

A woman with long dark hair is smiling and holding a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook has a sticker that says "live what you LOVE" in a mix of fonts. The notebook also has a pink tab that says "FEB" and a spine with month labels: "SEPTEMBER", "APRIL", "OCTOBER", "MAY", "NOVEMBER", and "JUNE".

JAMESSCHRAMKO

Stickers: A Journey into the World of an Online Sticker Business

Mim Jenkinson turned a passion for the humble sticker into a profitable online business. She and James peel back the layers of her inspiring story.



Mim Jenkinson

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to my podcast, and what an interesting topic we have today. We're talking about stickers, and I honestly never thought I'd be saying those words on this podcast. Welcome, Mim Jenkinson. It's fantastic to have you here.

Mim: Thank you, James. It's so funny, because I never expected to be talking about stickers in any way, either. So here we are. And I'm really excited to see where this goes.

James: I imagine most people when you say, Oh, I'm into stickers, they say, You're into what? I mean, my recollection of, well, my experience with stickers so far is I got stickers when I was a kid and stuck them all over things you shouldn't stick them on and caused havoc for my parents, especially when we moved house, it was all over the back of my door.

In my [surf brand](#), we had some stickers made and people often email us saying, Can you send us some stickers? And I put stickers in my kids' shoes, and, you know, things that they take, lunch boxes, etc. So that's my whole sort of experience with stickers, until I met you. And I discovered, low and behold, there was an entire world out there for people who are into stickers. Can you just give us a little bit of an overview into the sticker world, just for anyone who's not already a complete sticker fanatic?

Mim's entry into sticker world

Mim: I will, and I think they'll soon discover that they actually are, they may have just forgotten. Because when you think about when you were a child, and you used stickers, it wasn't even the, like putting the stickers on the thing or how it made you feel afterwards, it's how it made you feel at the time or when you were choosing the stickers or that buzz that you got. And it feels so trivial to talk about stickers in so many ways. But honestly, it goes way beyond why we're even using the stickers.

So I got started, I guess I'll give a bit of a snapshot of how things started. Because this absolutely wasn't where I thought I would end up, certainly in my own business. But back in the end of 2015, as you know, James, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, and thankfully, all is really well now. But at the time I was undergoing chemo, I had to leave my quite well-paid consulting job. I'd had years and years in recruitment HR and events and I had to leave to go through this chemo and radiation regimen, which was really tough.

I had a six-month-old, and a two-year-old, and a husband, we'd just arrived in New Castle in Australia. And when you think you've got your whole life ahead of you, that's exactly where we were. And have this diagnosis, and I just wanted something to do to take my mind off things. I wanted something just for me, a creative outlet.

So I've started using stickers in my planner. And that was something that I was really, really enjoying. But always wondered how people actually made them, have no words to give to what I wanted to learn. I wanted to know how they peel them off individually, all the things. So I decided to teach myself how to make stickers.

And then, in an absolute nutshell, taught myself how to make stickers, started using them myself, decided to see how they went selling them on Etsy. They picked up quite quickly, actually. And before I knew it, I was posting stickers to customers all over the world. Those customers started asking me how I was making the stickers. So I put together an online course to be able to teach them.

Then they started asking me how I was selling them. So I expanded my online course to be able to teach them how to start their own sticker empire too, and now, eight years on I think it is, I now have a huge business. I've taught and coached over 10,000 people worldwide how to make their own stickers, many have gone on to set out their own sticker shop empire. And here we are.

I've never thought that I would be here from where things started. But now I get to experience that joy that I've mentioned before of stickers in my life and in their lives and the people that they reach every single day.

James: Isn't that interesting? Now I've got a couple of questions around that. Firstly, I'm relieved to hear that things are well on the health front. Because often it takes something like that to reassess where you're at in life, and to experience gratitude and joy for when things aren't bad. It's good also, if we can somehow experience that secondhand and not have to go through it ourselves and get that joy and experience.

And it sounds like probably, you're helping some people with your products who are finding this joy or perhaps reconnecting with what it was like as a kid. Most of us enjoy stickers as a kid. I see the kids at the Brazilian jujitsu place, they ask for stickers and they happily put them. Lucy has put BJJ stickers all over her little kitchen in her bedroom.

Mim: I love that. You know that my husband is a brown belt now in BJJ, and the kids do it too, so I can imagine that altogether.

James: She just got another stripe the other day, she's graduating through the levels. And when they do sparring, it fascinates me to see a four year old just immediately taking down another kid and then I just think, I wish I had that experience as a kid. So any parents out there, this is such a good, reasonably low impact sport compared to a lot of things, but just learning about your body and building up the strength.

Does making it a business take away the joy?

So anyway, I digress. Probably helping people connect back with what it was like as a kid, that fun thing. But for you, this is something I've often thought about with my surfing niche is, does making it into a business take away some of the joy or fun that you had as a consumer?

Mim: I think that it can for me and for my audience, if I'm not very conscious of that occasionally happening, because as a salesperson, as a business owner, we can get a bit too in the weeds about the results. And while the results are incredibly important, clearly, I know that at times, if I'm not feeling that joy, joy is a word that I constantly come back to, and if I'm not feeling it, it's because I've moved a bit too far past it myself.

And maybe I'm not infusing the creativity into the business that originally gave me the spark to do this. And maybe I'm no longer feeling the enthusiasm and the creativity for the results that I want others to get, either. So that's a really quick reminder to snap me back. I know that feels a bit - it could feel a bit vague, but it's a true feeling that we have, and it goes beyond just the passion for what I want to do. It's the why I was doing it in the first place. I really wanted that creative outlet. And it's what I want to create for others, too.

And I say this all the time, it isn't about the stickers, it's about how the stickers make us feel. And it could be creativity, pride, calm, joy. So many different things. The byproduct of that is that we have a pretty planner or a pretty wherever we're putting the stickers. And we're organized, which is awesome, too, you know? So it's a really great thing to be able to help us in so many different ways. But it always comes back to that feeling of inner joy that I want to create for me and for other people.

