Case Study for Growing a Service Business

How does a service business achieve growth in a challenging industry? Josh Aharonoff of Mighty Digits shares the success story of his own company.

Josh Aharonoff

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to my podcast, JamesSchramko.com. This is episode 952. Today's a growth story. We've been having a few of these lately, and I like them because they're instructive. Like, we can take one or two takeaways from this podcast and apply it to our own business, we might be able to grow in a profitable way. And I've brought along my special guest, Josh Aharonoff. Welcome, Josh.

Josh: Thanks. Great to be here.

James: Josh, you run a business called mightydigits.com. You've been helping startups with their finance and accounting. I think, in particular, you work with SaaS companies, but I'm sure you take other types of companies. And what I've been able to discover working with you is, you're a good implementer, you ask good questions, and then you go away and do stuff. So it's been fun for me to watch your progression.

And you sent me a message at some point, fairly recently, and sort of indicated that you have experienced growth in your business. And I was very excited about that for you. I felt good that the work we've been doing together is helping in some way. And of course, it works better if you bring something to the table.

But you've brought along a great business to work with, you ask great questions, you implement. Today, we're going to shed some light on what that journey has looked like for you and see if there's a couple of key takeaways that might be useful for our listener. So welcome to the show.
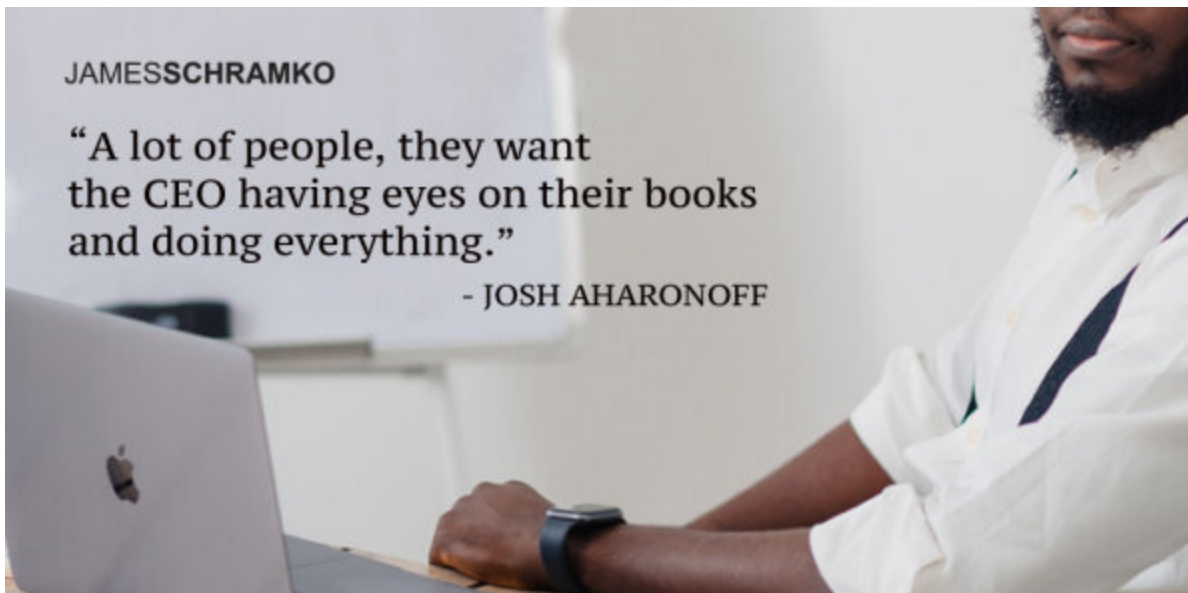
Josh: Awesome, great to be here.

A challenge in a difficult industry

James: So in your industry, you know, there's lots of people competing for startup businesses. So it's not an easy business by any stretch. You're in a fairly old industry, this sort of accounting finance industry has been around for a long time. So you could say that it has been somewhat commoditized.

I've had a previous guest on the show who's done a really good job with bookkeeping for online businesses; it was Bean Ninjas. So I see a couple of these examples pop up where they really, truly shine. But I'd love you to sort of cast your mind back to the beginning of this journey when your growth phase was starting, not when it finished. What sort of frustrations were you having at the time with the business?

