

# SUBSCRIPTION ENTREPRENEUR



HOSTED BY ERIC TURNNESSEN, FOUNDER OF **membermouse™**

## EP 121: How To Complete Impossible Experiments That Make Money with Matt Giovanisci

*"I was doing videos for Swim University – which is the pool site I was talking about – and I wanted this intro video of a guy jumping off a diving board. It's a point-of-view shot. Imagine a guy wearing a GoPro on his head. He's taking a dive off this high dive. He's doing all these flips and lands in the pool and then the bubbles come up. There it reveals the logo in bubble format. I'm telling my dad how I want this to do my first YouTube video ever, and he's like, "That sounds like a huge production. Where are you going to find a diver? Where you going to get this equipment?" Like, "Dude, no one cares. How do you eat an elephant?" I was like, "I don't know." He said, "One bite at a time. Just put up a freaking logo..."*

### **INTRO:**

That's Matt Giovanisci – *our guest on today's episode of the podcast* – talking about an over-the-top idea he once had for a video intro he wanted to create.

If you're not familiar with Matt, he's an online entrepreneur and the founder of Money Lab, a site that's dedicated to documenting his experiments and challenges in making money online.

Matt is well-known for what he calls "impossible experiments with unrealistic deadlines" -- like building a membership site from scratch in 14-days, creating and selling an online video course in 3 days, and even producing and selling a rap album in 30-days.

Matt documents all of the processes he goes through with each one of these experiments. And at the end, he reports on whether or not the project was successful. Over the years, he's learned a lot about what it takes to make money online and shares the strategies he's found useful in creating what he calls a "mildly successful six-figure business."

Matt joins us on the podcast today to talk about his unique approach to content creation, project management, the effect of setting unrealistic deadlines for yourself, and so much more. We had a fun and lively conversation, I hope you enjoy.

As always, I'm your host, Eric Turnnessen. And this is Episode 121 of the Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

**Eric:** Hey Matt welcome to the show

**Matt:** Thank you for having me.

**Eric:** Thank you for taking the time to do this. I really appreciate it. Looking forward to chatting with you. I've heard a lot about your situation and what you're doing from Matt already. I think one of the things that you guys ended up getting into when you were talking about all the varied projects that you've been doing is that there were some interesting lessons you learn from doing a lot of these things, which was intriguing. You talked a little bit about how setting unrealistic deadlines for these intensive projects changed the way you approached her creation. I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about that.

**Matt:** Sure. It was it was not something I had plan do when I start at Money Lab. I had this first challenge that we did. We tried to do it in 21 days. I knew it was plenty of time because I like to work really fast, but when I started setting deadlines really for clickbait in a way. In order to get traffic to money lab I thought, if I can do something that seems crazy in a short period of time that would be a good headline to share on social media or whatever. I didn't do any SEO stuff to promote the site, so I knew it was going to be more of a shared site. I started like that. I knew I can realistically do this in a week, so let me try to do it in a shorter amount of time. I would pick a deadline in my head that I thought I can reasonably accomplish this. Then I would either cut it in half or do something crazy. Then think, now that I've cut that timeline in half, now the things that I really wanted to do or the things that my creative side would say, "you have to do this, we could do that." All of a sudden, you're like, "well no you can't do those things." If you have to pick the absolute crucial things to get at the market - what are those things and accomplish those as best as you can. I remember when I did a course that I had set for seven days I ended up completing it in five days. I keep cutting the time down. I did a bigger course later, on Money Lab where it was twice as long because the course content was twice as long, but I had to do it in the same amount of days. I had to go back and read my original process and see where I could cut corners. I don't mean cut corners in terms of content quality, but production things. Alright, I'm going to copy over the same sales page so I don't have to recode it from scratch. I'm going to minimize my animations because they took me a lot of time, but weren't really crucial to the final product. You have to look at it like, I only have a certain amount of days to do this, so what do we do? Even recently we took an existing SAAS product, my partner and I, and we were like, let's give this a makeover and see if we can increase revenue from changing three variables. We picked three variables because I gave myself a two-day deadline, he gave himself a week deadline because he's a programmer so for him it took a little bit longer. I'm like, what are the three variables that we believe if we change them in a relatively short period of time, it would make a significant impact. We chose those three and we did two of them. The third one we decided not to change as a variable to see if the first two would work. We're testing that now. It got done in a week. That is this makeover. Anything I could do to cut down the timeline, it forces you to only work on the parts that are absolutely crucial to the final product.

