

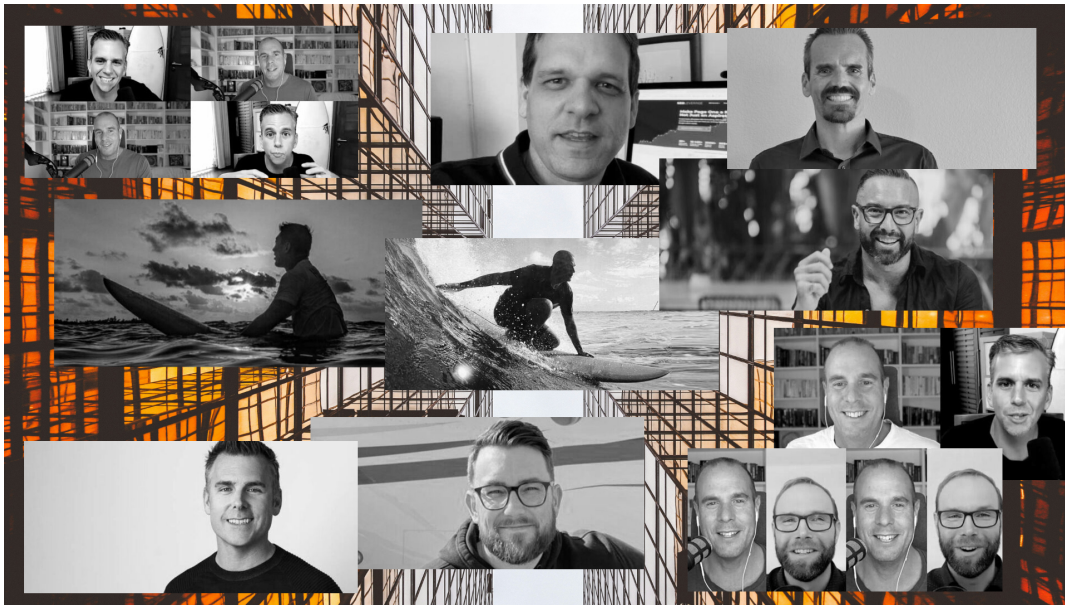


JAMES SCHRAMKO

TOP TEN PODCAST EPISODES FROM 2023

What was this show's best of the best in 2023? James revisits the top episodes that struck a chord with listeners seeking growth and inspiration.





Our top 10 podcast episodes from 2023

James: James Schramko here, and in Episode 1056, it's just me today, and we're going to be talking about the Top 10 Most Downloaded James Schramko Episodes of 2023.

It's always good to know what you're doing right. So every new year, we make it a point to assess which of our episodes really struck a chord with you, our audience, and which interviews and talks got the most listens and downloads. Which topics were most appreciated, and are potentially things that we could do more of?

To that end, we actually had 78 episodes in 2023, so there can only be 10. Which of those episodes were the top 10, by the most listened to and downloaded?

We came up with a pretty diverse list of topics from those episodes. We talked about being a great leader, about lifestyle design, about business growth. So join me as we look back at these winning episodes from number 10 to the most popular number one.



10 - How are your leadership skills?

In position 10 was [Episode 988 - How To Become An Elite Leader](#).

Episode 988 with [Nils Vinje](#) is a must watch if you are struggling with leadership. In our chat, Nils and I delved deep into the essence of great leadership, exploring why it's crucial in business and how to improve it. And I've often said actually, if it's just you, you probably don't have a business, you probably have more of a job-like function.

So among the topics we explored in that episode were common leadership pitfalls, the unexpected power of being responsible. I always remember that Spider-Man quote, with great responsibility comes great power. I know it's the other way around, right, with great power comes great responsibility. But if you want power, take on responsibility, build a team. If you're stuck in a rut, it's because you're not spending enough on team and growing to the size where you can actually buy back freedom. We'll talk more about that in a moment.