The practicalities of space and tools

James: One thing that I thought about, just from a commercial perspective, I imagine people probably think that you have to have a big printing shop to be able to print stickers. Is it possible for people to do this on a small scale?

Mim: Absolutely. And in fact, even on a large scale from home, it's possible. So when I first got started, so I've got one of my cutting machines behind me here, and I have another one right next to me. So a cutting machine such as a cricket or a silhouette, there are a couple of the popular ones. During COVID, everyone and their dog got themselves a cutting machine to do something from home.

And it's really simple. It literally is a case of the tools that you need would be a computer with a reasonable internet connection or a laptop, a cutting machine. I mean, you can cut stickers yourself with scissors or a craft knife, some decent sticker paper, you know, an okay printer, like it actually is a really affordable, quite a low barrier of entry to make your own stickers and to start selling them online.

I mean, Etsy is a marketplace where people are flocking to Etsy every single day to buy things like stickers. And I was printing them and sending them to customers globally. It was the most fun for a few years until I moved it to be a 100% digital product business. And now, I create the file. So I still get to experience the joy of designing the stickers. But I'll provide my customers, because I still sell them now, the files, they just print and cut them at home.

So it's super simple, super fun. Pretty much as passive as you can get. I know that that will get people's knickers in a twist if I say the word passive, but it doesn't offend me. [laughs] So yeah, it's really fun. And it means that it's a business opportunity that so many people can either create for themselves as a side hustle or a full business, or just add it as a new income stream to a business that they already have.

James: So it turns it from more or less, you go from an e-commerce business with physical stock to being an information product business.

Mim: Definitely. That's exactly how things have happened for me.

James: So I was thinking before that if you had to have a big shop, then it would have been too hard to compete. If everyone can do it, that's probably really hard for the big shops. Maybe they've been sort of encroached by all these at-home operators now.

Mim: Hope so. [laughs]

James's failed sticker endeavor

James: [laughs] Savage. So I wish I'd known you many, many years ago. One of my original failed business ideas was stickers, you won't believe this.

Mim: No, it wasn't.

James: In Australia, they have warnings on cigarette packets. And when I was very young, there was a bit of a trend where people would come up with funny versions of them that they would stick over the official label because like, they don't want to see a lung cancer picture or whatever on their cigarette.

So people were selling stickers that you peel off and stick over the original one to make it funny or entertaining. And so for one print run, we had some designed and printed by a proper printer. We drove out the Western Sydney and had these printed off, and then we bought some bags, and we put them all in little bags, and then we tried to sell them.

That's where we came unstuck. We just found it really hard to get people to buy these things. But it was a great idea, it did involve stickers, didn't work. It was a one print, run and done thing. So now I know where to go if I want to learn about stickers.

Mim: That's so fun. I'm so glad that you did that. That's hilarious. I think it's really funny that you've waited until now to tell me that. [laughs]

James: No. Honestly, I actually don't think I've ever told anybody, and we're 1031 episodes in. I've never told anyone about this business enterprise. And when I think back, there were plenty of other things. I used to buy and sell number plates. I was trying to get the business thing going before I knew what my business would actually be.

But I think what you're providing is, Hey, if someone either doesn't know stickers is their thing, or you know that stickers is your thing, you've got the central source of, Hey, this is how you do it. This is how you sell them. I've probably bought stickers from one of your students, because the ones that we do for, you know, they're on Etsy and stuff, I'm sure that's where they come from.

Bringing the value of stickers to society

So you are contributing a lot of value to society, even through kindergartens and preschools all around the world. I appreciate that.

Mim: Oh, I love that, I love the ripple effect. And you know, the stickers, and maybe this is where your venture went wrong with yours, they need to solve a problem, like they do solve a problem, don't they? And I mean, I'm now at the point where I walk around and think, there should be a sticker for that, and that, like it's impossible to not put a sticker on anything.

And this is one of the things that I coach my students on, you know, how is it solving a problem? Or how can you identify an issue, a challenge, a problem that a potential customer might have? How might something as simple as a tiny sticker solve that issue for them or help them start a habit, stick to a habit, stop a habit, you know, whatever the thing is that they really need help with?

It can become an addiction pretty fast that you just are overflowing with ideas. So this is where we can stand out, because there were so many stickers online. Etsy is certainly flooded with them, but how can ours stand out by truly helping people?

What makes Mim stand out

James: Well, on that note, Mim, I've had a unique window into your world. Since you came on board, and you know, we've done some work together, you've been in SilverCircle, you're in the Mentor program, and I get to see the real you. We chat pretty much every week, I even asked you to fill in for my mastermind, when I was in the Maldives, because I trust your advice.

You have been in lots of groups, you've built your own business very successfully, you're a steady hand on the rudder. And everyone gave great feedback, by the way. By the way, that's the only time ever since I started my program that I've asked someone else to do that. And that took 13 years, 12 years at the time. So you know, that's big praise on your capability.