**Eric:** That's a really big strategic combatant and against the things that usually keep people from getting to launch anyway, which could be any number of things like psyching oneself out, procrastination, doing all sorts of things to extend the timeline for reasons that we think have to do with it being better, this is increasing the quality, but really underlying that it may be like - what if I release it and it doesn't work. It's a catch-22. What I've learned is it's best to get something up quickly because the way that you're going to know if it's going to work is by receiving the feedback and making adjustments.

**Matt:** Right. This only applies to online things. The same thing wouldn't apply to a physical book. You wouldn't want to play with a minimum viable product up against a publisher or an agent that you were going to get printed. It is set in stone.

**Eric:** In certain circumstances you could do it that way. Think of how some of the books that became books started. They started as serials.

**Matt:** Like the Martian, right? Where he wrote the book on his blog and people commented. Then he changed the book and then published it. Reluctantly self-published it on Amazon. These people wanted to do it, but you're right. Focusing more online than it is an actual book proposal. I would give myself a deadline even in something like that. I would first research what are the crucial points, or what are the crucial elements of a book proposal and then basically give myself a period of time that would be ridiculous, and try to do it all in that in that period of time. It forces you to cut out the nonsense that you don't need to do.

**Eric:** What are your relationship with deadlines? For myself, I remember back in college. I had deadlines for things that basically meant I would do nothing until two days before the deadline and then I would do everything in the last two days. When you set a deadline, say I'm giving myself a week to do this, how are you managing yourself and making sure that you stay on track to hit that?

**Matt:** I live and die by the deadline. I don't know how that came about. I didn't go to college and have actual deadlines. I didn't do homework in high school. I was a pretty bad student in that regard. I break down a task into little tiny bite-size pieces to almost an insane level. I use Asana to do that. When I plan out a project and I give myself a deadline, I will sit down for the first day or hour - whatever it takes and I will literally write down every step that I need to do. It could be as silly as 'write this sentence or tweet something like tweet.' I will literally create that as an actual task in Asana. Whenever I log on for the day and do work I am looking at a giant list of to-dos and I am checking them off, one by one. I think it's a Pavlovian effect. Every time I

click something I get this dopamine hit so I feel like I'm making progress. Whenever you look at a project - this is something my dad taught me - I always tend to look at a project really big. I want it to be this final thing. It's so huge. It's going to be amazing! I was talking to Matt earlier about how I did this rap video for my pool website. I had this idea: we are going to be on this boat, and we're going to rent a yacht, and we're going to rent this like limo, get these girls. It's going to be a real rap video and it's going to be insane. Then I'm like, "okay that's insane." One, you don't have the money, so that's a that's a ridiculous thought. Two, you have two days. I gave myself this unrealistic deadline of finishing it in the weekend. At least let's still go buy a pool. That was pretty much what we did. I upped the value by adding a glide cam. I did spend a little money, so I felt like I was doing a production. It was filmed in one day, edited the next day. I was doing videos for Swim University, which is the pool site I was talking about, and I wanted this intro video of a guy jumping off a diving board. It's a point-of-view shot. Imagine a guy wearing a GoPro on his head. He's taking a dive off this high dive. He's doing all these flips and lands in the pool and then the bubbles come up. There it reveals the logo in bubble format. I'm telling my dad how I want this to be my first YouTube video ever. He's like, "that sounds like a huge production. Where are you going to find a diver? Where you going to get this equipment?" Like, "dude, no one cares. How do you eat an elephant?" I was like, "I don't know." He said, "one bite at a time. Just put up a freaking logo." I went and put up a logo and thought, this isn't that bad. Then you move on. No one really cares that I put all this work into the intro of the video that the probably want to skip over anyway. That moment stuck with me. I take every project, every deadline, one bite at a time. If you look at a project that's, in scope, a very huge project like building software, or building a membership site, or trying to build... If you're trying to build Netflix tomorrow or in seven days you're in for a world of hurt. It is it is something that has taken multiple steps to do and will build over time. It's a matter of breaking down those tasks. If you were to look at my Asana for when I do a course or build a product, the amount of individual tasks are so detailed. It's like, why would you even write that? You did that in two seconds. While I did it in two seconds, but I want to hit the check box. I need that.