Josh: Sure. So probably the biggest challenge at first was me answering the most important question of, how do I take myself out of what we're doing? I started this business as a solo consultant. Although I had a company name under Mighty Digits, it was really myself delivering the work for each of our clients. And I always knew that I wanted to eventually scale this to have an entire team.

And I found that going from just myself to one employee was probably the biggest challenge. It happens to be that I hired a staff accountant, a bookkeeper who was more in the background. So it's really when I hired my first manager, how can I go back to our clients and say, Hey, I know I sold you on the idea that I'm going to be doing all this work, but in reality, I just hired someone else? She's going to be doing it instead, don't worry, I'll still work with you.

JAMES**SCHRAMKO**

"A lot of people, they want the CEO having eyes on their books and doing everything."

- JOSH AHARONOFF

When people only want the CEO

That was one of my biggest challenges. And it still is somewhat of a challenge today. A lot of people, they want the CEO having eyes on their books and doing everything. But I'm grateful that we've had the opportunity really to scale and now have a great team.

James: And, you know, like if you've ever flown an airline, you probably don't demand that the CEO is flying the plane, right?

Josh: Well, it's a good call.

James: Yeah, I mean, this is one thing that comes up so much. And I experienced the exact same issue when I transitioned from salesperson to sales manager. All my customers still wanted to deal with me. And it was like, Oh, okay, and I've moved levels now. And there is an expectation and a relationship built. It was probably more the relationship than anything that was hard to change the dynamic on, so I had to sort of hybrid my way there.

I had to meet and greet the customer and then say, Hey, here's Freddie. Freddie knows a lot about the models. And I'm going to ask him to take you for a test drive while we get Jimbo over here to value your car. When you come back, we'll have a chat. So I started to get little parts of the process done. And then eventually, we'd get to the point where you know, we were dealing with a lot of people who weren't my customers, so they never knew who I was unless I chose to intervene.

So that's a really common frustration, that you are a solo operator or a small business and then you have this, often, it's our own idea that we can't let go of that relationship. Do you think it was a legitimate concern? Or was it over-inflated in your mind compared to reality when you actually started to do this?

Josh: I think it was a legitimate concern. A lot of clients, when I started working with them and I asked, What's the reason, if they were using a prior accounting provider, someone else, what's the reason that you're making the switch? A lot of them complain that there was some sort of transition with who is working on their books.

And that caused a lot of frustration, it wasn't done properly, and that's why they're now looking to work with someone else. And it's something that we remind ourselves of like, every time our team continues to scale, because it's not even just a matter of taking myself and as people grow in the organization away from the work, the organization is constantly growing, people are going into new roles.

So there's this inherent need to always be putting different people on different accounts. And I wouldn't say we're perfect, but I've certainly seen firsthand what the lack of that could bring. So we've been very careful to ensure we don't make those mistakes.

Educating the customer

James: And what do you do when it comes to your clients dealing with your staff? Do your team have individual emails? Or do they have role-based emails? Or do you deal with support? Like, are there ways that you can set expectations or educate the customer to not have to be dealing with a particular person?

Josh: So one of the things I really love is we have a Google Groups email address. For anyone who's not familiar, it's entirely free, you can set up this group email that anyone can send a message to. So let's say you're our client, James Schramko is the business name, we would create an email address, JamesSchramko@mightydigits.com.

We would then say, Hey, James, if you have any questions, the best thing that you can do is just email JamesSchramko@mightydigits.com. Everyone who staffs in your account will get that information, someone from our team then will respond. So that's what we do to manage the incoming messages to ensure that everyone is kept in the loop.

And oftentimes, the client forgets or whatever, they just want to email someone directly on our team. So they'll do that. But then we'll just go ahead and we'll CC on the response that group email address. And then, with regards to who responds to the client, we haven't figured out the exact science.

Initially, when I came into it, I was thinking, okay, only managers can respond to clients, staff accountants should not be responding at all, because you're doing what's a sensitive thing when you're talking about communications with a client. We've since then have become a little bit more lenient, we have some really great staff accountants on our team, and they do some really great job. And we haven't found it as important to control all the messaging just on the manager. So it's evolved a bit.

