



Harnessing the Power of Video: Strategies for Success in a Changing Digital Landscape

Join James and fellow podcaster Charley Valher as they explore the need to create video content, and share strategies for marketing success.



Charley Valher

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to my podcast. This is episode 1001, Harnessing the Power of Video. So I've brought along [Charley Valher](#), our resident video/podcasting/media/finance aficionado. Welcome back.

Charley: Thanks for having me, James. And what a title. I definitely get around these days doing various things.

James: You do. And I think, you know, if they say branding is what you think about someone when they're not there. I think my brand around you is systems, high quality, passionate interest in the things, whether it's cycling, off-road adventures, audio and video equipment.

But you've certainly been instrumental in helping me along improve the quality of the sound and suggesting that we put more effort into marketing our podcasts and publishing videos on our [YouTube channel](#), etc. So I feel like you've got some DNA in this podcast, if it's still kicking along and being reasonably relevant, you've had a hand in that. So thank you.

Charley: Oh, my absolute pleasure. And thank you for the kind words. I was saying earlier, as we were discussing off air, your podcast, I would almost have to say is one of the OGs of business podcasts. You have gone through a number of like, just media cycles and changes and still dominate to this day, which is rather awesome.

The need to move with change

James: Well, thanks. It's definitely the baseline of my business. I've got a really simple business model. It's podcast, with recurring subscription. That's the guts of it. Those two things have been consistent for over a decade. And part of the commitment to having those things, even if the business model is consistent, there will be subtle changes around that, the way that you do it needs to change.



So you have to have innovation, you have to have a commitment to being able to adapt. Because there are a lot of things have come out since I started podcasting. Number one factor being a lot of podcasts have come out since I started podcasting, the market has changed dramatically. There are new players, there's guys like Alex Hormozi. Back in 2016, he had \$1,000 to his name, and now he's a global phenomenon with his social media marketing.

So you see a lot of changes in the way people adapt their marketing, the social platforms. It's hard to believe this, but right now, as we're recording, my friends are all switching off Google and turning on Bing, or Microsoft, which is something I wouldn't have expected to say, on a podcast.

Charley: I can't believe you said it either.

James: It's happening, because they've incorporated the chat tools, and they've got a leg up in the arms race for AI. We're also in the midst of a revolution where [creating content just changed](#), the whole aspect of creating content. And now we're moving from content creators almost to content curators, or prompt engineers. We have a lot more leverage available to us in the research side and the distribution side because of the tools coming on board.

So whilst I'm observing all of this, my position has always been the same. I want to be aware of change. I've been tracking this for the last six and a half years. I want to be amongst the people who are doing the change. But I don't want to be the first pioneer with the arrow in my back. I'm not the one who takes on the brand new thing before everyone else. I wait until things settle a bit and then I'm in.

So I'm not, by any means, a laggard or in the late majority. I'm in that sort of early majority movement, and I'm seeing change again. I'm certainly not scared of it. I'm kind of excited about it, and observing what's happening. And I think there'll be changes. As I mark the, you know, I've just finished my apprenticeship with the podcast, having locked away 1000 episodes, and I'm ready to go mainstream now. And I think the next few episodes will be really interesting as we roll out to see the change.

Where Charley is in his podcasting story

You've actually experienced tremendous growth in your own podcast. I think you've gone from a standing start to around about a similar volume of exposure to where I was, or, you know, have been fairly consistently. Do you want to talk about that?

Charley: Yeah, let's dig in. So I think some of your audience may know me from when I was running the media company, [Valher Media](#). Now for context, I still have that company today. It's still absolutely going, but one of the big shifts we made is we started our own brands, and most notably, I started two podcasts.

One is [Business and Investing](#), and the other is [Property and Investing](#), which was a rather big shift now that I think about it going from, I suppose, we'll call it running an agency media model on its own, to encompassing our own brands in a space that I'm not known at all. Like, I don't think anyone really thought of me as someone who'd done, I suppose, we'll call it the finance niche.

Now, in that time, the podcasts are just over a year old now, or I will say one of them is, and the second show is maybe four months old. But we managed to go from standing start, I definitely didn't have giant email lists, or a brand that allowed me to leverage into these, but we just cracked combined on the shows 50,000 hits in a month.

So to get 50,000 kind of combination of views and downloads, I think it's a pretty substantial number in that time. And how we've been able to do that is kind of taking advantage of the things that I suppose are working right now, like the cycle has changed dramatically compared to what podcasts used to be. I think it's very interesting what's coming.

James: Well, I think that's the newsflash, you know, there is a changing landscape. And we want to understand what the changes are. And the clear message is if you have been doing things a certain way, with your podcast, or with your videos, there is change coming, and it's worth paying attention to. And that's where I'm at.

What's shifted for James

So a lot of things have changed for me. One of the big hallmark changes from the entire time I've been podcasting was in December and January, I didn't record any podcasts, the first year ever. And the reason was, I was overseas traveling, and that wouldn't have stopped me before. But now it would stop me because the recording facilities or the ability for me to get a minimum level quality podcast was not available to me. That meant no podcast.