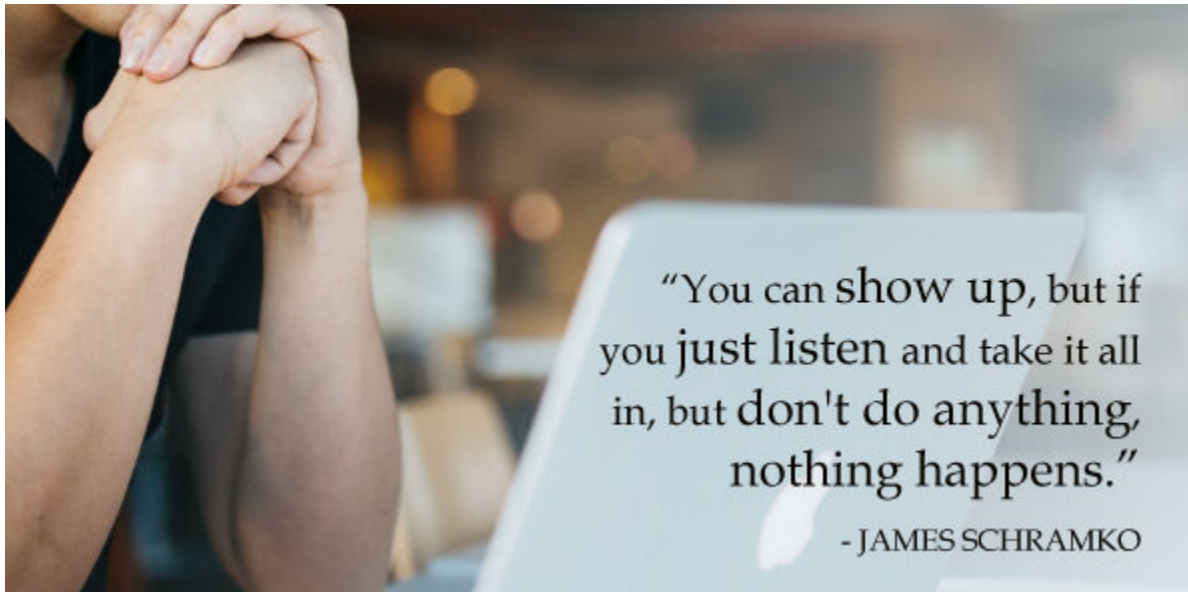
Mim: Thank you.

James: But there's so many things I like about you, I wonder if it's okay to share a couple of things to sort of highlight what I think helps someone be successful. One is, you always show up. And that's something, I really can rely on you showing up and being hungry for that next stage, I think that's a great attribute that serves you well.

Two is you're okay to mix and match and dabble in different sources of information, you don't have to lock in with one player for the whole run - it's good to do that, and to have the loyalty, but also, you're not limited. And you're also working, I imagine, with coaches or people who don't mind, if you have other information, like they're not jealous or whatever. And I love that relationship that we have, that I'm happy to work with anything you bring to the table, wherever that comes from.

And the other thing is you mimplement, which is...

Mim: I do mimplement every day. [laughs]



James: You are a massive mimplementer. And that's really where the rubber meets the road, right? You can have all these great ideas, you can get the information, you can show up, but if you just listen and take it all in, but don't do anything, nothing happens.

Married to a hero

Now, I think I saw a dramatic thing happen in your life, and if you're comfortable to share it. And that was in the early days of the business, I imagine your husband Miles was working. And then you were recovering and then starting this thing. That was the starting point, wasn't it?

Mim: Yeah, it really was. So Miles had to leave work while I was going through treatment to look after the kids and me. And that was the first time ever that Miles really took the reins, I think, had to, because I've always been the one to, I guess, I'm in charge of a lot of things financially, running the home and always was the main breadwinner.

Miles was a carpenter for years. And I was always the one, I guess, like I said, in charge, though he really had to take over that role and he just, I can't even describe the gratitude I have for him and for our relationship and how he did do that. And during the business, he supported me from day one, there was never a question from him as to whether I was doing the right thing.

We literally lost everything. When you hear people say they lost everything, we did, we lost every single cent we had. And we had a lot of money saved up at that point to be able to put down as a deposit for our forever home. It felt like it left the bank account overnight. So we were starting from scratch.

Now, thankfully, my parents moved in with us. So we had at least someone to pay for the rent and to help us in that way, or who knows where we would have been, but it was a really difficult time. And it was difficult for the first few years, honestly, there was a lot of, you know, they're working evenings and weekends, and Miles really still kind of taking charge of many things that he hadn't before.

And I always knew in my heart that it would be a success, and he always knew that the business would be a success because of me. So it was great to have that support. And when things did start to take off, my goal then became, how can I find a way to be able to give back to him for what he's given to me? And how can I try and, you know, get back to me being the major breadwinner again, but really in a super sustainable way.

And another thing that I've always had as a huge goal, which I guess comes from having this life-changing experience where your life flashes before your eyes, and it can be taken away from you, I've just really worked on putting things in place to be able to provide for Miles and my kids, even if I'm no longer here, or if I'm not in a position to be able to do what I'm doing now. So they've been the drivers for me.

And as you know, we've spoken before about the fact that, you know, I've got friends and we all know, I know a lot of people who are very lucky to have partners who subsidize their business. I've never had that. I haven't. You know, Miles has never been in a position where he could afford to carry our household expenses, it's always felt like it's very much on my shoulders to at least contribute equally.

So when I became in a position where my business was earning more and more and I was able to give back, James knows this, I made it a goal to give back to Miles and I started saving in secret to buy him a car. So we've bought him a car, we've bought him a brand new Hilux. That was his pride and joy for years, he'd had these crappy beat up old cars and utes that were just death traps, honestly, because that's all we could afford.

So he bought himself a ute, he put it on finance, and it just became my mission to pay it off. So I called Toyota and explained this to them. And they worked with me to be able to make over payments. I made it the goal of his birthday to be able to let him know I paid off his car and it was done. And that happened. So James, you knew that I was doing this every single month, paying off a bit more and a big chunk here and a small chunk there.

And just the day that I told him, we had the kids in the back of the car, he had gone to get something from the house, I think we were away actually. And I said to the kids, I've paid off daddy's car, like I'm going to tell him, it's his birthday present, actually struck a bow on the steering wheel. And when he got in, he was just, it was like, What's this about? He didn't understand.

But as soon as it clicked, and I told him what had happened, like my brown belt, you know, super masculine hero of a husband just started crying, which set me off and the kids. And it was just the best of the best experience ever. So things like that have always been my mission and continue to be so.

James: I loved being in on that during the process. And I got an experience from that too. If I'm working with you, and you're getting those results, I feel that. I can feel the emotion. And he now works in your business as well, right, together?

