning,

00:44:25 but what I'm going to do is I come down on the morning and in my living room I brought, which were really, really comfy armchair. Right? So what do we do? Let the dog out, go in the living room on the morning, I've got one of these Woodward candles and crackles and it smells lovely. And it's my old Christmasy and stuff like that.

00:44:42 Candle, probably a coffee machine on go out with the dog, come back in, promise over a coffee, go and sit in the comfy chair with my laptop. And another hack I did was before I went to bed on the night I switched off my wifi. So when I go into the living room, I'd leave my mobile phone in the kitchen.

00:45:00 So no distractions. And I go in and I set have this writer meter app and you set a timeline is September word count. So I opened up my word document are I am up to like 16,000 words, set, set by word count timer. And I just sit and type. And I'm like, after about a week, I'm like, this is amazing.

00:45:20 I'm sitting, I'm not writing, I'm drinking coffee, this beautiful candle. I'm in a really comfy chair and the words just start flowing. And then I, as soon as the right amount of time went off, I'd start from like, oh, donate to us. You know, by, by Thursday I've written the chapter. Then I had Friday,

00:45:36 Saturday, Sunday off and then Monday. So I wrote a book, I wrote a proportion of a chapter on a daily basis, but I made it, I anchored that chapter right into having a coffee with a<inaudible> jet. I made it so much more easier. And if you've got to do little hacks like that to do things, then, then do it,

00:45:55 put some nice music on and you know, just say self-esteem to get that done. And I'll tell you what the feeling of, of doing that every day. And then, you know, like in the winter it was still pitch black and that's part of my book and I'm like, oh, I got to the chief so much. You know? And it's just little things like that because it's,

00:46:14 you know, time, especially with distractions of social media, you know, you can be woman and you can check on something, I'll just scroll through Facebook. And then God, I'd like half an hour was gone. Right. Right. I love that. One of the other things I love about that story too, is when you got to that,

00:46:31 like, you know, whatever your goal is for the day, the 500, 800 words. And it's like, okay, good. I'm done. Because I think what happens a lot of people too, they're like, oh, well let me keep on going and keep on going. And then, you know, it's like, oh, I haven't worked out in a while.

00:46:45 So today I'm going to start off with an hour and a half workout. And then you're like, oh my God, that was way too much. And then you're super sore and you don't want to do it the next day. So it's, it's having the, what's the word, the consistency and the gosh, there's a word I'm looking for anyway,

00:47:04 whatever it's having the consistency to show up and do it every day, but also having the power to be like, not overdoing it because then I think you just shoot yourself in the foot. Cause you're like, oh, if I half an hour is good hours better. And then yeah, just so just kind of anyway, sorry, that was just a random tangent of words that I couldn't think of.

00:47:26 This is why I'm not a writer And another big thing, right. For me, like, you know, the writing is probably like the last thing I shouldn't be doing. I mean, I was, I was kicked out of school cause I was a bad lab. My dad was a lecture. My mom was a teacher. They were absolutely mortified.

00:47:47 When I got expelled from scale, I got no qualifications. And the reason I struggled with skill is because I was dyslexic. So you're going back to 19 85, 86. I didn't know what dyslexia was. I was just stupid. You know, so because I felt like a failure and I felt like I struggled to scale those lots problems because, and that's where I went off the rails a little bit.

00:48:08 But then later on found out that I'm dyslexic. So my writing is far from perfect, but I do know my stuff. So all I concentrate on getting what's in my head down on that paper. It's

I never read, I don't read it back because if I read it back, God I'd be gone on for bloody ages. I love to get like a hundred words done in a week.

00:48:31 My job is to get all this information down. I'll hand it over to somebody else to Polish it. In fact, what I do is I get it all down and then I start at the very beginning again and word has this read-aloud feature. And you can pick this woman with really, really posh voice. And she reads my stuff and then she read it and you can S you can spot spelling mistakes.

00:48:51 And I'm like, oh my God, I sent the sounds huge. Cause she's, she hasn't breezed on with a few more commas in. And it just means when I send it to my proofreader, she go, she doesn't think I'm a complete as he is. And then she edited a bit more, you know? So like, so yup. Pay her a bit of money to do something that I can't do.

00:49:13 And I think with photographers, that's a tendency for us because we're creative people to clutch onto everything. Hold on, I've got to design this. I've got to write there. So I've got to edit these patches. You know, there's people, so many talented people around the world who, you know, let's face it probably a lot more talented than we are at certain things.

00:49:31 We can get to do these things for us, for a fraction of the price where our time is spent being good at what we're going to do in O or focusing on something to get some corporate foundation to descend it all. But I've got a copywriter who, you know, I, I suddenly realize that I spent far too long writing blogs and not getting the blogs done.

00:49:51 Then I thought, you know what? I'm going to get a copywriter to do it. So I spoke to my copywriter, Claire, and I says, right, if I just record a video, I'll put the video onto YouTube. You go and watch that video. Then you can write that copy in my tone of voice, because it's got a sound like me and that's what you do.

00:50:06 So she then, so I created a video and she then writes the, the, the, the blog. And then once the blogs written and a handout to my designer, and that designer creates it as a PDF with images and that becomes intellectual property. So if I'm talking to people, oh, you got your advice on that deal. Send, do you want to PDFs on that?