Leadership redefined beyond management, the importance of asking questions instead of just providing answers, and the art of giving effective feedback. I know this one's changed for me a lot. This one technique that Nils has talked about, and I speak to him pretty much every week, he's one of my Mentor clients. This has been such a helpful thing to pass on to other entrepreneurs.

We also covered key concepts like setting clear expectations, accountability, and handling challenging situations. Because let's face it, if you have a business, you're going to be in a challenging situation sooner or later. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur or an established business owner, this episode is a guide to building and leading your dream team to success.



9 - A life without compromise

In position number nine, was [Episode 984 - No Compromise. How Chris Dufey Sold His Business.](#)

Bumped into Chris recently, actually, he lives near me just a suburb away. His daughter and my daughter do some sporting activities together. He's a really great guy. I've known him for many years since he was a personal fitness trainer in Dubai, to now being a neighbor here in Noosa. And his journey is inspirational.

He certainly made success with the online coaching space. And now he's just living here in this idyllic suburb of Australia. But if you ever dreamed of turning your passion into a thriving business while maintaining a balanced and fulfilling life, then this episode is for you. Because Chris is on a similar path to me and a few others perhaps out there, where he's transitioning from his original thing, that fitness training, to coaching other trainers, and then helping them build out their own successful businesses.

So he's building a portfolio. So he manages a portfolio. I've got a portfolio of partners. So we were able to dive deep into the realities of making these significant life changes, the importance of crafting compelling offers, and the strategies for effectively transitioning out of a business to focus on what truly matters. I know for a fact he's a family man, and so am I. So if you have kids in particular, and you feel like you're wondering what comes next, I think this is a great episode.

Our conversation isn't just about business growth, but also personal development, and living a life without compromise. If you ever look at a picture of Chris, you'll see that he really works out, actually. This episode was packed with lessons in building a meaningful and financial but rewarding life.



8 - Living like royalty

In position eight, this one was interesting because many years ago, I went to a mastermind, I spoke for a client of mine at the time, [Ryan Levesque](#). He had this Texas mastermind, and he had a couple of guests. It was me, and this guy, Dan Martell. And I remember my presentation was on lifestyle design. And one of the lines in my presentation was, you can buy back your time.

Now, I don't know if that had any lasting impact or not. But this [Episode 986 - Buy Back Your Time and Live like a Royal with Dan Martell](#), it's a thought-provoking episode. I mean, I teamed up with Dan Martell who is an entrepreneur, author, and coach to challenge the hustle and grind mindset, offering a different perspective on achieving success. Both of us think success isn't about working the most hours in a day. And we dive into concepts from Dan's book, Buy Back Your Time.

We talk about how you can invest in team and unlock unprecedented time freedom and elevate your quality of life. Now, I feel like he's taking it to a way different level. There's levels to this game, he's taking it to the nth degree where he's got like a house manager and everything. I'm just a humble guy, right, with a small family.

But I have a little team of six, who are virtual, and do almost all the functions in my business except for the couple of things that I hang on to, which is making this podcast, the odd video here or there. And of course, coaching, mentoring, that's my main gig.

But it's really interesting to hear, you know, in this conversation, we sort of explored the intriguing possibilities of leading a life like royalty, you know? Just imagine going somewhere and then the house has already set up before you get there because your assistants have done that. I mean, that's the sole level he's playing it.

And maybe you think it's out of reach for you. But it's probably not. If you're still mowing your own lawn, or cleaning your own pool, or washing your own clothes or whatever, then there's hope for you. Because there's lots of ways you can build a team that doesn't necessarily have to be in the work side of it. If you've ever eaten out, you already understand how to buy time.

This episode is actually perfect if you're looking to build a business that you really love that supports more of a lifestyle dream you have. Okay, so we shared insights in creating an empire without sacrificing personal life. Like, Dan's doing this athletic type endeavors. I surf every day.