James: Love it. Yeah, we did a similar thing. We used to use Google Groups, and we had just a central support email. And then we migrated that central support email to Help Scout, and that allowed it to create a permanent record, so a centralized place. And at one point, we had 65 people in our team. So depending on the query, we had an internal matrix of that type of query gets solved by this team member.

I think there was six or seven support people. And they were able to then deal with the specialists on the end of it who needed help. It's a perennial challenge, it's one that's worth solving, because the ultimate thing is it doesn't have to be the business founder, and they're not expecting to deal with the business founder.

I've found that certainly in my own case, most people don't expect me to be dealing with them for things like changing your credit card details or switching to a different coaching plan. They're happy to deal with my team for that, it seems that that would be the expectation. So I think a lot of it happens at the front door.

When documentation becomes a priority

So thank you for sharing how you solved that with Google. In terms of other challenges you were having, so one was getting you out of the tools and having to deal with every customer. What other things were frustrating you in the early days?

Josh: It's along the similar notion, but as an organization scales, it's not enough for someone to possess all that knowledge, and then every time someone joins, you go ahead and share that knowledge with that person. If that knowledge is not being shared in a repeatable, scalable manner, then whoever is sharing that knowledge, each time someone new comes on will have to again share that knowledge, and you leave a lot more room for error, because it's not something tangible right in front of you.

So it's not really important to have documentation, and standardization, and SOPs and all of these amazing things when you're a solo person, or even if you're like, less than five people, because at the end of the day, there's a never-ending list of priorities that you need to attend to. So is it good from day one to be documenting everything? Sure, just like the other millions of things that you should be doing.

When it becomes a real priority is when I would say you start maybe surpassing five to 10 people. And that was one of the biggest challenges for us. So at the beginning of this year, we hired a chief of staff, Justin, who has been just one of the most incredible hires in our organization. I'm really grateful. We have so many great people in our team, and it's one of my favorite things with what we're doing.

So documenting everything that we're doing has been so helpful to remove my own time, to create more of like an infrastructure and wireframe for how things get done. So before you could document something, you kind of need to go ahead and standardize it and say, Okay, well, how exactly do we want someone to deal with something in this specific instance? Then you get that into a document management system. We use Notion, we're really happy with it. And we also use Loom a lot on top of it.

An academy for new people

So when someone comes to our organization now, other than me spending what used to be like weeks meeting with them every day, going over all this information, and then having to repeat that process, now someone comes in, we call it the Mighty Digits Academy. They come in, they review how to do all these different things, they watch a bunch of videos showing the screenshare of how those things are done. They also have a video editor on our team. So he'll oftentimes jazz it up even further, making the user understand. That's been another really great action that we've taken to just reduce the pain point.

James: That's huge. I remember when I started. Some companies, I got some training, some companies, I got no training, it made a huge difference. Probably the funniest one was when I worked with General Motors Acceptance Corporation, GMAC. It was 1991. And they gave me a cassette player and a bunch of cassettes, which were from America, and probably recorded in the 70s. So they were 20 years old.

It was in this thick accent, it was like, When repossessing a car, avoid using terms like putting it in the barn. And I sort of thought, it's really unlikely that I would use that expression to a customer as I'm repossessing their vehicle, you know, in Australia, in 1991. And then a few jobs later, I went to BMW, and there was zero training.