**Eric:** I also feel that there's another reason that that's extremely valuable. In that process of doing that you're actually visualizing what it's going to take to complete it. You're going step by step in your mind: I'm doing this, what happens after I do that? In that in a sense, you've already done the project by the time you've completed that project at a certain level.

**Matt:** Right.

**Eric:** Then you actually need to check these off, but at some point, you're doing your checklist and then you start daydreaming, "I could do all this huge stuff." Even in that process you realize I'm holding things up. Without a big cost you're minimizing the effect of that by going through

that process. It raises the question. We all want to do those big things because we see the people doing big production things. We all want to emulate them, which is great and we think if we don't have anything like that, then nobody's going to watch your videos, or nobody's going to engage with my membership site if I don't have the most amazing logo or the most amazing design. In this process where you go through the exercise and the discipline of setting yourself deadlines and completing things. It seems like you've come to a number of lessons. Now that you realize it's not about the bells and whistles, what is the essence of success of something what makes or breaks it when you're getting it out?

**Matt:** I remember I was in the process of moving from Jersey to Colorado and I only had a MacBook Air. For some reason I decided I was going to do YouTube videos for some University. I realized, I don't have a pool. I don't have a hot tub. I'm like, "what if I try to you YouTube videos with just my MacBook Air. How can I create good quality through just that? It was crazy. I've done a few of them. I had no complaints at all in fact. I use those videos all the time, all over my website. I sat in a small room that was in this Airbnb that we were renting. I had a couch, so the sound quality was pretty dead. I had an ATR 2100, an Audio-Technica USB microphone for \$70. Plugged it into my laptop and I used my laptop camera, which only recorded 720p at the time. I used my MacBook Air as the teleprompter. I had a Google doc set up with really big text so I could read it. I had the microphone play slightly off camera, but enough to where it would pick up my voice. I did an entire series of videos where I was talking about pool care. The way that I increased the quality without having to buy any fancy equipment was one, the audio quality in any video is the absolute most important thing you can focus on. Especially if you're delivering any educational material. You need to be able to hear it and it shouldn't be annoying to listen to. Even if you have you're pulling up a YouTube video and you're not looking at it. Maybe you're cooking dinner or something. You still want to be able to hear good. That's always been important for me. A \$70 microphone is fine. Then you get a program and edit it. You get a program, either buy one or get one for free. I edited text over the screen and made it look good. I cut out all the times where I messed up. It was super simple, but did it on my laptop. I probably did eight or ten videos like that. They were perfectly fine. After that, once I finally had a place to live, I bought a camera. It actually got harder because now I have to set up a camera, I have to set up a separate mic. I have to set up I to find a teleprompter or memorize the thing, or do it off the cuff. Actually, having the minimum amount of equipment was easier to create and reduce the friction of publishing.

**Eric:** As soon as you start adding all those things you're making it more difficult. That difficulty may be the reason why you don't move forward. In fact, that's what we see happen a lot with people to sign up for MemberMouse. They're thinking too much about the design and they're thinking too much about their thoughts, whatever. They're not thinking enough about their

content. They create all of these technical hurdles for themselves and then they get overwhelmed. They think it was it was it a fault of those things as to why they didn't succeed, but really it was because they didn't do something.