So I'm falling into the Mercedes-Benz catchphrase, the best or nothing. I don't record podcasts now unless I've got good quality sound and visuals, because I know how important the video component of it is. So that's something that's definitely changed in the time I've been podcasting when I was audio only.

And let's be generous. Sometimes my audio was pretty crap. I had either a portable dictaphone like a press journalist sitting on a table between my guests and I, I had a lavalier mic wrapped around a rearview mirror on car trips, and you can hear the traffic and wind noise. I've done them outside with wind. I've even recorded podcasts where I've had the wrong microphone connected, and it's going through the laptop, and I've let it fly.

Charley: I've absolutely done that. [laughs]

James: Everyone's done that. Probably one of my most important ones, you know, and where I was even talking about you and how you've helped me with the sound quality, I think it captured off the iMac instead of this, because we had a blackout.

Charley: Amazing irony?

James: The irony, it's always the worst one that you just can't afford it to happen to is the one. So I expect all this. I call this in business, it's like being punched in the face. It's a metaphor for the things that will happen. It will happen. No doubt about it. You'll lose recordings, etc. So for me that was a big milestone, was saying, Okay, well, there's a minimum standard.

And we've had guests where they're not able to bring a minimum standard of recording level to the show, and I've not published them. So that's been a huge change.

The minimum standard that now applies

Would you say it's fair to say that if you're podcasting now, there's a minimum standard? Or can you still get away with it, sort of grassroots recorded in the cupboard audio?

Charley: The way I would describe it is once upon a time in podcasting, it was like you were the fast food truck out the front of a nightclub at 3am, and you were the only one. And the reality is your food didn't have to be that good, and quality didn't have to be there, and you probably still do reasonably well, because you were one of the only options.

But as time has really passed here in the last few years, particularly, that's just not the case anymore. Like, most notably in podcasting, particularly, but also in things like YouTube, quality matters. And I'm not just talking about like, video quality or audio quality or lighting. Although I do love, James, you and I have got this like, hot and cold thing going on. You've got the red, and I've got the blue. I quite like that.

James: Well, I'm in Noosa, and you're in Melbourne. So it's appropriate.

Charley: Sums it up. But the content as well, like minimum standards with content. I remember there was an era of podcasting where it was almost like a game of volume. You'd see shows out there trying to put out like one episode a day, and it was just gibberish and rubbish. And I don't think audiences will stand for that anymore.

And I would compare what I see today where it's like podcasting and YouTube channels have become as serious as radio shows, and to a degree even like TV shows or movies. The quality is really moving in that direction. And you will know, and I can even talk to my same experience, if I was to sit down in the evening with Bianca and we were to watch something on TV, we're comparing watching something on Netflix against watching an interview on YouTube.

People are making those choices now. Just imagine this, you know, me and Bianca are sitting there watching something on YouTube, and you've got crappy audio that echoes in my living room, and it's hard to understand, and I've got to do the work.

And then there's another interview with the same guest or a similar guest, where it's all nicely produced, looks great on my TV, it sounds great. I know which one I'm going to gravitate towards. And the signs show that, like, better produced podcasts in way of video content, or quality of the content, is making a big difference in this space.

Why Charley targeted the Aussie market

James: How much of that is responsible for you reaching 50,000 monthly listens or watches? The quality versus the type of market you're in? One notable thing is I think you mostly targeted the Australian market.

Charley: Yeah, absolutely. We are in the Australian market. I should point that out.

James: I think that makes the achievement even better, because it's a small market segment. But it's probably only two to 10% of the global reach that you could have. But it is a fairly big topic.

Charley: Can I go a little bit deeper into that?

James: You should.



Charley: I should. Arguably, it would have been easier to grow a finance podcast if we targeted the world. Right? Because there's much more people in the world. Like, the viewership, particularly in the US, is massive. The challenge with that, though, is how do you pierce through and be different? Right? How do you be unique enough where people have a reason to consume your show?

So one of the very intentional decisions we made with the podcast was not to go after the US on the show, because we felt like Australians had been neglected in this space. So for us to create something where we are unique, we knew there was demand for, I would actually say is like, you would think it's like a hindrance to growing a bigger show. But it's actually become the advantage, because we're the only place you can come for this type of content.

James: So you found the nightclub where people are coming out at three in the morning, and there's no hotdog stand.

Charley: Exactly. And I would say that is one of the key reasons on why we've been able to have fast growth. And I suspect many podcasts out there are not. I don't want to like, bash any shows out there. But I do think they suffer from being too similar to other shows. It's like, why would anyone come to your show to listen to what you have to say, when it's like, there's someone actually doing it better?

Some observations on James's show

James: Yeah, I mean, it's definitely crossed my mind a lot having a podcast for a long time. I've never thought of myself as having any particular specialty. But I do hear some recurring themes like that I take complicated things and simplify them, that I'm fairly direct, I call things how I see them, I do have some real world business experience that helps me know if a guest is leading me down the garden path or not. And I'm also pretty fussy - I don't want to waste my time, promoting people or bringing on guests that are going to waste my audience's time.