Mim: He does, he does. So that was the next goal. The next goal was, how can we retire him from carpentry. He isn't retired altogether. Now he works for me, and he doesn't work for me full time. So he's now like, in a part time capacity as a designer for me. You know, James, he was an artist and a hand drawn illustrator and animator for Disney for 10 years. He's illustrated one of the Dutchess New York's books, and she's commissioned him for more, like he's an exceptional artist and his skills were, I guess they were being wasted in carpentry.

But also, you know, he's in his 40s, he's cracking on, and we just want to protect our health as much as possible now and plan for the future. So he's working for me designing. And he's also become, I guess the, I don't know whether people like the word house husband, we jokingly use it between us, but he does more around the house. He does a lot of the kids' stuff too. He gets to spend so much more time with me, and so much more time with them. And it's an absolute blessing to be able to do this.

And it's been something that we've been planning for the last few years. But just with your help, James, took the leap earlier this year and had a plan to be able to make it work and sustainable and to, I guess have a backup plan should it not work. And it wasn't a, if it doesn't work financially, it was a, you know, if we hate this, what will we do about it, because our relationship is more important than the other things, so, so far so good.

James: That's amazing. Look, I can totally relate to this. My wife and I spend every day together. I'm a home dad, who happens to have a podcast, and coach a few people a couple of hours a week here and there. And I love that lifestyle, that lifestyle is possible now with the leverage.

Mim's stance on AI

Something I think is really important. Your husband Miles has amazing graphic design skills, illustration skills, etc. You're in the sticker business. And what we've seen in the last year is people with no design skills, but are getting sort of fancy with AI, starting to whip up images, and so forth. And we've had conversations about this, and I love your stance on this. You've said to me, what about AI?

Mim: First of all, haven't drawn my line in the sand entirely with this, I don't think anyone should. And actually, my beliefs about this change every day, the more I learn from others, and the more stories I hear from others' experiences. For me, personally, I wouldn't be using AI to create any graphics that I was selling, because I don't feel confident in knowing where the source of those graphics are.

And I do think that there's legitimacy to what artists are concerned about and that it's taking their art, in almost like a mashup of their art and other people's and coming up with something new, which obviously is the same when we use ChatGPT to write any kind of content at all, it's doing the same with words, which is also a little bit of a concern, although it isn't, I feel more strongly about the artist because of knowing so many and Miles being my husband.

There's a lot of talk about that not being the case. However, I also have heard many stories now about people creating artwork with AI, where you can see watermarks, and it will say things like Getty images or other watermarks on there. So that is pretty self-explanatory what's happened there. And it to me, it isn't worth the risk.

And especially when I think there is so much digital art created by actual artists online that's available to sell at a really affordable, really affordable rate for a commercial license, why take the risk of using AI for that right now? So that's where my current day opinion is on it, it's definitely subject to change. And I think that AI will certainly change anywhere, we know that what we're faced with now isn't going to be the same in a week's time, let alone a year's time. That's one of the things that concerns me, though.

The other thing is that a lot of the AI content that's coming out graphics wise is crap. You know, you'll see images of birds that have two sets of wings, or people with fingers missing or eyes that are not, you know, connected. Like there's just so much when you - it doesn't take an artist to spot the difference. Anyone can actually do that. So, you know, that's an issue too. So I guess I'm kind of on the fence, but that's where my opinion of it is at the minute. How about you?

James: Look, I see people, especially marketers, selling stuff like, Hey, this video was entirely made by AI. It was scripted by AI, it's AI voice, and it's my AI image. I'm not here. This is the Max Headroom, for any of the older kids in the room, is here now. But it's sh*t. It's not real. It's inauthentic. I really detest the way the marketers have just grabbed up these shovels and they're selling them to the gold diggers and they're making it all around to make money.

Betting on the humans

These are the same people that were selling cryptocurrencies last year, or the year before it crashed. And they were selling high ticket the year before that, and they were doing whatever - I don't know, I'm a long-term player. You know what I think I would bet on? I would bet on humans. The fact that you and I can have a proper human conversation with real emotions, life stories that have happened, is irreplaceable. And just like if you had someone come to your house and deliver organic milk from the farm that's not been messed with or treated or sprayed and all of that, that's really valuable now.

Mim: I completely agree. I was talking to Miles about this last night when we were having a conversation about the friendships that we have. And we're in our 40s now, in our mid 40s, and I actually don't want a surface level of relationship with anybody, and an AI chatbot is a surface level relationship now. I love AI, I've embraced it for so many things. I'm definitely not on the anti-AI side of the fence in any way.

But I do think there's a time and a place for it. And there's a time and a place not for that, either. For example, we were talking about, you know, we work together and what I like about our relationship is that you're not only interested in my business and my results, but also in me, also in my life outside of my business, and outside of me sat on my desk and these four walls, and you're interested in Miles and the kids and how it all works together. And that's far beyond a surface level relationship.

So I don't need a quick answer from you. I mean, maybe occasionally I would do. But that's not why we're working together. It's the holistic approach to how I can have a better life and how you can steer me in that direction. So if I purchased a course from you, and maybe there's an AI function for me to be able to get a quick answer by searching within the course, amazing. I think that's awesome. Anything that can make our lives quicker in that way, is perfect.

But I'm not really interested at this point in having a surface level relationship with anyone in this respect. So really open to what happens in the future. I do think it's one of those things where it's a never say never, but for where I am right now, that isn't what I'm looking for.

James: I think a really good example with us is, you and I work together using AI to get the things that we need. Remember you asking me about product lines and model mixes, etc. And I said, Hey, you know, let's build a spreadsheet, let's anonymize it. Very important step. And I asked for permission first. I said, this is what I suggest we do. But I want you to say if it's okay or not. We get the data. We anonymize it, because once it goes up there, they own it, right?

And by the way, Zoom have put in their terms and conditions, and I need to check this, that anything we do on these calls can be loaded up to AI and used for whatever reason, which is something I'm very concerned about. But we upload it and then we get the AI working hard on processing that information and giving us outputs. But then it takes an actual human to say, Is this good or bad output? Is this what we want or not? Does this steer us in the right direction?