It was just like survival; it was like Lord of the Flies. And after that experience, and after becoming a sales manager, I built the strongest induction program ever, which was rolled out to all the Mercedes dealers, you know, they forced me to teach my competitors my onboarding system.
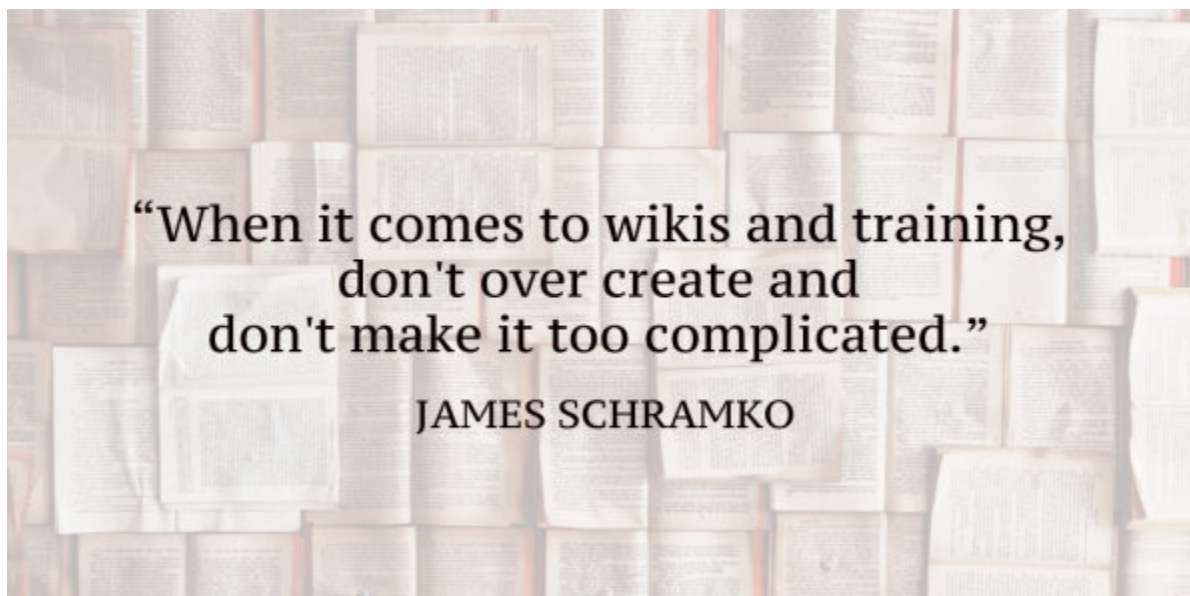
But it's so critical, isn't it, to bring someone in? I love that you've got an academy for new people. That's seriously pro. When you can think about someone joining your company, and they're given the tools and resources to be able to succeed, it frees you up to do your specialty, but it also means you've grown an actual business, a real business that's not one-man dependent. So that's a tremendous outcome. Well done on that.

Josh: Thanks.

James: You even mentioned the tool, which is great, Notion, I hear a lot of good things about that. And Loom is probably my absolute favorite software, it's just so powerful.

Josh: Amazing and so cheap.

James: I know you and I have done a few Looms back, I'm not sure how much it costs. So I know I pay for a pro plan, but I have it on my phone. And often, I'm coaching via it. For me, it freed me up from booking calls and maxing out my schedule. Now I can just do the asynchronous communication back and forth, but get the depth of what you can do on a video.

"When it comes to wikis and training, don't over create and don't make it too complicated."

JAMES SCHRAMKO

I think for - when it comes to wikis and training or whatever, the cautionary tale is don't over create and don't make it too complicated. Like, keep it simple, keep it in one place, and keep it fluid. Obviously when things change or update, it's important to update the standard operating procedure.

For us, I would say it's probably good to document even if you are a solo. I think it's good to have frameworks at least, or checklists, even if you're a solo operator, because when you bring on one person, they can learn that and then they can transfer it to the second person. So I would go a bit earlier than six to 10. But I think it's great to have.

Alright, so, so far, we've got scaling your support, scaling your team training resource and getting some leverage there. What are some of the other things that you've encountered on this growth journey?

The thing Josh took for granted

Josh: One of the things I took for granted, the company that I was at right before I started Mighty Digits, was such an incredible experience. I grew so much in that role in the two and a half years that I was there. In essence, I think I learned like 90 percent of what I needed in order to start this company.

And it was a very similar role. I was at a consulting firm. And I had always thought to myself, anyone who joins our organization is going to have that same experience. They're going to recognize how amazing of an opportunity there is, how much growth there is in terms of your career, in terms of your salary, in terms of what you're doing, in terms of being stimulated.

I took for granted just how important it is to actually create that roadmap for people and help them understand, (A) this is what it looks like in the role that you're in, in the role that you're going to graduate into, in the role after that, and what you can become in our organization; and (B) showing our employees, I'm committed to actually getting you to that status.

And it was so easy to take for granted until I had an experience when an employee actually came to me and said, Hey, I don't really understand how I'm going to be growing in this organization. And at first, I was like, so surprised, like, how could you not understand? But it forced us to kind of take a step back and realize, well, wait a minute, maybe it's not so obvious, maybe everyone isn't as aggressive as I potentially was in my last career, to go out and get that growth.