The importance of having a dedicated team you can rely on, right, my team has been with me now for about 13 years. And so I'm blessed to have that in my life, the art of balancing work with family and leisure. And I would argue for a lot of entrepreneurs, it's all one big sort of mashed together soup. So it's very important to align your life, you know, live the way you want, and then build your business and your team around making that happen.

We also discussed important strategies for dealing with the visionary but challenging CEO types, and the transformative impact of having assistance in both your professional and personal spheres. But all in all, I think this episode offers a wealth of practical advice and inspirational stories that will demonstrate how you too can live a little bit more like royalty.



7 - Building an autonomous team

In position seven, [Episode 982 - Teaching Your Team to Think for Themselves](#).

It's probably the number one complaint I hear. Oh, why can't my team just know what I'm thinking? Well, in Episode 982, I joined forces with [Lloyd Thompson](#) from [VirtualDOO.com](#), to explore the transformative impact of building an autonomous team. It's a theme running here, isn't it? Delving into the FAQs of lesser known aspects of recruiting and leading a team, and particularly from the Philippines, because we focus on how to encourage team members to think independently.

This episode is a treasure trove of insights for business owners who long for a self-sufficient team. We discussed strategies to create an environment where failure is actually acceptable. I know that sounds weird, but if it's okay to fail, then it's okay to try. And self initiative is actually rewarded and encouraged, rather than frowned upon.

If you think about school and university and the lower rungs of big enterprise companies, people actually aren't encouraged to think, they're taught, you have to do things this way. It's like when you join the army and they shave your hair off immediately to indoctrinate you into that submissive situation.

So we talked about tackling the challenges of micromanagement and the importance of fostering team autonomy. Additionally, Lloyd offers practical advice on coaching techniques like the GROW method and situational leadership. And so, hopefully, you'll come out of that with some tools to build a team that not only meets, but also challenges and enhances their business aspirations.

Our discussion is a must-listen if you are looking to elevate your team management skills, and by extension, business success. Isn't that interesting? So, three of these episodes so far are team-related.



6 - 1000 episodes and going strong!

In sixth position is Episode 1000. I'm glad this made it actually, that was the [Epic 1000 Milestone Review and Celebration!](#)

I mean, on this episode, it's really hard, right, when we tried to put together some of the interesting things that had happened for the first 1000 episodes. And so we celebrated that milestone.

By the way, FYI, we're just about cracking five million downloads of this podcast.

And so I reflected on that journey through 1000 episodes. I revisited some interviews. I had renowned figures like [John Carlton](#), [Jay Abraham](#), [Perry Marshall](#), and [Pat Flynn](#), offering loads of enduring insights.

There was a rich tapestry of topics in that, from creating a business and life you love, understanding the nuances of team leadership, embracing the courage to be disliked. I'll say that, again, embrace the courage to be disliked. If you can do that, if you can do things because you don't care what other people think, you're free, you're liberated.

It's not just a look back. But it's actually pretty timeless advice, some transformative advice and strategies that was soon interspersed with some heartfelt messages from past guests, and well wishes. In fact, I'll say that the podcast has changed me over the years, because I learned so much from my amazing guests.

So it's more than just a podcast, it's a celebration of growth, my personal growth, but also the growth of the listeners who have come through and tuned in to learn, and I'm so appreciative.

You know, if you think about a classroom of 30 kids, or a school with 1000 students, or a stadium with 40,000 people, it's pretty mind blowing to think that you have a stadium full of people listening to your episodes, every month, like the whole show, like in a month, a stadium full of people will listen to that. So it's a huge responsibility.



5 - This tool changed everything...

In Episode 980, came in at position five, and that was [The One Tool that has Transformed My Membership](#).

I've spent a lot of time around websites, you know? It was the first thing I learned how to build online, it was the first way I made affiliate money. I have been behind the scenes for a lot of the big programs, I helped develop and innovate lots of software programs over the years for website development.