**Matt:** To speak to that. This is something that I talk about a lot and have struggled with in the past. You have to understand who you are as a person and what your skill sets are. Like, maybe you suck at programming or maybe that you don't suck, but you hate doing it, or you tried it and realized it's not for me. I suck at drawing. I hate it. I'm not good at it. My girlfriend is excellent at it, so thankfully I have that. I every time I try to draw something or do some graphic design, use a pen tool, I had to trace it. It takes me forever. I'm when it comes to programming. For the most part I'm not really that good. If I keep pushing myself to build my own SAS products I'm in a world of hurt. I'm going to be a struggle and it's going to take me forever to do anything. Whether it's video, or writing, or anything - writing is another one I struggle with. I have to sit down and ask myself, what are you actually good? What is the thing that you can get done in record time, better than everybody else or is your wheelhouse? Then be creative and do that thing. For me, it's video. I can pull up ScreenFlow on my Mac. I have a decent microphone setup now. Even if I didn't not get I would go back to the ATR 2100 and I would be recording screencasts like crazy. I tried this the other day. I published two videos on Swimming University - this is my pool site. I don't own a pool. I don't own a hot tub. In my brain I think I can't make Swimming University videos because how can I show people what I'm talking about if I don't own a swimming pool? How can I do that? One, that's idiotic because not everybody has the same pool. Two, there's other ways to demonstrate what you're talking about. I have a ScreenFlow, which is a screen recorder. You can use QuickTime built into your Mac, and I'm sure there's other ones for Windows. I used PowerPoint and I created a bunch of slides, maybe like 10 or 15 slides. I'm a designer so I designed them nicely, but I've seen ones that don't have to be nice. Obviously with Keynote they have built-in templates. You can make something look pretty decent. I filmed a 20-minute video teaching people how to take care of their pool or getting rid of algae. It's getting views like crazy. Clearly, I didn't need all of that stuff and that's something I'm very good at. Writing on the other hand, it would take me forever because I hate writing. Video is the opposite.

**Eric:** I want to add a slight modification to the word "good." Good is another word where people think you have to be good, but I'm not good at anything. It's not even that. It's about alignment. You recognize, if you sit down to write, you run into blocks. If you sit down and try to draw, you run into blocks. If you sit down to video, stuff flows. That's the key. That alignment that people have to recognize who they are and then practice. Practice by doing. Not that it means that whatever you do first isn't "good," isn't good enough to be released. Like you said with your first videos on SwimU, you had a standard laptop mic. I listened to that video and I

definitely noticed that. It doesn't diminish the value of A, the content and more importantly B, your experience as a content creator.

**Matt:** That reminds me there's this Ira Glass quote about the distance between your taste and your ability where... I forget the actual quote. Basically, when you're just starting out - I've been doing video for a very long time and I've been doing audio for a very long time. Even before I even had a computer my dad owned a recording studio and we were doing like reel-to-reel recording. These are things that I'm good at, but there are things that I'm not good at, but my taste is very high. I think I have pretty good taste. If I try to draw something right or I try to write something, I am constantly criticizing myself. I know that this sucks because my taste says it sucks. Therefore, why would I ever publish it? Recognize that there is going to be a gap in the beginning. Then as you keep doing, your ability is eventually going to sync up with your taste at some point. You can never get there if you don't actually publish anything or create anything.

**Eric:** Right. Our taste is based on what we're seeing around us and there's so much stuff around us. Ultimately, people are more interested in experiencing you express yourself personally through what you're doing, as opposed to copying others. You may assimilate your taste for other videos you watch into your work, but ultimately what you create has your personality in it. That's what people resonate with. They resonate with somebody who's doing something in which you can sense their personality in it. This goes back to what you were saying earlier. If you don't like to draw, and the reason is because you don't express yourself through that. Even if technically immaculate, there's a staleness to it.

**Matt:** I know that there are people who do YouTube videos, and actually this is me. I want some University to have fully animated videos. I'm not I'm not good at that. I could pay somebody to do that, but now we're entering that realm of I don't have enough money to pay for the quality that I'm looking for. Therefore, not going to produce any animated videos or any videos at all for some University because I can't get what I want today. That sucks.

**Eric:** Do you have any techniques you used with yourself to determine what was in alignment with you? Was it obvious for you that video was a thing or did you have to try writing? Did you have to try the other things? How can people figure this out? What's their mechanism?

**Matt:** All the things that I've mentioned I'm bad at, I have tried and continue to try even to this day. I will still try to create motion graphics. I will still try to create do animations or drawings. I still try to create anything that's out of my wheelhouse because I do want to get better at those things. I've actually come to the point where I know that there's that gap of my taste and talent.