So I've always been respectful of my audience, at least. And now, if you combine things like a minimum quality standard, I'm also not pushing for ultra frequency. We've done tests of publishing once a week, twice a week. I actually haven't really ever gone out to my audience for years asking them what they like or what they're interested in. I could probably do that, would be a next logical step. But I felt like I had things to get done first.

Charley: Can I make some observations on that one?

James: Please.

Charley: This is just my observation. This is opinion. And I'm not going to say this as fact, although, I'll weight it. It's important to me.

James: But it's your fact.

Charley: Yes, we'll go with that. James, one of the reasons, like, I love tuning into your show, even if you've got a guest that's been on other shows, is I know you're going to ask very unique questions to that guest. It's not going to be the standard run sheet you may get or you're going to let them talk their points, which I really appreciate.

The second point of that is you disagree. Like, a lot of podcast hosts out there, or even people that do YouTube shows in a similar nature, is they just like, run with the flow, agreeing with everything where it's like, you really challenge people on their ideas, even if they are in line with your own. You ask them for why, you provide insights from your own experiences. And you've done that for years. So you've built up a loyalty and trust with your audience where it's like, we come to expect it. I hate to have an entitled attitude, but I kind of do on this one.

James: Well, I won't disappoint you. I will maintain my position, but I think it's probably like the AI tools. If you ask it to do things, and then there's an output, some people won't be able to tell you if the output is true or false.

For me, when I'm interviewing someone or having a chat with someone, I have some depth of field on those topics quite often that allow me perspective. Like if it's on the topic of selling, or marketing, or negotiations, or leadership, or strategy, or online stuff, memberships, etc., agencies, I've got an opinion on it, because I've been in the field, and I go deep with it.

So that's certainly what I like to bring to the table. I don't mind having a different point of view to my guests, because they've grown up in their bubble, and they've got their things. And you're so right, a lot of people will offer a run sheet, suggested questions, they'll have their agenda, they're there for a reason, they've got something to sell usually. And I'll make sure that I get the value for my audience.

If someone said, Why do you have the guest? Because I want my audience to be better off. Because we're going to send an email about it, and my golden rule with email is I want them to be better off for opening the email. Where I'd like to go is it would be good if I had a nice studio, and my guests were in person, and I could get to the really good production levels of the shows like Lex Friedman and Joe Rogan, etc.

I feel like that would be interesting to explore down the track if I'm going to have guests. But I also do want to have more of a solo component. And that's something on my mind. I've been asked for it, I get good results. Usually, when I do a solo episode, it makes it in the top 10. So there is some validation there.

In fact, the top 10 is essentially my way of knowing what people like, because they voted for it in the listens and the shares. And by the way, Charley, I've had lots of good feedback from your audience. When my people go and listen to your podcast, which name you should mention in a second, they always say, Oh, that's a great podcast. I'm glad you recommended that, or it's nice to hear about it from Charley. And I think you've told me before that some of your listeners are sharing this platform with you.

Charley: I get numerous emails where people quote our podcast together, James, and say I came from the show. And James Schramko is very well known in our audience as well, which is just awesome, right? It's always nice to hear from the people who do listen to both. So shout out to all the ones out there.

A brief recap

James: So let's get straight into some of the other changes. We've talked already, just to quick recap. I've talked about some of the changes are, there'll be a minimum quality standard, which is sort of a universal inflation of something that matures over time. There's more acceptance of podcasts in general there, on every car you buy, there's Apple CarPlay, etcetera, Spotify, it's all easy to get to.

People know about podcasts now, they didn't even know about podcasts when I started podcasting, They're like, what's a podcast? So everyone knows what a podcast is, we can access it from our digital smart devices. There is a minimum standard if you want to compete. You should pick your point of differentiation so that you can be that hotdog stand outside the nightclub, but make it good quality so that people refer their friends and want to come back even when they're not at the nightclub.

Beyond that, what other changes have you seen?

Video domination in podcasting

Charley: This one's been interesting. When I first got into podcasting, it was almost like a bit of a tough sell to get people into the idea of doing video. It really was. Many people thought of podcasting as just an audio experience. But today, when you look to the bigger shows, it's almost a rarity to find a podcast that is just audio these days. So video has just become so dominating and continues to be dominating.

One of the things that's working really well right now, just a trend I only see getting bigger, is I think the video thing is going to continue to dominate and actually expand. And most notably, you'll even see on like the YouTube ad, they've got things like listener control now. And if you hit that button, it actually looks like a podcast player now. Like, it's not even the same in the YouTube platform.

So I really think video is going to get bigger and expand even further. It is one of the things that has absolutely enabled our show to grow faster. But I'm going to throw a little caveat on here that kind of makes it even more interesting. When I look at why video is working so well, it is because the other social media platforms demand video as well. Like, it's quite hard to promote audio clips well anywhere, like compared to video.