My early days at XSitePro, where I used to make the cheat sheet that would help people get more results out of it, I was kind of right there at the beginning of OptimizePress, kind of invented it with [James Dyson](#), not the vacuum guy, but the other guy. I was early on [LeadPages](#) and really promoted that, and then built out WordPress shops, and finally found the solution I was looking for. And that was Kleq, [K-L-E-Q.com](#), for my membership platform.

And I've looked around. Look, you hear a lot about other platforms. The main ones you hear about are Click Funnels, Kajabi, Circle, and Skool. And whilst they're all probably great platforms, quite well supported, they're all making innovations in their own areas, I found that each one of them had something missing or that wasn't working the way that I needed it. So this is going to come down to personal preference.

It's also going to come down to independence, right? I'm not going to buy a software just because everybody's promoting it as an affiliate. That doesn't float it for me. The one question I get asked a lot actually is, Why haven't I heard of Kleq? Well, I guess it's kind of more of a bespoke platform that just does its thing and does it damn well.

It's got like all the funnels and page building of something like Click Funnels, except it's all integrated. It has a membership site area that you might find in something like Circle. It's got courses like Kajabi, it's got community aspects and gamification stuff like Skool, but it does really cool stuff. Like, it lets you put it on your own domain, or point to your own domain. So you can point your domain to its installation but it is still fully hosted. So you get all the benefits of not having to have a tech team, but the fantastic control of being able to build your own domain and control where that traffic goes. So if you want to put it somewhere else later, you can point your domain somewhere else. Perfect. It's also the only one, at the time of recording, that deeply integrates with the email system.

Now, some of them try and do the email built in. But it usually is horrific. It doesn't deliver well, it's janky, and it can't layer your segmentations and tags. So there is nothing like Kleq.com. I encourage you to check it out. Even if you do hear a lot of hype about other tools, it's mostly because they're really good at marketing, and paying affiliates, and running conferences. Terrific. Kleq.com.

So in that Episode 980, I actually talked about why I chose it as my platform, making the significant change. I was using different solutions up till then. And as much as I liked the platform, there was a cost to change, and I get it, maybe you've got a cost to change. In fact, at the time of recording this, we've just trimmed over 2000 pages from my website.

We had over three and a half thousand pages on JamesSchramko.com. And we've just pruned it back to 1000. That's how legacy I was. And I also had 150,000 posts on my old forum that I switched off to start on the new platform. But it was worth it. So I chose to start afresh. It just made things so much easier.

We talked about native apps and how much it's important to have that app on the phone for your customer. So people can access my content via the academy app, which hooks straight into Kleq. It's really designed for a mobile phone user, and all the data on my users show that I have a mobile-first community.

In connection with this, I talked with [John](#), the developer of Kleq, about the balance of decision making, and customer feedback, and streamlining, like one of the huge issues for some of the other platforms is you cannot change things. You can't change the colors or the design. And you know what's going to happen? Everyone's going to have the same, same, same, it's just be all the sea of same, it'd be like everyone's got a Facebook page.

And when you can customize, and I'll talk about how you can customize, it gives you such good options. Imagine being able to drop a pixel or a code on just one page, or to tag people if they visit something and start them on a new sequence, or to change the whole look and feel of your site. And there's some wonderful users of this platform out there, like [Stevie](#).

Stevie does this incredible course version. She's selling a lot of this program, teaching people how to put together courses. There's other social media experts with beautiful-looking sites. You can't get the other platforms to look that beautiful. So we talked about that.

We also talked about how they decided to build in things. They've built in - I don't know how many things - dozens of things that I asked for, and just build it in. Whereas a lot of the other platforms, they either won't build it, or they'll charge you a fortune for it. And then you're paying for that development.

It's all done with Kleq, and they build in the things that I need. And it just is hand in glove, it fits what I want it to do. It's made my life so much easier, my team are able to concentrate on content instead of website development. It's always up and running and hosted. And they even install it in its own separate installation versus everyone else. So I'm not mixed in with all the other customers.