I just don't give a s\*\*\* be honest. I put it out there and I know I'm going to get better. If you follow a YouTuber and you love them. You think their videos are so great. "I love their videos!" Go back to watch their first video. You're going to be shocked by how bad it is, or by how good it is for their first time, but mostly how bad. That is time and taste and talent working its way through life and continuing to publish and eventually you'll get there. For me, to sit down and say what I'm good at. I know that I am very good at video. I don't do it very often because it is so time-consuming. There are out there that I could do that would make more of an impact for me. Writing is one of those things. I don't like doing it, so I have to figure out a way for me to like doing it. I've sort of hacked that. You have to do everything. For example, the first book that I wrote for some Swim University, it's an eBook called the Hot Tub Handbook. I thought, I'm going to create a product. Now why I decided to create an eBook when I hate writing is beyond me., but that's what everybody was doing, so I'm like - that's what I'm going to do. I started writing it in Google Docs and I was like, "this sucks." I was procrastinating and hating myself. Then I thought, what am I good at? I can design. That's something I'm very good at. I love throwing on music and sitting down and just designing. What I did was I actually designed the book first and put dummy text in. Then created the outline and all the chapters, but did all of the artwork and the in the design for it. Then filled in the gaps with words. That was a hack for me to go what I'm actually doing is not writing in a blank, white Word document. I'm actually designing something and the words are filling the design space that I need. It was a mental hack for me. I can see this in so many different ways. I know I really like podcasting. I've always been a fan of broadcasting. If I hate writing so much then why don't you...

**Eric:** Like, Rev.com. It's a dollar a minute.

**Matt:** Then hire somebody else to edit it. There are so many ways to get around content creation based on your ability. You have to shut the door, sit in a room, and be honest with yourself. What do I like to do? What do I hate to do? I tend to think more negatively, so I'm like what do I hate? I hate that, but I like that so I'm going to do that to push that. It is really a matter of sitting down with yourself. You'll find creative shortcuts. You always do. It's the idea of the constraint whether it's a timeline or of somebody wants to start a membership site and they want it to be all video. Cool, but they suck at video. Maybe you don't suck at words. Okay, we'll make it words for now. Do that first. Then once people are in and you have paying customers and your idea has been validated. Well now you can try doing video. "I hate doing that." Well, maybe it never becomes video. Maybe that thing that you thought you wanted you actually didn't want. You were actually better off doing writing because that's the thing you're good at.

**Eric:** The closing of the door part is important. That thing that you can do where you get into a rhythm and you flow. Like you said, when you personally are looking at a blank Word doc page, all you it's like pulling teeth, trying to climb a mountain with just your fingers. You may get there someday, but it's going to take the life out of you. Where video for you is like starting at the top of the mountain and you're on a unicycle and you ride down it. You need to get into this flow state where you're able to creatively express something and produce.

**Matt:** To go further into that, one of the things that you can do sitting down in your room - you have to go through your Rolodex of times in your life where you were in that state. Everyone's been there. Whenever I think, what is the thing I actually love doing? Well, every time I'm doing video work I forget to eat. I forget what time it is. Why don't I do that more? Clearly that is a place where I get into a really solid flow.

**Eric:** One of your projects where you created a deadline and completed - I think it was 14 days for the for the membership site?

**Matt:** Yeah.

**Eric:** This is this is something that a lot of our audience at some point in the process of doing either they are or at the very beginning, or at the very least somewhere out there running it, but I think for the people who are in the beginning trying to get started. This is your experience going through that process and it could be very valuable for them. You did it from soup to nuts in 14 days.

**Matt:** Right. I built the membership platform. Even skipped a lot. I had used something that was already built.

**Eric:** Obviously, yeah.

**Matt:** I tend to over complicate things.

**Eric:** I do the same thing. In fact, I was reading your timeline where you said, "I built a content management system and then I realized WordPress existed." When I started MemberMouse I did something similar. I had the idea for this membership plugin. I had built something myself for websites in general, like a PHP program. Then I thought I should make something for WordPress because everybody likes WordPress. This is 2009. I outsourced it to this Russian team. They came back \$20,000 later and handed me a custom coated version of WordPress. At that time, I never used WordPress. I didn't know what it was or anything, but I looked at it and

asked an honest question. “Doesn't WordPress have things like plug-ins where you can create it so you're not modifying core code?” They were like, “yeah.” So I asked, “what if we need to make a change or WordPress changes?” They said, “we will need to build a whole new WordPress. I said, “you’re fired.” Sometimes you have to go through those things.