So I love our relationship that we've had working together through the different stages of your business. I've watched you grow. I remember the first interaction with you, because it was significant. And that was when I was traveling, I think it was traveling up to Crescent Head at the time, and I stayed overnight in the Hunter Valley in a tiny home. And I posted a little picture on social media. And you said, I've always wondered what a tiny home looks like inside. Any chance of a little video tour?

And I did a little video tour, and I sent you this message. I didn't know you at the time. But you were watching my social media profile. And you got a world exclusive for one tiny home tour sent to your private message. We started on a personal note, and I think that's what makes it special. I can't imagine someone's going to get the same value from just typing answers into a bot.

Mim: I mean, you're not going to get the same value when you pay 10K for a coaching program, so within someone who is a legit human, like, the personal touch is always going to win me over for sure. Because like I say, I'm not interested in surface level anything. I don't have time for that. I'd rather have few people in my life as whether you say, as people who I'm looking for for help with the business or advice, or even in my personal life, I'd rather narrow that down, and KonMari everything else.

So I can really go deep with people because you know, I give a lot. I'm really generous with how much I want to offer to other people, too. And I don't expect the same level of generosity back. But I do expect people to have an interest in me if we go eat, or if we're going to be in a relationship together in any way whatsoever.

James: Well, that's come up before, hasn't it, where you're over servicing people or doing something because you feel a desire to serve? And sometimes it takes that other person to say, Well, you know, come on, you've really given them a fair run now, it's time to make some changes.

Can you actually make money with stickers?

Let's just stack a few ideas together. You're in the sticker market. You can do it from home. You can make it an information business, or you can print them off and do the Etsy thing or the e-commerce side of it. People are going to be curious if they were to hear about our conversation and say, Well, can you actually make any money with stickers? Is it a good business? Or do people feel sorry for you when you say, I do stickers? They're like, Oh, that's okay. You'll be okay one day.

Mim: I get a lot of that. I get a lot of, Oh, that's cute. It doesn't help having a really high-pitched voice. Like, that's sweet. That's lovely. And I'm like, Yeah, it's amazing. And it's also multiple six figures a year, like it's a really big business. [laughs] And then they'll take note and want to talk more.

I think honestly, I didn't help myself in the beginning because I probably was like - there was no probably about it, I think I felt - I didn't feel embarrassed about what I did. But I think it did feel like I hadn't committed to it. I always thought, you know, this sticker stuff is amazing. And I think it will always be part of what I'm doing. But surely, it isn't the thing that I am here to do. There must be something bigger. If I'm going to stand on a hill, there must be something more substantial to talk about than this.

And I realized, and it took a long time for me to realize how ungrateful that attitude was. Because not only had I transformed my life through this sticker business and my kids' lives and my husband's life, but also all of the lives that are changed around the world and that enable people to find that creativity, or that outlet, or that new side hustle, or whatever the thing was that was meaningful to them, and to dismiss that was so ungrateful.

And I had a coach who really shared her experience of this too, and how she had done it. And I mean, we talk about stories a lot, but her story really made me reflect on my own. So I started to speak about it in much more, I guess with much more, you know, passion, and gratitude and pride, because I'm so proud of what I've achieved with this, and just the amount of help I've been able to give to other people and the lifestyle that I've been able to create for me too. And I absolutely am grateful for it every day.

I mean, in terms of making stickers and sales, I still do that now for a couple of reasons. Firstly, I really enjoy the creativity side. And if ever I have time, and I want to do something fun and creative, it's always sticker designing or making stickers for me, I just find it so fun. So the fact that I get to play with stickers every day, and get paid to do that, is amazing. So I still sell them. And I still make a few \$1,000 at least every month in selling them myself.



And I think it's really important when you're teaching something to still be in that mix yourself too. You know, I'm not teaching something that worked for me eight years ago, I'm teaching a process that works for me today. And I hope I'm always selling stickers, because I really enjoy being able to, you know, have other people use my designs right now.

I mean, there are so many people in the Etsy space and beyond who are teaching processes and formulas and three-step plans that worked for them 10 years ago, or when things were easier, when there was less competition, you know? And to me that isn't authentic and isn't helpful. So, I mean, I've had students who've absolutely overtaken my success, which is the goal for me, because it was always the goal, but I'm not - because my business isn't a full time 100% business on making and selling stickers.

In fact, my business really compared to other people's is probably part time hours altogether. I want people to overtake my success. So there's some of them who literally only want to make enough money to subsidize their sticker buying habit. Whereas there are others who want it to be a part-time income to subsidize their life and their financial bills, and others who want to make it a full-time business. And I'm here for all of them.

James: Oh, that one piece is the heart of it. I know someone who has a surf website to cover their surf purchase habits. I mean that's a legit reason. These days, you want to do something, set up a website, share your experience, get paid some ads, and put it back into the thing. That is a big tick in the joy department. I love that. That's integrity there.

The time it takes per week

How many hours a week are you putting into your business, roughly? On an average?

Mim: Yeah, I've done a time audit recently. So I know exactly how many. Well, for that two-week period. Generally it's between 15 and 25. It really varies per day. Most days, I'm doing something weekdays. I used to when I mentioned before, I used to work into like 7pm in the evening. Actually can't do that anymore. I'm too tired. And I certainly don't want to. And I used to work a lot in the weekends too, in the early few years. And I think that a lot of people do that, for sure. I know people who do it now, even. I stopped doing that, as soon as I could stop, I did.

And now I generally work between the hours of 9am and 3pm. But not solidly. So it could be that it's a couple of hours or five hours or a full day. But yeah, between like, 15 to 25 hours, I think 20 is probably an average. And that's pretty good for me. I really enjoy it. And then anything extra, you know, I'm making stickers, probably. [laughs] Just designing, drawing. Yeah.