We talked about the vital lessons I'd learned in that decade-long experience building my own stuff, piece by piece, and gluing things together. John sat beside me and said, What do you want it to do? And I told him, and he built it. Amazing.

So it doesn't matter if you're a seasoned entrepreneur or you're just starting. This would be worth listening to if you're seduced into going with one of the mainstream brands that are out there, because I'm really happy with it and so are the other users, and you'll see lots of case studies on my side of people using it.

Now in terms of design, I want to give a huge shout out to [Studio 1 Design.com](#). [Greg Merrilees](#) and his team, they are just constantly coming up with amazing designs. I mean, firstly, things like my book, my podcast logo, they've done a style guide for my team, the PDF templates that you see, my website, they do all that design, they're the best designers.

They designed for really famous people, lots of people you know, they designed for software as a service, agencies, info products. But if you happen to have a Kleq website, or a WordPress website, it doesn't matter, you can go to them and say, I need some design, can you help me?

And they will listen to you, they'll take a brief, and then they'll present you your designs. But what I love about Greg's team is they know how to design websites that actually convert, right? Because lots of people can make pretty designs, but they don't actually do anything. So they've always got an eye for conversions.

They also understand that they're going to have to work in with a copywriter and a website developer at some point. So we always get our skins from Greg, and my team then just turn my Kleq website into what he's designed. And it works hand in glove. It's fantastic.

So we've actually put up a page at Studio1Design.com/James. And Greg's got a quiz there you can take, which will tell you how your website stacks up. So go and take the quiz. See how you stack up.

Greg is like, probably, the number one top fan of this podcast. So I know he's listening - good day, Greg! If you end up going to Greg and talking to him about a website, make sure you mention this podcast, he'll be absolutely stoked that you came off this podcast because I mean, it's just proof. The podcast and all my design assets are designed by Greg and his amazing team. So huge shout out.



4 - You can grow a business too fast

So in position four, [Episode 981 - The Downside of Scaling Fast with Chris Evans from Traffic and Funnels](#).

Now this was a really big deal. We're starting to see a lot of FTC legal action coming out against online marketers. And that's going to happen when people start to grow a bit too fast, cut a couple of corners, maybe they start out being good at something and they get excited about it. But then they don't know when to stop or to involve proper help.

There was another marketer since that episode came out that got hauled in front of the FTC. Interestingly, one of the things he was in trouble for was telling other people how to not get in trouble. And so his response is classic IM. Now he's going to do a course on how to not get in trouble by the FTC, which I don't understand. But it's a thing.

Anyway, in this episode, Chris Evans candidly shared his story. By the way, it's not the famous Marvel actor, right, it's the other one. He got a bit of entrepreneurial burnout. And that's because his company, Traffic and Funnels, it just grew too quickly. And this was such an honest episode, I'm really not surprised that it's here. And it takes guts to come out and talk about this. But it talked about the exhilaration and the pitfalls of managing a high-growth business and the pivotal moments that led Chris to reassess his definition of success.