So we've created this path to promotion document, which again, is constantly a work in progress, that outlines, these are the different roles today in our organization. And this is kind of like a scale of all the different traits that we look for in people in our organization. And at each of these roles, this is how strong we expect you to be at each of these different service items.

So communication, like I was just saying. Not as important for a staff accountant to know how exactly to communicate directly to a client, but for a manager, that's one of the most important pieces of their job. So that would be something that differs. I'd say that was a really big shock to me that I wasn't even expecting that I really realized you need to kind of spell out.

James: I think we're sometimes blind to our own specialty. The fact that you are running your own business and an entrepreneur, according to Gino Wickman, that puts you in the six percent of the population already. Right? So it's really rare. I mean, it's obvious, but you left the job where you were a consultant and had a good experience and got great training.

Born to be an employer?

Did it cross your mind to think about the reasons why you left and to prevent that from happening for your own team members?

"It takes a certain individual to want to be not only an entrepreneur, but also a business owner who employs other people."

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Josh: It's a good question. At the end of the day, like you said with that six percent, I think it takes a certain individual to want to be not only an entrepreneur, but also a business owner who employs other people who deals with - I mean, so much of my day doesn't even have to do with the work that I'm actually dealing with.

So I think for me, it was just always in my blood to really be an entrepreneur. I had my own startup for two years. Unfortunately wasn't successful, but I learned a ton from. I've had multiple side ventures.

James: Probably helps you deal with startups though, right?

Josh: It helps a ton, absolutely.

James: Massive investment and experience.

Josh: For sure. Because of that, I mean, maybe I'm being naive, but I had assumed that it wouldn't be an everyday problem that I would face with everyone in our organization wanting to go off and sign and, you know, set up their own company one day. But I do think it takes a very special individual to go out and, you know, to even be able to handle the stress and the time commitment and everything. It's a lot.

James: Yeah, look, it's a huge factor, it comes up a lot. I actually have a name for this, I call it the Western way. Let's say you have 100 employees, six of them are likely to go off and do their own thing, at some point.

You get this sort of conflict, do I train them up and bring them in and show them how we operate everything for them to then clone me and take our IP and steal our customers and compete with me? Or do I train them up and they stay with us and we dominate? Or am I just going to hire the safer ones who aren't going to leave but don't do as good a job?

"The more you get off the tools, the more your actual job is strategy and looking after team."

JAMES SCHRAMKO

So there's a lot of these things start to come into play. But the more you get off the tools, the more your actual job is strategy and looking after team. And I agree with you that it takes a huge responsibility to be an employer. You are providing an income for a whole bunch of people, you are producing a lot of tax for the government.

It's a big responsible role. And it's not to be taken lightly. And some of the biggest traumas I've seen from people when they have to let their team members go, when they've failed them, to some extent, like mismanaged the business, not read the market or not kept sharp enough, and they have to let people go, and they feel really terrible about that. So you can tell those people actually care about their team.

For me, it was this weird situation. When I had 65 people, the business was pretty much running itself, I still had this in the back of my mind that I'm responsible for like two or three classrooms full of people. When we would do our team meeting, and we would fill an entire restaurant or whatever it was, it was mind-blowing, the amount of responsibility. You can only imagine people who have thousands of employees or tens of thousands of employees, how that must be.

So that's a really interesting one, that you left the consulting role, you've built your own business. And now, you've got to deal with a bunch of people who are trying to be intrapreneurial. They want to know, okay, where's my path, or else I'm out. Or there'll also be people who aren't really that interested in climbing the ladder high, but they just want to survive and cling on to the log they're next to and just do a good job and be safe. Some people are very safety-driven.

So a lot of this, I think, happens at the hiring process. And the fact that you have set clear benchmarks, and that you have a pathway mapped out, that allows you more options when you're hiring, because you're competing with other people who are hiring as well. And it also gives you a better chance of retaining good talent. If they know where they can go, and you know where they can go, it removes some of the ambiguity. So again, that's a really great outcome for you.

Josh: For sure.

Valuable talks with James

James: I'm interested to know, some of the conversations that we've had - of course, obviously, they've been private, because we do the private coaching thing - but I'm wondering if there were a couple of things that we discussed or that you implemented that surprised you, or that gave you a great result that might be useful to share with others, that you'd be happy to share.