James: Yeah, I can totally relate to that.

Balancing the elements

And in terms of course versus community or forum elements, do you have a balance of that? Do you want to share? Because for me, for example, I've found having a dynamic platform like this ongoing membership allows me to update playbooks that sort of solves the problem of, hey, this worked for me eight years ago, I can put in, this worked for me last week, or this is working for clients. Here's the step-by-step process that you can implement into your business. So that's been a really good innovation. How do you go updating courses or keeping people in a dynamic environment?

Mim: Yeah, that's a great question, because unlike many digital product businesses that I'm aware of, there is very little live delivery from me, which is very intentional. And we've spoken about that before the fact that I actually don't want a full calendar of calls or zooms or anything like that. But at the same time, I do want to connect with my community.

So typically, so I have courses and eBooks and other digital products. And I also have a membership that is just about to turn one year, one year anniversary, which is so exciting, with over 500 members. And the way that I guess I update regularly because of the membership, like I'm always coming up every week with new content for that. The monthly deliverables are not especially high, they don't take very long for me to put together. But the way that I come up with those deliverables is by asking questions of my community.

So what are they struggling with? What are they enjoying? What do they want more of? And it's constantly coming up with things that help them, which keeps things fresh for them. But it also keeps things really fun and fresh for me, too. And the courses, I don't update too regularly apart from the current one, the main course is, take a shot plan, that's going through a major revamp at the moment that we've been working on together, which is super exciting.

So any live delivery that I do, I present as a bonus, and it's a bonus for them. And it's a bonus for me too, because one thing that I wouldn't want to ever do is overcommit and let people down. Like I, you know, I value my community so much, I value their time so much. In terms of the people I have in the community, it's busy people, busy parents, busy grandparents that you know, they have many different competing things going on in their life. And I want to make sure that I am not constantly asking too much from them either.

But I do a lot to get to know them. And I have a community group where I get to chat with people. You know that I run an online event twice a year, which is just the best time for me to really connect. And that's when I am doing the live delivery for a few days where I'm solidly online, and just love those events so much because I get to chat with people, whether it's face to face on Zoom or on a Facebook Live.

And I just have found that the relationships that I've gained over the years with people in my community has not just helped me help them. But it's really helped me too, you know, talking about going deep and not having a surface level relationship. Some people will be surprised how deep you can go with people when you're not doing constant live delivery. But it's all been intentional for me to be able to create this lifestyle where I'm contributing as much as I can, but at the same time retaining the boundaries that make my life feel good, too.

Where the traffic and leads come from

James: Yeah, that's good. I know you love those events. I was definitely going to ask you, where's the traffic coming from? Your favorite ways to get traffic to an information business.

Mim: Yeah, I could talk about traffic and leads all day.

James: Well, we could listen for a little while, for sure.

Mim: It's the most fun. It's just the missing piece, isn't it, that people generally don't think about.

James: It's a question that does come up every now and then in calls, you know, I'm all good to go, my product's ready, i just need a couple more leads, or a few more buyers.

Mim: Where are the people? [laughs]

James: How does Mim get traffic to - and by the way, please mention the website, because I don't think it's properly come out yet. And we need to make sure we reference that if someone didn't know they were a sticker fanatic, or they know they're a sticker fanatic, where are they going to go and check this out?

Mim: It's mimjenkinson.com. And you know, I have an issue in that I'm so passionate about what I do and how I help people that I can easily convince friends to start making stickers when I don't think it's a good thing for them to do. [laughs] So be aware that you might end up signing up.

James: They're be under the mimfluence.

Mim: They will - I am a mimfluencer as you know. And I find that it can be a challenge. But like, the question that I ask myself every single week, sometimes every day, is where will I find new customers today? And that is not coming from a place of desperation in any way. It's coming from a place of fun, a bit feeling inquisitive, feeling creative, excitement, having gone through the hard yards of sales back in the day and a really similar experience to the one you had for where as you were selling cars, I was in recruitment.

James: You were selling people, surely that's worse, right?

Mim: Selling people, well cars at least, you put it in one place and if the handbrake's up, it isn't going anywhere. [laughs] People are a different ballgame.

James: But the funny thing is they'd occasionally go missing. That was like - does anyone know where that - like we had a few times in my career where we could not find a car worth 100-something thousand dollars, like it's got to be here somewhere, but we just couldn't find it. And then like, two weeks later, we remember that someone loaned it out to the boss's wife and no one went to go and collect it, and she's wondering, when's this going to stop? You know, like it's scary.

Mim: So similar, so similar. But even before that, I was selling office furniture. And then before that, kitchens. Like, literally, you know, with an index card box where you have two of them. One is full of blank empty cards and one is just empty, and the process was making them a client and moving them over to the other box, like going through the Yellow pages...

James: I had a stack of papers on my desk, I had this huge stack, like this big, and I would start at the top and I would just dial for dollars, I would just call every single person that came in and then put them at the bottom, and then keep going. And then if they walked in, I'd have to ruffle through them and find them. And then like, Okay, this is where we're up to last time. Even worse, they'd come in and they start talking to someone else, and I have to go, Hang on, they've been speaking to me. They're like, Oh, they didn't mention that. And sometimes, they'd say, Actually, I did. But you said he wasn't here. That was cutthroat.

Mim: Oh, our people used to hide CVs of people in recruitment in their drawers. We called it top drawing; they would hide it in their drawers. I would out them, like it's crazy. [laughs] But you know, it was such a good grounding. I love those days. I mean, I've always been the top biller, I always loved the competition, loved the people, again, the people I was helping, and I have the highest number of referrals coming in, like, just really enjoyed it.

But all of that experience now, when it comes to transferring it to online business, I have no fear. The worst thing that people can do, well, one of the worst things, is clearly saying no, it can't get worse than that, you know, there was some abuse on the phone, yeah.

James: Oh, as someone who repossessed cars for a living, I was thrilled when I went back into the office because it didn't matter what I said on the phone, they couldn't punch me in the face over the phone.