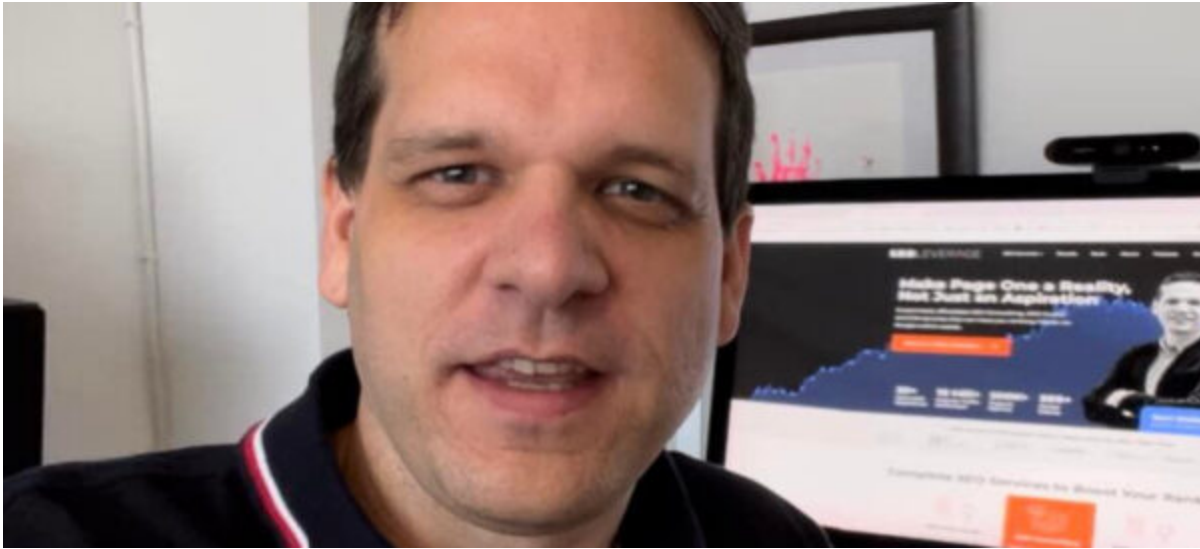
And I was just so happy to have this podcast, because so many people tell me their goal is 10 million. These days, weird things happen. We're now hearing a lot more people say, I'm going to make 100 million, and the people who are famous for 100 million, like Hormozi, he says he wants to make a billion.

But why? What can you do with a billion that you can't do with a couple of 100 million? What can you do with 100 million that you can't do with 10 or 20 million? Honestly, I think probably when you reach \$20 or \$30 million, you can probably cover all your costs for the rest of your life if you invest it reasonably well. If you could get a 10% return on your money, you'd probably be able to bring in \$2 or \$3 million a year. And that's being pretty conservative. I imagine you wouldn't have many costs either.

But let's just move on. My point is this episode was important because it helps you question what's the point of all of this. And it highlighted the importance of maintaining that balance between business success and personal happiness.

So you'll gain some insights into how to build a flourishing business. Sure. But without losing sight of your wellbeing and joy, maybe recognize some of the signs. Entrepreneurs and business owners tuning in will gain a valuable lesson in growth and mindset change for sure. But also that true essence of success. It'll make you question, and I think, this is sort of serving as a guide.

So if you are striving to create or you do have a set, you know, just a number as your goal, think about it. Think about how important that is, and what are you giving up? We're always going to have to give something up to get that. So is it worth it?



3 - Targeted SEO = twice the conversions

In position three, we had [Episode 979 - Double Your Conversions in 8 Months with Hyperfocused SEO](#).

Well, you know, it's joyful to see an episode like this. Of course, I had my guest, [Gert Mellak](#), a regular on the show. He's from [SEOLeverage.com](#). He's a partner of mine in business and makes a lot of sense, because I used to have an SEO business. A whole bunch of my team members work for Gert. He's such a good guy, he's spot on, does his research, he's methodical, he's honest. He's one of the good guys in the SEO space.

And he shared a story of dramatically boosting a client's conversions in just eight months, using a pretty unique approach, by aligning the strategies and the desired outcomes, and then fixing what's not working. Sure. But it did clear away some misconceptions that SEO is all about link building. And it sort of takes you into how deep and complex truly effective SEO actually is.

So it was a thoughtful, results-based episode on how to transform your online presence and drive growth. I think it's a treasure trove if you're interested in understanding how real SEO actually is and how to harness that. I still get plenty of traffic from SEO.

We just went from page 100 to page one, for a phrase that I'm really interested in having on the search results. And Gert is the engineer behind that. So I trust him.



2 - What it took to move a membership

In position two, Episode [977, Behind the Scenes: Migrating an Established Membership Community \(Mine\)](#).

Okay, so there we are, again, this was another episode with John, from [K-L-E-Q.com](#). And we talked about what happens when you migrate, because it's something that's pretty scary. If you think, oh, okay, I'm not happy with what I've got. I am happy with what I've heard is the way to go. But what's actually involved?