00:50:24 You know, so I now have about 150 200 pieces of information. PDF's brochures, guides on stuff. It makes me look like a real authority on right. It's building this stuff out. So it's looking at, and then that, that blog that it's been written can then be broken down it attempts, which are media posts. You know? So the blog directs people to the YouTube channel,

00:50:48 the YouTube channel, and it wrecks people to the blog. The blog becomes a, a brochure that can be exchanged for people's email addresses, or can give to potential clients to, to increase my authority, increase my value to them. And then the blog has brought it down to

10 social media posts, social media going. So don't yeah, there's,

00:51:06 there's always loads of way of repurpose and everything. And then when you're doing this posting, if you're actively growing your business and actively getting more followers, then keep your posts on a, on a word document. And then every three months you can pretty much start from the beginning again, because if you think about it, you know, I've got 32 San Fran since 1930,

00:51:27 2000 followers on LinkedIn, a couple of 40,000 done on Facebook. Only about 10% of those people are going to see me post anyway. So that's all 3000 of the 32 have seen it in three months time, I might have 30,000, 35,000 followers. So I've got 3000 new people who would have never seen it in the first place and 27,000 who didn't see it the first time anyway.

00:51:50 Yeah. And even if they did, they're certainly not going to remember. I know I've looked back at things and I'd be like, wait, did I write that? Oh wait, I guess I did. Like, I wrote it and I forgot about it. You know? So yeah, that, they don't remember either. That's funny somebody, I was actually listening to podcasts this morning and about some social media stuff and they had that same advice.

00:52:09 So that's twice. Now I've heard this in one day. So I think I should start doing that more to, oh my gosh, Jeff, this has been so, so good. I, I love it. And I think kind of one of the takeaways too, for everyone is, you know, not to wait to for perfection just to figure out like what,

00:52:30 what to do. And like, let's figure out what you want. Let's break it down and let's start taking the first smallest step possible. You know, cause sometimes it can seem really overwhelming. Like, you know, I'm starting my business and where do I find these clients? Or I won't need to build that website or whatever it is. So what's the one thing I can do right now.

00:52:51 And maybe that is just kind of break down what actually needs to be done that you know, needs to be done. So you have an outline, so you know where to start tomorrow. Yeah. And another thing sometimes if you, if you are thinking about stuff and it sounds too overwhelming, then you've got to take a step back as so many photographers.

00:53:06 You know, I jump on board in my program and go, Jeff, I'm going to want to build my website on some, well, there's no point building your website anyway, because we do, we don't have your brand. So if you built a website, it doesn't have a brand and it doesn't have a message. You've got to have a brand and a message to speak to your ideal client.

00:53:21 Anyway, how does this as well? You know, once your website's up there, it's like, you're suddenly going to launch your website and 20,000 people love to it. This is you, you know, sometimes. And especially if you, if you, you know, you don't have a lot of funds, you

know, get our brand together, get somebody on Fiverr.

00:53:37 Who's an amazing designer to get your brand in. Right? And then you're more likely to potentially get clients from blogging and social media than you are just coming straight to your website. You know? Cause the only way to get your website traffic, if you're just starting off from scratch is to actually start doing Google ads. You know, it's going to take awhile.

00:53:58 So you sometimes think, well, right, what's going to be me on money. Bring me money in quicker. Where can I put my focus and actually give me the biggest financial returns? One of the biggest focuses is getting that brand, right? Because if the brand is right, that's going to help you charge a lot more money. And even if you just get two or three more jobs,

00:54:18 if you get two or three merger opposite two or three times the more price, and then just look at the channels. Other ways is joint ventures. You have Joe, if you team up with a dog groom, that's, who's going to give out your, your vouchers. Every time somebody comes in to get groomed and they get a 10% commission kickback from the sales of the product as well.

00:54:39 That's brilliant. And that hasn't cost you much. It's cost you what? \$40, \$50 for some printed, really nice flyers that they hand out to the people when they coming and get the dog groom. So not totally as if it's going to give you the best revenue return for the smallest amount of money and not necessarily the webs building the website and spending weeks on a website and launching,

00:55:02 and then not actually doing anything about getting traffic to it. Right, right. Yeah. The traffic to it is huge. I think a lot of people think, oh, I just posted the website with beautiful pictures and ah, that's all I have to do for business, but it's always about getting, getting our offer our message and our images in front of more people.

00:55:19 Totally. Yeah. Oh man, this has been so, so good. So thank you so much, Jeff. Yeah, that was so fun. Let everybody know where they can find you online if they want to learn some more from you and follow you. So if you go over to LinkedIn, just typing the photographer's mentor or Jeff Brown, the photographer's mentor on LinkedIn,

00:55:40 you can connect me with me on my personal Facebook, which is Jeff Brown, the photographer's mentor, and my website is the photographers mentor.com. Perfect. Awesome. Thanks so much, Jeff. It was great to chat with you and we will see you around hair of the dog soon. Talk to you Soon If you enjoy this podcast episode, go ahead and take a screenshot of this episode on your phone and posted up there on your Instagram stories and be sure to tag us at hair of the dog academy.

00:56:14 And we would just love to see how you're listening and a full disclosure. Sometimes we just like to give away a little pet photographer swag in the form of hair of the dog

t-shirts and sweatshirts. So what are you waiting for? Go ahead and share that screenshot of this episode. And don't forget to tag us at hair of the dog academy. And while you're there,

00:56:37 maybe you want to jump on over to our account and see what we're up to on the gram would love to connect with you. Thanks for listening to the hair of the dog podcast. This was episode number 137. If you want to check out the show notes for access to any of the resources that we mentioned, simply go to www.hairofthedogacademy.com/137. Thanks for listening to this episode of hair of the dog podcast.

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