**Matt:** For sure.

**Eric:** For this 14-day thing, you actually built the membership platform too?

**Matt:** I used something like MemberMouse.

**Eric:** You were using a plug-in of some kind?

**Matt:** Yes.

**Eric:** Okay, got it. What from that experience do you think could help people who are wanting to go through that themselves? What can I do to get launched in 14 days, like you did?

**Matt:** In this case I had a partner. I was not the one in charge of creating the content for the platform. I had a guy and he had done two courses. We had all these YouTube video courses, Then I was like, “look, I will build you a platform to sell a membership site.” To build - what we were calling at the time - the Netflix of survival skills. The site was all bush craft and survival skill videos and courses. I'm like, “I can build this for you. I need you to produce these videos.” We developed an outline of all the courses we were going to have. There was only a handful of courses, maybe like three or four. He did all of the course material in those 14 days as well, while I was building the platform. One of the more valuable things people can pull from that is partnerships are great. You can have somebody else come in with you to do the content while you work on the more technical side. or vice versa. The idea of doing it in 14 days was because this is something that we want and we want to be able to sell it. We have to be able to test this as fast as possible to see if people are even willing to buy. We had to look at what was the bare minimum that we need to do in these 14 days in order to launch something for sale? One of those things is you need a good sales page, regardless of what's in the in the actual product itself. The product can always evolve and so can the sales page. You need people to actually want to sign up and pay you money. Pricing is really important too. Pricing can go up and can change. That's the best part about all of this is no matter what decisions, they're not that crucial. They just need to be made. You need to sit down and go, “alright decision made. Here's what we're building. Let's do it as fast as humanly possible.” Basically, the idea of an MVP, a minimum viable product. Let's get something out the door so that we can see if people are

interested. Let's talk to those people and then once people are in, let's improve it and add to it. Let's mold it, shape it.

**Eric:** It's more of a journey than a personal/private journey where at the end something goes out. It's more of like get something out early. Then it's a journey and a conversation that is continuous,

**Matt:** You also have to be comfortable. I think this is something that both Doug and I really care about how good it looks. I know that's not great advice for everybody, but I am a designer. To me, all of the things that I could have done with building this product that was the most important part that would have made me feel good in the end. That doesn't have to be for everybody. It doesn't have to be that exact variable, but that was something that I was good at. As long as this looks good, I'm cool. I'm good with this going out into the public. I had 14 days to make it function the best that I could while he was creating the content and we did we got it done in 14 days. We launched it. He had an email list of maybe a hundred people. We had some small number. I think we sold like 10 spots. This was \$10 a month.

**Eric:** 10% return. That's pretty good.

**Matt:** It's pretty good and he didn't really have a good relationship with his list, but that amount ... I could go back, all the data is in that post. What was crazy is it worked. People bought it. The way I look at it, and any project that I do, Money Lab especially because we make these little projects. If it makes \$1 - if one person converts the idea is validated. End of story. Now, it depends on how many people in the future will convert, but I don't care about that. If it makes money, it makes money. End the story because at that point if one person was going to buy into the idea then there are definitely other people in the world that will buy into the idea. We learned that in 14 days. In half of a month we figured out that this is this is an actual product. Let's continue building that, which unfortunately did not happen, if you read the whole thing. I built the platform, that was my job. Doug wasn't able to hold up his end of the deal which was to market to his people. I think there's a lot to be learned from that story as well, which is you did the hardest part. The hardest part of an online business is actually making a product that people can buy. That's the hard part. All he has to do, and what I told him for the last three years, is write content and drive traffic to your site and convert - tell them that you have a sales page. That's really all it takes to sell an online product.

**Eric:** Pretty much.

**Matt:** It's really that simple.

**Eric:** It is that simple, but of course that simplicity has depth to it. People shouldn't misunderstand. One of the themes that we're talking about is things can always be more complex, but you should start with the first step. Marketing, traffic and conversion, that's tons of people's sole job. There's a lot there, but at its basics you're just telling people about it. You could be telling people you meet on the street, "hey, I do this thing," or on your Instagram. Like you said, you don't want to have unreasonable expectations in the beginning. MemberMouse had ten customers for the first two years of business. That actually turned out to be extremely valuable because it meant that we were able to work with those ten people closely and improve the product through those conversations. That made it more attractive to get the next 90 people to a hundred. Then we were at a hundred for a while. There was a number of years that we were at low numbers and things didn't take off, but it doesn't matter. The journey was started and we are having the conversations. They were helping us improve the product so that it gained wider appeal.