Mim: Well, you could always put the phone down.

James: So I have no fear of the phone. Yeah, I'm not scared of the phone. Because, like, what's the worst that could happen? They hang up or they say something nasty.

Mim: Exactly. So I have no fear about that. I had no fear.

James: So, traffic...

Mim: So when it comes to traffic now, it's really what haven't I tried and what don't I keep trying? And it's look, I mean, this is the thing. Because I'm B2C mainly, of course, many of my students are opening their own business, but they're typically not coming to me already with an established business.

So it's kind of different in many ways, but it means that I can look at what's working in the B2B world, and apply it to my world in many ways, or looking at entirely different niches and seeing how I can apply that creatively to mine. So in terms of where I started, when I got started, I'd already had experience as a blogger, I'd been blogging since 2013.

So I had an audience, it was entirely irrelevant to what I was doing now. So I kind of was starting from scratch very much there. But at least I knew how to establish a brand, how to get started on social media. So I have a huge email list now, I have an okay social following. But now, it's where you know, the three top ways that we know, obviously, to get leads are the organic stuff, first of all, so it's what I'm doing with my current email list of, you know, keeping people really engaged.

I love treating my email list, you know, wanting them to know what's happening next and involving them very much. So it feels like we're collaborating and doing things together. I also do a lot of paid advertising on Facebook and Instagram, I've dabbled a little bit with Google and YouTube, too.

James: Is that how you get them on the email list?

Mim: It is one of the ways, one of the many ways. I do a lot of collaborations with other people. So that would be inviting speakers to speak at my Summit. And then of course, when they share it with their audience, then they might hop over to my event or to my email list too. It might be running a special campaign, just for somebody else's audience. It might be being interviewed on one of their podcasts, going into their membership groups and speaking. My own podcast. There are so many.

I will try everything. I've tried online advertising, offline advertising, radio ads, podcast ads, like literally all of it. And it's just as a cycle, I have a huge list. In fact, if anyone wants that list, I'll happily email it to them. I have a huge Google Doc with a list of all of the different ways that you can find leads organically. And of course, you can always add money to fuel those fires, if any of them are working too.

But there's no excuse to not be able to find traffic, leads, customers, people, if you know exactly who you're targeting, if you have the right messaging to really resonate with them. And if you prepare to keep on going and keep on trying and testing new things, and not fall flat and feel flat and deflated when the first two or three things don't work. It becomes fun. I think it's a game every week.

James: That's a mic drop right there. A gold nugget. We'll definitely transcribe this episode into a downloadable at episode 1031, because Mim just offered up the goods.

Not always a straightforward thing...

I tell you what. It sounds like you've got the products there. You've got a great connection with your audience. You've got a good list, you've got traffic sources. What kind of challenges have you found along the way? Because it's not always straightforward, is it, this online business?

Mim: Oh, it really isn't. I think that I'm certainly my biggest challenge. And you have really helped me with this. You know all of the things that I want to do, and you also know how fast I could do all of those things too. Like, I could literally write a new course today, put the sales page together the checkout page, have all of the messaging done, I've interviewed three people and have a Facebook ads funnel set up.

So to me, that's a walk in the park. But that isn't always going to help me and my mental health, I certainly know that, not the success of the business either. So we've worked together with refining my products and what I'm doing and just staying on track with what's working. And although it can appear on face value to be quite a simple thing, that's a real challenge for me to do. I wake up in the middle of the night with a pounding heart and excitement because of the next thing that I want to do.

James: Because you're so creative.

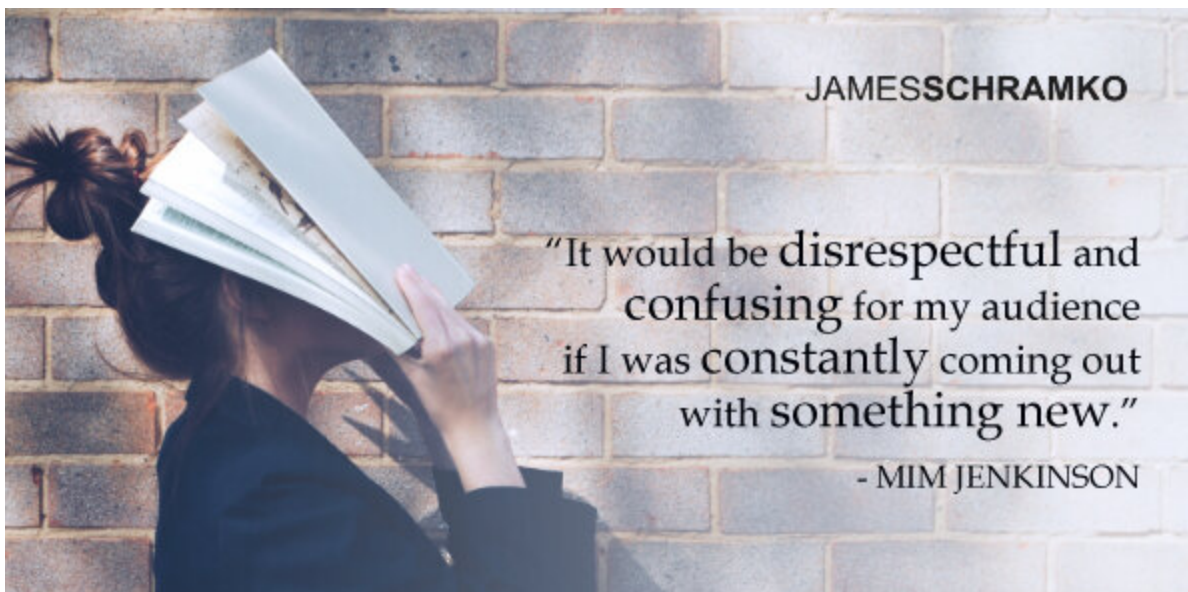
Mim: It's definitely a downside of the creativity. And the fact that I can implement and mimplement so quickly means that I really don't feel, I don't feel I have any barriers to doing anything. So you have helped me to put those barriers in place for sure. Sometimes to lower them a little bit and just to have a test or something. Like, I know when you're sitting back thinking, this isn't the right thing, but she seems determined. So I'm going to let her and see what happens. [laughs]

James: Well, I have to find the balance between - like I'm not here to tell you what to do or to control you. But I'm here to offer suggestions. An analogy might be if you were to get so excited about fireworks display, and you just start firing them off everywhere, you know, like, versus if we could just build a really good firework that goes up and dazzles everyone, like that might be a better goal sometimes. So it's like, here are the range of options.