If you're doing a video podcast, and you're able to take what I'll call the clips, and reels, and shorts - there's a variety of names for them, depending on what you're looking at here - I'm finding that to be the best promotion tool that exists today. So I would say in the top three, and I know we're going to get through a few of these today, because I hinted out with some notes. But if I was going to make a suggestion now for anyone who's wanting to grow their media presence through video podcasting or even a YouTube channel itself, I feel like the short video stuff is going to continue to get bigger, really is.

James: Yeah, I would say the same, actually, that's been something I've put significant focus on towards the end of last year. I've been doing short videos since not long after I saw Gary Vee do it when he still had the Wine Library TV. And I'm talking about 2008 or 2009. I mean, I had stuff on Vimeo back then, or Viddler, I think, he was using one of those things. But you know, he left YouTube, one of his mistakes, he said.

I was on a different platform altogether. And I tried it, I never really cracked the big views or the vanity metrics that other people seem to, and what I realized is I probably just haven't been good enough at it. But I've certainly put more effort into it. And one of the best trainings that I've done inside my own memberships was teaching my clients to just hit record when they're doing sales calls, or coaching calls, or recording any piece of content, because it can be cut up and used for shorts, and if you have the right captioning and good editing, they can actually get you traction.

And I was pretty surprised when some of my videos was starting to get 16,000 views or whatever. To put that in perspective, if you have a podcast that in your case, Charley, if you're doing 50,000 views or listens a month on a podcast, then you can pull an extra 100,000 views of the short pieces from that.

Then add the other stuff

And you add it together, now you have quite a good reach and ability to get your message across. And for me, the most interesting thing that happened, in combination with [changing my brand](#), changing my membership platform, and changing the way we market our podcast, is I started to see people come through from socials to become a member of my membership. That was really encouraging to see that campaign working.

If you combine it or enhance it with things like paid traffic, with direct messages, and email follow ups, you've got a recipe that's pretty strong. And for me, that has been what's worked well. And now what I've found when we do add paid campaigns on top, which I've actually been getting help from a friend of yours, Charley, and it's able to take advantage of the stock value built up in the market, we've seen some customers coming on board for just a few cents, which is pretty much unheard of in 2023.

Charley: Shh, James, don't tell anyone. That still works, right? It's a secret. [laughs]

James: They do work. I know you've had a hand in the training there. But even for a dollar, two dollars, to have someone on the email list is pretty amazing.

Charley: I'd love to chime in on a few points here, because I think there's - first off, James, how awesome it's like turning into tangible revenue and profits for you, right? That's the reason why many of us do podcasts, or YouTube channels, or media in general, like that's the result we want. So like, fantastic.

The impact of short videos

Most notably, the two areas that I'm seeing like a lot of really good results for is like number one is organically, the YouTube shorts feed itself. And when you think about it, if you release a good, and I think it's shorts on there, I'm pretty sure, I confuse if it's reels or shorts.

James: No, shorts on YouTube, reels on Instagram.

Charley: There we go. So shorts on YouTube, if you make a really good, what I'm going to call cliffhanger, so this is something that leaves people hungry to know what is going to happen next, getting someone from your short piece of content into like a full-length episode or even a longer clip, really effective strategy. YouTube is absolutely favoring their shorts feed, and it is growing in the wake of competition against things like TikTok and reels.

James: Do you put your shorts on the same channel as your long-form content now?

Charley: Yes, definitely. Once upon a time, I would have said no to that.

James: Yeah, because it used to be the other way. And it is confusing because it used to be that the high intensity of the shorts would get you a low view time and start to erode your quality on the channel for the long-form content. But then I have heard lately that it's back to one channel. It's like Facebook did the same thing. They had your limit of 5000 friends but then they let you have subscribers to your personal account. So it became unnecessary to have a page for a while there.

Charley: Just to give everyone context, there was a time when putting short content on your YouTube channel actually used to damage your YouTube channel because the view time per video would plummet.

James: That's exactly what I was saying, or how it was told to me before.

Charley: Yeah, that has been changed, and I suspect they got enough complaints or noticed how many people were making a secondary channel and going, What's going on here? It's probably not the best.

James: Well, I have. I've got a shorts channel, and my shorts channel was my old SuperFastBusiness channel, which we rescued when we changed the brands. And I have my personal channel, which is where we put the long-form content. So now, I'm in a strategic dilemma again.

But if you're in it for long enough, you can go every few years. And you could look back and say, I should have done this or I should have done that. But you have no way of knowing what's going to happen in the future. You can only do what the best thing at the time is, or what you think might happen. But you'll basically be wrong in hindsight multiple times, like every few years you'll have a major strategic readjustment.

Charley: I'd just accept that comes with the game.

Picking your platforms

James: It does come with the game. It's frustrating and difficult. But also, for example, I've chopped off channels where I'm not seeing a yield. For example, we used to put stuff on Pinterest. For a while we had Google Plus or Buzz, or whatever their attempted social media was at the time, there was one more. I'm forgetting, they had so many.