So we dig into the challenges of decluttering. I mean, I had so much stuff, that's really, it's a huge burden. Imagine like a house that you've lived in for 20 years, and you've just collected stuff and then trying to decide, I'll move into a smaller place, a new place, what am I going to take? It's huge.

So I talked about why I chose the platform, Kleq, I talked about how I wanted to focus on the customer, I wanted them to have a user-friendly interface, I want it to be available from an app, I want it to have the least amount of navigation possible, but I want it to be really powerful. I want them to be able to click things when they've completed it. I want them to be able to watch it on any device.

So it provides really useful insights into optimizing membership portals, how to lay things out, common questions and concerns, and highlights, and critical elements that would contribute to that transition. So if you are considering a platform migration, or looking to enhance your online community, then I think this was a really good episode.



1 - Fast business growth in half a year

And finally, position one, the top downloaded episode for 2023 on the JamesSchramko.com website was [Episode 978 - How to Grow Your Business Quickly Over the Next 6 Months](#).

And it was the number one most popular episode. I had a regular guest on there, it was [Will Wang](#) from [GrowthLabz.com](#). He's always got interesting topics. He's very creative. He's a copywriting expert. He's a creative marketer with a little agency.

And we talked about one of his clients, Bob - we call him Bob - who achieved substantial business growth in less than six months. And I know this is an outcome we all want. So I think that's why it was popular. And our talk delved into the importance of recognizing your unique strengths, to fuel your online business growth and discuss the strategies for crafting a compelling sales offer to align with the value delivered.

I think it's easy to sell stuff. You could make a wild sales offer, but you have to deliver. That's where people fall short. That's why people get in trouble with the FTC. You have to be able to deliver. Some people deliver so well, but they don't sell that well. So they never have trouble with bad reviews or feedback. They get lots of referrals, but they could be selling more if they would put together a better offer. And I think the offer is critical.

So this episode highlights the key tactics, such as pinpointing the most effective marketing channel. [Cold email outreach](#) is still a thing. Significance of continual adaptation and innovation in business strategies, maybe something's not working, you need to change. And I think it's a must watch if you're a business owner looking to expand your enterprise rapidly, while maintaining a strong focus on delivering exceptional value to your clients.

So that was our rundown of 2023.

Did any of these episodes resonate with you? Was one of those in your favorite? Was there an episode you really liked that you thought would be here but wasn't and didn't make the list? Let me know. Shoot me an email, leave a comment, we'd love to hear from you. And thank you for tuning into this show.

I'm still going to be serving up more episodes for you this year. A couple of changes, though. One, I'm going to be focusing on the YouTube channel as per a discussion I had with [Charley Valher](#). So these podcasts are going up on YouTube. The numbers that I've based this episode off came just from Blubrry, which feeds out to Apple and podcatchers of that. It does not take into account Spotify, we are on Spotify. And it does not take into account YouTube.

So you can pick up this episode on [YouTube](#), you can pick it up on [Spotify](#), you can pick it up on [Apple](#), you can listen to it on the website, doesn't matter where, I'll continue to do it. You'll probably see the frequency of the episodes reduced a little, maybe one a week. And I want to make sure they're better episodes.

And I do want to do more solo episodes, I quite like doing the solo episodes. And I want to bring some really interesting guests for you, like we used to do in the old days, some very unusual topics or things that maybe you're not seeing on every other podcast.

If you've got a guest recommendation or you think you'd be an amazing guest, and not because you got a new book coming out, or you're trying to flog some program, I'm not interested in that so much. I pretty much say no to all those podcast bookers. If you think you really have something to bring to the table, send me an email, James@JamesSchramko.com. Let me know about your podcast, bullet points, what would you be talking about, how would you be appearing on this list in a year's time from now?

I'm James Schramko. Thank you so much for watching.



JAMES **SCHRAMKO**
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YEAR**