**Matt:** I continue to learn this time and time again, which is humans, by nature, will over complicate things time and time again. I did this with recently with an email funnel project that I was working on. I was trying to, for Swimming University specifically, trying to take customers on a journey and educate them through this whole like weaving email funnel thing only to discover that I didn't need to do any of that. They were ready to buy as soon as they read the first article on the website. I only learned that because I built this whole freaking thing out and I'm like, "why is no one buying?" Why is no one responding to this? I've given them so much education and I started asking them. They said, "no, just show me where it is and I'll buy it." They landed on my website and got free content. I thought, you want more free content, which is already free on my website - sign up for my mailing list. They would sign up for my mailing list and get more free content. I gave them a whole week's worth of free content and then said, "here's my product." It's like, "why didn't you tell me on day one. I would have bought it." If you look at SAS websites, you can buy this product right then and there. You can just buy it. You're reading this brief thing and you think, this is really cool. I love this blog post. Who makes this? Where am I? Oh, they have a product? Like MemberMouse, you read a blog post or listen to a podcast and maybe you found it on Google or something - you think this is exactly what I'm looking for. There's a plugin, this is awesome and I'm going to buy it. You don't really need to over-complicate it. It's that simple.

**Eric:** There doesn't need to be all this pressure and put on some big reveal of the fact that you're selling something. Just casually have it there all the time and continually offer the value through the free content. So, do you have any projects that you're coming up on the pipeline that you're working on?

**Matt:** We just did the makeover of a SAAS product that my friend and I were working on and we're about to launch our affiliate marketing plug-in called Lasso, which is that get [lasso.co](http://lasso.co). We have another month worth of onboarding, some beta members, and development. For the next month, all of May, we have we have put together an entire marketing plan for launching this product. We are trying to get to \$15,000 monthly recurring revenue in six months and we're starting at \$0. This is going to be a challenge on [moneylab.co](http://moneylab.co) where you can follow along in real time, you can see the entire plan and what we're going to do. That's pretty much going to be my life for the next six months is to is to grow this one SAAS product.

**Eric:** What's the skeleton of that plan to get to 15 MRR in 6 months? What are you what are your main milestones?

**Matt:** There's three. One is a very share worthy sales page. This is sort of my wheelhouse. My wheelhouse is being really creative with website design. I'm trying to push myself to develop something that will ... a lot of SAS homepages don't get shared. What would have to be on that page for the people in the right industry to share that? That's the first step. The second step is to create an editorial calendar for a blog that will be mostly SEO driven, but at the same time we only have six months. We sat down yesterday and we were we were talking it out. An SEO focused blog is certainly a play. It's just not a 6-month play - it's not going to happen in six months. It may have happened in three months if we're really good, but for the most part it's going to take six months plus to start getting any ranks in Google. We can go after a bunch of long tail keywords in all this stuff for it happen sooner, but what if we did something that was so grand, so big that it would it would actually work with SEO in the long-term and in the short-term people would share the hell out of it. It would circulate within a community that all needs this product. That's the second piece. The third piece is doing a roadshow. The idea of him and I, my business partner Andrew who is helping me build the product. We have two podcasts. We do a show called Listen Money Matters which is a personal financial show. It's really popular. Then we a show called Money Lab which is on [moneylab.co](http://moneylab.co). I think we're really good at talking. We have good equipment. We know how to deliver the message. We know how to communicate. Let's go on a bunch of podcasts in the first month because I think that would be a way to quickly grow some interest or create buzz in this product, in order to get it to \$15,000 MRR. Those were the three factors, the things we know in the first month could get us a lot of traffic without paying for it. It's a lot of work talking about innovating and really pushing ourselves to think big and think outside the box, but also operate in our wheelhouses.

**Eric:** And run a software company. I would like to talk to you eight months from now and see where you're at with that.