And then TikTok, I'm not a fan of TikTok. So I've decided just to delete my presence on there, and just not participate. I don't like the platform. And maybe that's a huge mistake. But it's noisy and I don't like it. So it's just not something I participate in. But maybe down the track, it will be necessary. Who knows?

Charley: Well, let's go there. Because this is something I find rather fascinating. We're going to be careful of personal bias as well, when it comes to these.

James: We all have personal biases. I think everyone should know our cognitive biases, like sunk cost fallacy, survivorship bias. We're going to look for things that validate our viewpoint in the world and reject things that don't. And that's why you get such - come on, you've got a whole country, the United States seems to be divided in two, right? Like red and blue.

And that's because everyone's got their cognitive biases happening. And they're only seeing what they're allowed to see, or what people have constructed for them. So yeah, it'd be really interesting. And quite often, there is no way to know the truth, but you can know your truth. But I'm interested, what are your viewpoints on this, Charley?

Charley: So I'll start with like, we'll call my level one thinking here. What I really look at is like, there's places where I'm happy to build assets. And there's places I'm not. Right? So I'm quite happy to build up an email list. I'm quite happy to build up a YouTube account. And I'm also quite happy to build up an audio following, that is, I'll call it audio following because the idea being it's on Apple, it's on Spotify, and the mixture of those.

What I'm not happy to do is build my audience into Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. And I just find, and again, this is opinion, but it's well tested, is those are the platforms that are most notable to change. And we saw many people get wrecked in like, they build a big Facebook group, but then their post didn't reach their Facebook group.

James: Or LinkedIn groups back in the day, was a big deal.

Charley: Completely. I'm going to throw LinkedIn in that category as well.

James: Or Snapchat was a thing for a while there. Or Vine.

Charley: Huge. Now this comes back to really something you taught me about, [OwnTheRacecourse](#).

James: MySpace.

Charley: We have MySpace. You taught me this years ago, James, about OwnTheRacecourse. And I will say I've kind of bent the rules a little bit on it, with YouTube.

James: I have too, I've changed my rules on it too. And this is critical. This is why I'm saying you have to reassess. The whole concept of OwnTheRacecourse is control. And probably I left my personal brand change a little too long, because I was enjoying the control of my own asset, but these days, the social media Goliath have just gotten so much power, that I should go on there a little more.

But this is the point, and Ezra talks about this, I taught him the concept of the octopus and the tentacles. If your own email database, or your own list, or your website is the head of the octopus, you can still use your tentacles on the other platforms. As long as you've got a way to turn that subscriber into a buyer at some point, if the head of the octopus was your shopping cart, or in the case of performance deals with revenue share partners, or affiliations, their shopping cart, that's the goal. And I'll go out and get them in other places.

But I think it's interesting. I'm actually pretty close to you in terms of which platforms I like. I feel like YouTube has to be a solid bet. Your email database should clearly be number one. It's such a powerful machine. The audio subscription, I'm totally down for. There's plenty of people in the gym or driving that can't watch stuff. So I'd still cater for them.

And I like Instagram as a platform because that's where all the surfing happens. It's a fun and nice experience for me. So I like using the Instagram reels, and it sort of caters for my creative things. I don't like the ownership of TikTok, I think it's the most likely to be not allowed down the track, because of the closeness it has to governing bodies in the country it originates from. And I don't like the user face or the platform. And I don't like the type of content that I'm seeing on there. So it's a no for me, for so many reasons. Just not interested in it.

[Twitter](#), I actually built a reasonable following in the early days, it's one of the few platforms that I did get up to the 10,000 mark fairly quickly, and maintain, I think I've still got 8,000 or 9,000 people there. So it's just a little regular update.

And [LinkedIn](#), again, I think the bio for me is getting a fair bit of heavy lifting, and it does generate sales. But I'm pretty light on it. And we have identified it's not worth putting video on LinkedIn or Twitter. It's a waste of time. Same with the [Facebook page](#) is been really going better with text for us. So interesting. Those things change over time, of course, but that's what's happening right now.

Charley: I would say that on an organic front, I would say that's pretty reflective of what I see in my own. The caveat or change I would put on it, though, is that I'm quite happy to run ads on all of these platforms. And I think that you want to - in the case of myself here, the ones that work really well for me have most notably been Facebook and TikTok in my niches.

Now, again, you might be in a certain type of market where LinkedIn is more suitable. So if you're in something, particularly like B2B, I think you've always got to put your audience first. You want to know, where is my audience actually hanging out, and then decide what makes sense there. But the strategy is really different here.

So when I'm running ads, for example, on Facebook, and TikTok, which we do a substantial amount of, the whole goal is getting them off those platforms and into one of our core platforms. We're happy to spend money on promoting shorts or videos, as long as it's leading people to then come into our main holdings where we're actually happy to have people stay and form that.

The thing that I would encourage a lot of people to, I suppose, think around here is that, for a lot of people that use Facebook or TikTok in this example, they use YouTube a lot as well. Right? They're not like they sit on one platform. So it's fine to get in front of your audience on one of these platforms, knowing that it's just going to build awareness to them on another app they are already using.