Josh: Sure. I think there were a few things. Probably the biggest one was, I remember sharing with you our plans for growth and our strategy and our tactics. And you kind of asked me something like, Why are you only settling for something this small, when what you're telling me, you currently have a method of scaling that to a much higher level?

And you helped me really point out to myself, like, do you think you may have a bit of a limited mindset, in terms of trying to grow this firm, beyond your wildest dreams, given your fear of who knows what it could be? Most likely, what I think it was, and still is, my ability to manage a business that all of a sudden grows so large, and who knows what type of safety rails are going to all of a sudden go off the rails and all that.

That was one of the biggest things, you helping me take a step back and realize like, in order to properly grow, it's not enough to just implement things, you need to have this entirely different mindset. One of my favorite quotes is, if you share your dreams with someone, and they're not laughing, you're not dreaming big enough. Make them laugh, dream big. That was something that was really helpful.

In addition to that, you pushed me to start creating a brand via LinkedIn as one of the channels. One of my favorite trainings from you, which I think a lot of people know you for, is your own the racetrack. And that is that you don't want to have just one channel here. So although I'm going to focus right now on your advice, specifically on LinkedIn, I do want to highlight that it's important to build just this funnel, where everyone goes back to your website.

Is more content better?

I remember when I shared with you that I wanted to go on LinkedIn, and I was like, Yeah, I'm going to have these amazing videos, it's going to be this perfect quality. And I'm going to do it once a week on LinkedIn. And I need to really just get it right before I do.

And you said, (A) why are you only posting once a week instead of every day? And (B) why are you so focused on this quality? No one's going to be watching your videos at the start. And no matter how great you think this quality is, it's probably not going to be that great. And I look back to the videos that we made during that period, and like, just as I expected, it's like cringe-worthy looking at it just like, ugh, you know like, the lighting is bad…

James: Unless I think it's Gary Vee or someone said, if you don't cringe when you look at your first content, you didn't produce enough. [laughs]

Josh: [laughs] Exactly. So I'm coming up on almost, I think I'm at five months now, posting every day, every weekday, on LinkedIn.

James: Imagine that. That's like 500 percent more than what your intention was in the beginning.

Josh: For sure.

James: And you're seeing results from it?

Josh: So yes, and no. I'm certainly now at the point where I have leads every day in my inbox saying, I saw your content on LinkedIn. My God, this is so cool. Can we schedule a meeting? Here's my money. The biggest result I've had is pretty much everyone who has already been part of my network knows what I'm doing and is constantly reminded about what I'm doing.

So I've had a lot of people reach out to cheer me on, to potentially refer me business. But a lot of those, you know, the challenge is when you generate so much awareness, you may be getting more leads, and if you're doing outbound but the quality of those leads are not always going to be as strong given the fact that it could be anyone now reaching out to you.

So it's been really cool seeing everyone in my network cheer me on, it's been really cool being reached out to and referred to businesses that could potentially use my service even though the conversions haven't really been so strong. But I'm definitely not yet at the point where I feel like this has been a huge success. But at the same time, I do believe I can get to that point. So I'm going to continue doubling down on our efforts there.

James: Yeah, well I would say it's encouraging. The first part of that, it's very important that people actually know what you do. I get this feedback a lot from people in the early phase of content creation, like their whole peer group or network, like, Oh, I didn't even know you do that, or I didn't know you'd left your job at the bank, or I didn't know you'd - so that's phase one.

You're definitely building attention and awareness over time. I'd say give it six months to anybody, if they're going to do this, this is a long play. I know that it works for me, because it's the main thing I do, right? Content marketing, podcast, some videos.

It's also very hard to track specifically to a call to action to a campaign. And even the big dogs, you know, like Alex Hormozis, will tell you that you're going to have to create a fair bit of content to start with, and then generate that momentum. And at some point, it takes.

I think NAS Daily, I think he started getting traction on his, like 100 and somethingth video. It was not in the first few. So if one in 10 takes, then you need to create 10 to get one. And over time, I think you'll get a good balance of quality and hitting your message right. And so I'm encouraged by what you've been able to do.