I always think of Peter Drucker's insights, you know, which is about doing the right things, that that should be the focus rather than doing things right. The problem you have, and it's a rare one, actually, is you could do 100 things very quickly. And a lot of them will be quite right. But it does diffuse your focus, like we're working with a 25-hour cap for the week, you still want to turn up at school pickup or go out on date night with Miles, right?

So there has to be some limitations. And then, like any good artist, if you constrain the boundaries, if you say like, Okay, you're only allowed to use this canvas here, and these paints, sometimes you're going to get a better result than if you just switch modalities, and you're on to the next thing and stuff.

Mim: Yeah. It's so true. And it goes beyond me, too. Because I do - I love my audience so much. I love the people who I help. And I also know that if I keep on coming out with new things, or a new twist on things, or three different new things this week, it isn't fair to them, either. Like what I'm trying to do, if I'm trying to bring joy and organization and peace and a better living experience to people who I care about, me constantly dangling new carrots in front of their face is an absolute disservice to them, too.



So while I'm all good with it myself, I know that they are not and nor should they be too. So I think it would be disrespectful and confusing for my audience if I was constantly coming out with something new. Does that make sense? Like I just don't think that it's there.

James: Totally. It's same with the way that I operate with my team. I could think of 100 things that I'd love them to do. But I have to be responsible to deliver one at a time in an orderly sequence, because that's going to be effective. It's like a big powered engine in a car trying to accelerate too much. The wheels just spin, and it's confusing.

And I learned that lesson actually, early on in my membership. We had a weekly training. And then when I switched it to monthly, everyone just went, Thank goodness, like, I couldn't keep up. I was actually seeing people leave because they couldn't - they felt like they weren't able to keep up the consumption, and they weren't getting what they paid for, or they weren't able to consume what they were paying for.

It's like if you ordered milk delivery to your house, but you got two liters every day and you only drink a cup, and you'd like, you'd turn off the subscription because you're going to have a fridge full of milk and you're not getting through it. So sometimes you've got to respect, yeah, like, you've got to respect the audience's ability to consume and take it in. It's like, I'm going through a course at the moment of someone's, and the modules are just two or three minutes each. And it's really easy to consume a little bite-sized piece. So there's always that lesson.

The biggest insight our guest can share

Mim, what an extraordinary share for this episode 1031. I just want you to reflect on, what do you think one of the biggest insights you've learned in the last few years running your business that you would like to share that could be really helpful if someone else was in the trenches on that journey right now? What's a piece of advice or something that you hold dear to your heart that's been helpful for you?

Mim: The biggest thing comes back to me to testing and not being too slow to test and not being afraid and having the right goal for why you're testing or doing something in the first place. I think, and I'm extremely results-focused. I always have been, but it's, what results are we looking for? So when I put out a new offer or a new, any kind of new potential advertising method or promotion or the thing that I want to do next for my business, of course, the goal is sales. It always is. Everything that we do in our business is the goal is sales. So let's not always make that the goal for this particular thing.



JAMES SCHRAMKO

“The goal to me is to gather data to test.”

- MIM JENKINSON

The goal to me is to gather data to test. So if I'm sending an email to 70,000 people, you know, and the goal is always to make so many sales, well, that isn't enough for me. Like, I actually just want to gather data. And I want to be only attached to the outcome of gathering the data so that I have that to assess.

So I guess what that means for me is that I no longer feel hung up or like a failure when things don't particularly go the way I planned. Because if my goal was to gather data, how can I do that incorrectly? And it just really, it's taken me out of that fear of things not working or sitting on things for too long. And it's become the biggest reason why I can implement so quickly, because that's been my switching focus.

So for me, you know, if you told me or advised me or helped me make a decision to do something, it's why I can do that immediately. And today, because we come up with goals that are reasonable. And the things that we want to do is to make better decisions for the next goal, rather than always going off the final outcome of sales. I hope that helps.

James: Oh, that is mega. And I don't think I've heard this one yet. So it's even better. If the goal is to gather data, and it's your hypothesis, basically, and then you run the test and you gather the data, you've won, because the test will either give you - it'll give you information that allows you to be in a better position to make a decision.

Mim: And it's all we want to do, isn't it? It's a series of decision after decision.

James: And most people, like, they're just swinging through the air trying to grab a vine. And if they missed, then they consider that a failure, right? But if we were saying, Well, the test is to see if we can grab a vine or not, then we will learn a yes or no answer. And then it puts us in a better position to approach it in a different way or that you know, enhance it the same way but even better.

I love this episode so much, Mim. I love everything you're doing. I also particularly enjoy talking about businesses that aren't just a make money online internet marketing niche. You're an example of what's possible with real people in non-internet marketing industries.

Of course, if you're interested in stickers, head over to mimjenkinson.com. If you're interested in online marketing, then she has offered you a traffic checklist, which is great. If you want to have chats to me about a business like Mim's, then of course I invite you to join my Mentor program, and get in on the fun.

So Mim, thank you so much. I really, really appreciate you sharing all of this, and to your continued, inevitable success.

Mim: Thank you, James. I appreciate you so much. I love our weekly calls and the group that you've gathered and curated. So thank you so much for having me today.

James: Amazing.

JAMES SCHRAMKO



**Let James guide
you towards your
own business
success**