Does TikTok actually convert?

James: Yeah, and we see a lot of the influencers are heavy in quite a few platforms. Often on Instagram, I see such and such has so many followers on TikTok. I'm interested, with your TikTok ads, are you getting buyers, and what type of person is on TikTok that buys things for you?

Charley: I would break these into a couple of camps. So does it create buyers? Yes. And do I see it create buyers in some of the accounts we have at [Valher Media](#)? Absolutely. So I think of TikTok as just another placement against Facebook or Twitter. I haven't universally seen it be like, Oh, this is terrible. Don't use it. For some markets, it's excellent. And then for others not so much.

And I'll flag the ones that are not so much quickly. If you're in some sort of tight local business or trade business, it's not great. If you're in the, let's say, coaching or education space, it can be phenomenal. And then anything from millennial and younger, it tends to do particularly well for them as well. Older demographics tend to, I suppose, still do better on Facebook or other platforms overall.

James: What would you say is an older demographic?

Charley: I'll go millennial or older.

James: So millennial's old.

Charley: No, millennial in TikTok context, yes. Like, it does skew young.

James: That's what I think. Some of my very best students, the ones that go from a few \$100,000 to past \$10 million a year though, I catch them in their early to mid-20s, mid 20s, like 23 to 25. If I get a 25-year-old who's making a couple of 100,000 and they've got a lot of potential, they're the ones, over years, like the [Ezra Firestones](#), they can just knock it out of the park.

But my more typical clients are in their 30s and 40s. And I've got a few in the 50s. So I reckon for TikTok, there might only be a few 100 million people in, you know, who are older than 30 or 40. I'd have to check that. But I certainly wasn't enjoying the experience interacting with it. So ads might solve that problem. But I'd be open-minded.

The thing is, I haven't even dominated any of the other platforms yet. So I'd rather have a bigger following on Instagram where I definitely see a massive correlation between activities and members joining. I have direct messages in Instagram, and then they appear in my membership over and over again. So it clearly works for me, and I enjoy the experience.

Charley: Well, that brings up a great point. You don't have to get every platform working to have a successful business.



James: Well, it takes discipline to say no to a platform and say, I'm not participating. And then, gosh, I don't know, maybe 30 or 40 people a day hitting me up in my Instagram, telling me how crap my content is, and how they could take my video and turn it into short videos. And then I click on their link and they've had like, 16 followers or whatever, I'm like, dude, like, why is it that I'm getting organic clients all day long from my podcasts and videos, which you say are no good, and you're the one cold sliding into my DM, trying to pitch me stuff? Like it doesn't seem right. There's something not going on here.

Charley: Do you know what's interesting? My experience with Instagram seems to be like your experience with TikTok. So you've been like, I don't like the platform. It's not necessarily for me, and I haven't seen a particular amount of buyers from it. Well, it's the opposite. I have people literally discover us on TikTok, download our stuff, come across.

James: It might be the type of product you're in, or it might be your affinity for it. That's where it's important to take note of your personal preferences. So as we're thinking about the changing digital landscape, I guess I have to say, I would be open-minded to trying TikTok again, down the track, if I saw a significant shift in something, whether it had a more legitimate ownership, whether it had an older audience, or people who buy my things are telling me, why aren't you on TikTok? I haven't had a single person say, Why aren't you on it? I was there, but I didn't like it.

How will AI change things?

We've got to have a strategy that is adaptable to changes. There will probably be a technology platform arrive in the future that we don't know about yet. We have to expect that that could be a possibility. The major disruption I'm seeing with Google right now, it's fascinating to me, because you know, if you had to say who had the biggest lock on an audience, who had the greatest monopoly on search, I would have said Google is in a pretty striking position. But that's under threat now, with the shift of guards.

So let's see what happens. Is there a discussion around AI regarding the changing landscape? Is it just going to create a proliferation of well-researched, highly produced, or even automated content? I know there's a trend at the moment for faceless content. People can research, write, and record the audio in any voice or style they want right now with AI technology, at a very high level. And then they can have it edited with the imagery that's AI-generated.

So there's really very little human involvement other than the concept of it. In fact, I've even seen some experiments where people say, I want you to pretend that you're a genius marketer, and I'll give you \$100, what would be your best marketing strategy to make money? And then, follow the instructions from buying domains, setting up a store, creating content, all AI-generated. Will there be a place for us humans in the future?