Pinpointing what the goal should be

But your great point just on that self-awareness, self-relationship, one of the things that I think I do bring to the table is I can tell someone if they're way over or way under what might be reasonable to expect, given their experience, the business that they're running, the market they're in, what I've seen other people be able to do.

Sometimes I'm pulling people back and I'm saying, Hang on a minute, woah, why do you want to make $10 million a year? Why is that the goal? And when I go deeper, it's not really their goal. It's just what they think their goal is supposed to be. And it's kind of shallow and empty. Other people, they say to me - like, we're recording this at the moment in 2022 - they go like, I'm going to get this thing going, and I'm going to really hit it hard. And I want it up and running by 2024. And I'm like, Wait. We're not going to Mars here. This isn't like, a two-year mission. Why isn't it next week? Why not next week? Why not tomorrow? Why not next month? So I'll pull the timeframe back.

So I feel like it's really important as entrepreneurs, because we're especially good at creating a reality distortion for ourselves. Like, Steve Jobs is probably the ultimate example that we can sell ourselves on anything. And sometimes that's good. And sometimes that's bad. If you need someone in your corner to say, Well, hang on, that's kind of crap. Really? Do you really believe that? Like, give me the evidence of why you think that's possible.

Or I might say, Man, I think you're selling yourself short. And you could be doing a lot more with this if you take the restrictors off, you take the limiters off, if you let go of the fear of it. And I just read a book, or sort of skimmed a book to be more accurate, sitting on that bookshelf there, it's about there, I'm pointing to it, and it said one of the irrational fears we have is that we're going to live in poverty.

It's just extremely unlikely that we would get to that rock bottom, like you'd probably have 10 or 20 friends come and let you sleep on their couch or provide food for you and shelter, like the downside is not as bad as we think in many cases of actually having a shot, giving it a go. Having a crack, as we'd say.

Final thoughts for the listener

So, great story. I'm thinking, is there anything else that you would like to share today that's sort of thinking about this episode, because I knew you knew it was coming, what would you recommend for someone listening to this podcast, if they're in your situation where they were a small business, onto a good thing, scaling now, building out support, documenting their onboarding for new outpeople, getting very clear on the pathway, setting clear benchmarks and expectations, getting that balance right between the activities they're working on and trying not to be an adult daycare center, you know, if you get the team right, it can be drama-free.

Like my business. I have six people. It is zero drama. We have zero drama in our business. It's a 10-minute meeting every week and a little chat here and there on Slack. That's what runs my business. The relationship with yourself that knows sort of what's realistic and where you sit and to have that support, someone to cheer you on but also tell you if your shoelaces are untied, you know, like that will be honest with you.

And of course, the concept of OwnTheRacecourse, like managing your content, deciding if content is your play and which platform and how frequent and what best practices. So they're all great insights that we've got from this episode so far. And just to reference, we're listening to Episode 952. I'm speaking with Josh Aharonoff. And he's from mightydigits.com, helps startups with finance and accounting.

Josh, what advice would you have for someone listening today?

Josh: So when I think of the role of a CEO, it's really everything in the organization. Now, the CEO may not be the one responsible for doing everything, but having his or her hand in everything and understanding how it functions at a very high level is a really important piece of it. And when I think of, at least in the early stages, the most important pieces of an organization, number one to me comes down to sales.

Do you have a method, a repeatable method of first identifying who is your target audience, which comes down to just finding and even understanding who your target audience is? And then do you have a method of reaching that target audience? And there are numbers of different growth tactics out there, I would suggest for anyone starting off outbound prospecting, whether that be cold calling, cold emailing, or whatever. As long as it's not done in a spammy manner, I think that could be a really strong channel for someone to start with.

But I think partnerships are also a really great source, because you can close one partner as opposed to one client, and you'll get 10 clients as opposed to one. Those are the two biggest ones that I would suggest in terms of sales. Ideally, you're building a business where the more clients and customers you have, the more repeat business you get, the more referrals you get from those customers and creates this compounding effect. So that's with regards to sales.

The important piece that is hiring

With regards to hiring, that's the next really important piece that I think about, scaling an organization effectively, because again, like we were speaking about, you can't be everywhere at once. So understanding how to put together a compelling job description - I'm not going to say I'm an expert there - definitely an important thing.