**Matt:** Thankfully I am just the marketing side of things and Andrew, he owns a majority of the company. He will be handling most of that, but another thing that is in my wheelhouse, that I worked on last year was processes. We're getting ourselves out of the customer service process almost immediately. I already have documents set up to remove us from that process. We have learned our lessons. I've had others software products before where customer service was really a killer and how we communicate with the customers. We've learned these lessons so many times. So, let's make sure we don't make these in the future and figure out a way to make this easy on ourselves. What we're trying to do is build a lifestyle business where nothing is urgent. That's something that has been Andrew's mantra for the last two years. Nothing should be urgent. As long as we can develop with that mindset and we can communicate with that mindset, then I think we're going to set ourselves up for long-term success. That's obviously the plan. We just need to execute it.

**Eric:** Sounds like a good plan. What happens is always a variable.

**Matt:** I know.

**Eric:** Having a good plan, based on experience always gives you a lot more potential for success than otherwise.

**Matt:** And a North Star too. You have to know what you don't want. We don't want to be tied to the computer 24 hours a day because of issues. How do you mitigate that in the very beginning, from day one? We've come up with a list of things that we are incorporating into the software and how we've even marketed the software and priced the software to not meet the things that we don't want to happen. We are both from Jersey. We have that negative motivation. What don't we want?

**Eric:** As we're wrapping up here. Is there anything that we haven't covered that you think would be valuable information for our audience, people who are solo entrepreneurs at some level, looking to start their online journeys? Is there something that comes to mind that you think would be useful or valuable to them?

**Matt:** I think it's reiterating the points that we discussed on the show. To recap a bunch of different philosophies like not trying to eat the elephant all at once. Even if it's in your own brain because that can stop you from doing a lot of things when you're like "oh my God this is such a daunting task!" Well, now you have two days so, what can you do to remove from it in order to get it done and then break it up size pieces and by the end of the weekend, you have

something done. That goes for any project. We also talked about setting unrealistic deadlines which would force you to look at the project as a whole and take out what you think might be necessary at first, but really isn't. Sitting down with yourself and figuring out what's in your wheelhouse. You will struggle if you try to do something that you're not good. I'm not saying that you need to completely avoid it. I'm saying that those things can come later. Again, I may not be good at drawing right now, but what if I decide that I really want to do that? Ok, you don't do that now, but on the side, you can learn, you can develop that skill and you can implement it overtime. Eventually, hopefully your talent will match your taste, or if it doesn't, you move on. I think sitting down with yourself and being honest and saying, "what am I good at?" Focus on that and run with that because that's going to make you the most successful. When you are honest with yourself and say, "I like writing. I'm going to be a writer. That's what I'm going to focus on, and not video because maybe you're not good at that." It's all about publishing and creating as much as you possibly can because you get feedback on it whether you want it or not. That feedback helps you to move along, no matter what. Make sure you want to do it because it is hard.

**Eric:** 100% agree. I really appreciate you coming on today. This was a great conversation. Really interesting stuff. Can you share with us again about your podcast and in addition are there other places that people can learn from you, see what you're up to, get in touch with you?

**Matt:** I think the best place is moneylab.co. That's my home base. There's a podcast that goes along with that. Whatever podcast app you are listening to this on you can search for the words Money Lab and you'll find it. It's me and my buddy Andrew. There's about a hundred episodes. We've been doing this for a year and it's really what we talked about here. Each episode focuses on a different online business strategy and we deep dive into it. We bring on guests and we talk amongst ourselves. Moneylab.co and that podcasts are the best places to find me. If you're looking interested in any of that, that's where you should go.

**Eric:** Awesome. Again, really appreciate you coming on.

**Matt:** Appreciate it. Thank you so much.

## **OUTRO:**

Many thanks to Matt for coming on the show today and sharing his thoughts, ideas, and perspectives with us. I hope you enjoyed our conversation and found it to be interesting and educational.



If you're interested in learning more about Matt or diving in to some of his "impossible experiments" head on over to his site at [MoneyLab.co](http://MoneyLab.co). We'll also have links to all of the resources we mentioned in this episode at [SubscriptionEntrepreneur.com/121](http://SubscriptionEntrepreneur.com/121). You'll also find the show notes and a full transcript from today's episode.

Thanks again to you for listening to this episode. If you'd like to hear more interviews with successful entrepreneurs, be sure to subscribe to the Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast on iTunes, Google Play, or Stitcher.

That's all for today's episode, we'll see you next time!