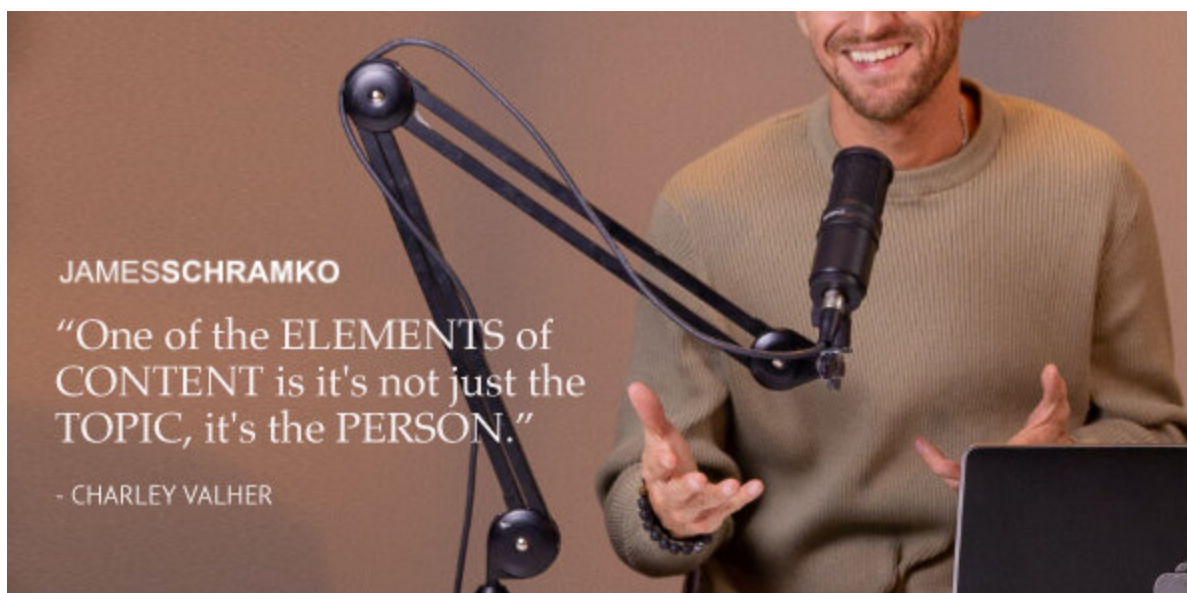
Charley: That's a great question. That's a really great question. From a media front, what I look at right now is that every content creator, what AI is essentially being the gift of is it's giving us all an Ironman suit. Right? I think this is something where it's going to level up people in a really big way. And even in some of my own interesting experiences.

I've actually played with this, I'll write a series of questions for my own podcast. And I'll put it into ChatGPT are one of the AI tools and I'll say, Make these questions better, and see what comes out. And there's been some excellent recommendations. So when it comes to like, research, question prompts, I'm very excited by this, because I actually think it's going to lift the whole boat for quality. As for replacing people, when it comes to actual content creation, I'm not certain I'm sold on that yet. I haven't seen a good example of that compare.

James: It'll come. I should be able to feed it 100 videos of me and then I can prompt it to give me good prompts to feed some video platform that will replicate my image and voice in a deepfake scenario that is as good as a human output that is indistinguishable. At some point, you'd have to think that it could just go off and do its own thing. But then everybody can do that. That's where it'll be really interesting.

Charley: Completely.

James: Maybe we'll value our uhms and ahhs, and gaffes and mistakes, and quirky laughs, and dry humor, etc. It might be the only ways you can tell that it was human generated.



Why we still need humans

Charley: I think there's also one of the elements of content is it's not just the topic, it's the person. Right? So it's not just seeing something down, like how many business podcasts are there, James? Tons.

James: I know in terms of podcasts in general, there's like hundreds of millions of podcasters. Is it 800 million or maybe even a billion podcasts? It's a lot.

Charley: I don't actually know the exact number, but it is a lot now. It is a huge number.

James: There's a lot. Like, Oh, my God, I'm still at this, but I'll give it a crack. It's okay. Like, I'm looking for what won't change, like that Bezos question. And I feel like people want to connect with humans. People want integrity. They value the truth, or a version of the truth that they can relate to, if we're going to talk about bias. And I think people are human and still like emotional things like stories, and being connected to an experience, even if it's a roller coaster, and it's not all positive.

And those stories actually can be very compelling, because we bond with each other through those experiences. So that's what I'll continue to bring to the table. And I'll try and curate the right selection of topics and guests to bring a good experience because I want to be relevant. If I'm going to do it, I want to be relevant. And I want to provide value.

Charley: I concur. That's what I mean. Even if let's say these AI tools were getting to a point where there's a ton of faceless podcasts out there, I still think people will show up to hear from James. I want to know what's going on from James. And you only have to look to the phenomenons of our world of shows like Big Brother, where people want to see people. We want to follow the actual people.

James: That's pretty crazy stuff, isn't it? I wonder if when they started producing that show, they realized that the whole of society would end up being more Orwellian, and what they might have thought, cameras everywhere, controlled environments, you know, locking rooms and stuff, making people go in here, do that, do this.

The stuff that won't change

I'm wondering, let's just step back a bit, on the things that won't change when we're looking at the changing digital landscape. I feel like [email is still a power play](#). How are you bringing people into your email list from these shows that you're producing?

Charley: Alright, so I'll do a quick recap, and then I'll go into this one. So let's just say that like, shorts organically on YouTube, killing it for growth, really are, highly advocate that. Second one, there's likely a paid media channel out there to promote video as well, that will lead people to your show, particularly using that cliffhanger strategy I mentioned.