But I don't know if I would say that is going to be the difference between a hiring experience where you knock out of the ballpark, and you don't, it's important, but you just need to pass a minimum threshold. I like to have an important way of like, scaling that. So I like to have knockout questions on every platform that I use for hiring.

One of my favorite platforms is JazzHR. It'll allow you to syndicate your job posts to all different job boards, as opposed to having to go one by one on each. You can include these knockout questions. So oftentimes, I'll ask questions to gauge, how good of a cultural fit are they? How good of a fit are they based off their expertise and their background? From there, you kind of have this funnel where you keep getting it smaller and smaller.

My favorite way to qualify someone, resumes are great, references are great, interviews are great. But at the end of the day, seeing someone actually perform work that you give them has always been for me the number one thing in terms of hiring the right candidate, and it allows you to do a few things.

First, how well did they follow your instructions? And what we do, there's a crazy amount of detail in the work that we do for our clients. If I gave, let's say, eight different pieces of instructions, and only six of them were followed, I'd be a little concerned about those other two. Similarly, did they follow up and send the information at the time in which you sent it?

It's almost a guarantee that we're not going to go with them if we have to follow up with them if they didn't send it by that specific time. And then, what's the quality of that actual output? Is that something that you value? I like to then get them on the call and be like, Walk me through, what did you do over here?

Those have been my favorite ways for hiring. And, again, I think sales and hiring are like, the two biggest things for people whenever they're starting out. Now the rest comes down to building a repeatable system, to train people, to move them and to take yourself away from the work. I'm a really big fan, I once heard a podcast where the CEO mentioned, Every time I do a task, I ask myself, how can I never have to do this task again? And that is really the whole essence of delegating.

So I mentioned that we use Notion and Loom, but our biggest actual process for process management, task management, if you will, has been Asana. We have everything documented on Asana, and they're set up to be recurring for specific clients versus non-clients, and we can tag people, and we can add comments and attachments and integrate it with Slack. It's pretty much how our entire business runs, because there's just so much that we have to do.

So having a strong infrastructure operationally, not only for how you're going to do what you're doing when it's just you, but how you're going to scale that, that I think is maybe the third, and without any specific order, but those three, I would say, are the most important things with scaling an organization.

James: So sales, basically marketing, people and systems. I hear you.

Josh: There you go.

James: You had no way of knowing this, but the episode before yours, 951, which was not published when we recorded this, we were talking about cold outreach being a really great B2B sales channel, and we're talking about growth stories. So everything you've said today really dovetails nicely on top of that, Episode 951.

So it's like a pigeon pair, but looking into a different business. You're in a service-based business, I've seen you scale, firsthand. I mean, you were great to deal with. I really appreciate our interactions, because you're so thoughtful, you ask good questions, you go and do stuff, which I would expect from someone with an accounting background. Clearly, you've got structure and systems on your side.

But you've developed the softer skills, which is the rarer thing for the people who are so numbers-focused. And that's what I think makes you formidable. And I just want to say, I appreciate you coming along and sharing your insights today. It'll be good to find out too, who would be a good customer for you if someone's listening to this, and they're thinking that they might need some help with finance and accounting?

Josh: Sure. So right now, we're really trying to focus on our niche, which is startups. And the reason we're focusing on that niche is because we really understand the ebbs and flows of startups, the fundraising process, and how startups scale and all sorts of pitfalls that they fall into.

So companies, usually we look at companies who have raised at least $500,000 in VC capital, companies who are looking to grow really quickly with additional VC capital, series C, series A, and so forth. Companies who feel like their accounting and finance process is not where they want it to be, they're not getting the insights that they need out of their books, they're not able to report to their board as they need to.

Companies also who are cost-conscientious. A lot of times, companies will come to us and they'll say, Hey, we need to hire someone but, (A) we don't have enough work to hire this person. And (B) even if we did, we really need a little bit of a junior person, a little bit of a senior person, a little bit of an executive.

That's where our model comes into play, and you could ramp up and you could ramp down. So companies specifically in the startup space, who are looking to improve their accounting and finance function. That's our bread and butter.

James: Love it. MightyDigits.com, Josh Aharonoff, thank you so much, and I appreciate you being a member of our community as well. It's been a great interaction.

Josh: Likewise, James.

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