So if you can create something where it's like, you know, if you've got five tips on a podcast episode, give them tip one, and then say, to get the other four tips, listen to the full episode. Like, it's a nice jump to have people understand what to get more from. Coming into this realm here about we're talking about email, I still can't believe how relevant email is and how powerful email is.

So while people will commonly, let's say, use social media platforms more, email is intimate, and is so strong and continues to be strong. So I'm a really big advocate for it. And I would almost say that like podcast and email, hand and glove, like they were built to go together. Now, the strategy I use today when it comes to email is that, particularly on the shows we've got, which are investing-orientated, we will promote like calculators and frameworks, and I'll call it like, wealth planning spreadsheets, and tools, and resources, right, which I think is a common strategy people know.

But this is a little twist I put on it. Let's say I was going to build some sort of like, portfolio tracker. So the download on this one is that you can download my portfolio tracker, then you can put in your numbers, and work out your net wealth position. Rather than just promoting that and just getting someone on your email list from that, what I'm actually doing is taking people to podcast episodes on like, how do you use your wealth tracker? Or, why it's important to track your wealth.

So I think it's a really, really powerful combination you can create where frameworks, calculators, tools, the promotion, then podcast episodes, or video episodes, or even just videos, if you're more of a YouTuber, that actually enhance the download you've given someone to create that combination. And that's how we're kind of intertwining email and podcast to deliver a much bigger result there.

James: It's very good. It kind of reminds me of that episode that I did, which was along the lines of, [which membership option is the right one for you?](#) There's an educational instructional precursor to helping someone find the right membership plan, because at the moment of recording this, I've got two membership plans, and helping people understand why they need something, what it actually is, how it could help is good.

That's why I like the case studies too, especially actionable case studies with steps people could follow and apply to their own business if they have a similar situation. So that's nice. So we've been doing lead magnets based on each episode. And that's when we put episode numbering, that helped a lot.

Wrapping things up

So I would say, here on Episode 1001 at JamesSchramko.com, we'll put some show notes of this discussion, we'll put the key points in a digest of what changes are coming and how you can adapt for your video marketing strategies, etc. And people go to that, but they can actually access all the previous PDFs, transcriptions, frameworks, checklists, etc. So that's good.

Or you can have a catch all, like I do, like give away [my book](#). They go to any part of my site, they're probably likely to see a free book opt-in, and they can get my book, which is a more general opt-in. So you could have a specific opt-in, a general opt-in.

The technique you're talking about Charley is excellent, because you can have a look at the tools that people need to use to be better off, and then put content in front of them that bridges that gap and talk about a cliffhanger. You haven't shared the name of your podcast yet. I'm dying to know.

Charley: Actually, I did earlier in the episode. So the two shows for anyone, in case I did skim over, which I might have. We have one show, which is business and investing. So it's the Business and Investing podcast. And then the second show is Property and Investing. So quite unique naming mechanisms there.

Now, one of the questions I get is, why did you create the second show Property and Investing rather than just rolled into one? We found that there was just so much to discuss on the topic of property, we just wanted to bring it into one. So to give people some context on why they might listen to either.

Business and Investing, that's for business owners who want to become financially independent. It's talking about how they can generate wealth from their business and turn it into assets. The other podcast we do, property investing, is really hammering in on property in Australia.

James: And website?

Charley: So it's [businessandinvesting.com](#). And it's [propertyandinvesting.com](#).

James: There we go. That's what I was sort of alluding to. I always like to reference off those great resources. Or maybe we'll get a few more subscribers after today's episode. So is there anything that we've missed? We've talked about short video content, we've talked about email being the powerhouse, lead magnets, collecting email addresses, which platforms we like and why and why not. And what we're doing, minimum standard of publishing.

Video provides you a great opportunity for promotion. And I'll say, we put more effort into both the research and pre-production. Before we publish an episode, I always want to know the talking points. And I want to have an idea about what we're talking about. And once we've published, we actually do more effort in terms of producing better titles, better quality summaries, publish it to the right platforms with better descriptions, all of those things have added up to create a lovely wall of exposure.

And so far to date, since I started the podcast, it's still been a prime mover and a viable machine, which the way that I run it is a small team working on that. It's the primary thing we do in our business. We're a little content machine. If you don't have one, it's easy to have a chat to someone like Charley, because I think your team is still looking for a few clients like my type of business, if they're a good fit. Do you still have that service?

Charley: Yeah, absolutely. So Valher Media still runs today. We provide essentially the service you're describing there, James, so for those that don't have the internal team, it's an, I suppose, an external solution.

James: Which is a lot of people. [laughs] Get asked that question. Valher Media. V-A-L-H-E-R-media.com. Charley, thank you so much for sharing on this next phase of my podcast. It's lovely to break in new ground with you on board at episode 1001.

Charley: Congratulations on the [1001 episodes](#), by the way, James, huge achievement.

James: Thank you.

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