

Scaling an agency to six figures per month while implementing processes that reduce your work load.



MINDSET & JOURNEY



LEARNING PROCESS



Started as an event coordinator surrounded by property managers, entrepreneurs and business owners, establishing the mindset of an entrepreneur.

Spent \$40,000 building a failed travel website/app because she had a great idea but no audience.

Decided to turn her freelancing work into a full Facebook Ad Agency.

Struggled starting an agency without consistent clients or established team members.

Reached her breaking point while struggling with negativity and imposter syndrome and buried under debt.

With no "Plan B", finally cracked the code and started to scale rapidly.

Developed processes allowing for outsourcing implementation so focus could be maintained on individual expertise, with the goal of reducing individual hours and increasing agency revenue.

Established a Social Influencer presence enabling a long-term audience which helps in future business pursuits.

Cat's initial travel app was cool, but she didn't have an audience to buy it once it had been created.

"Now I realize you sell it before you build it."

After the app failed, she decided to take her Facebook Ad freelancing business to the next level by growing it into an agency.

Encountered funding problems and made a similar mistake, this time by hiring a team before having the clients to support it.

"I thought that the way that you grew was you got a bank loan or you get someone to invest in you and then you hire your team and then the money will come so that's what I did..."

"...that was definitely not the smartest way to go about it."

Found herself with no "Plan B", buried in debt and having to let go of good staff members.

Right when she reached the breaking point and thought her agency was going to fold, she figured out a system and started to rapidly scale.

"Perseverance is [...] the biggest component to success because we're all going to hit snags, we're all going to hit speed bumps and sometimes those speed bumps are required to pivot you to where you need to be."



LOSING CONFIDENCE & IMPOSTER SYNDROME



Started losing confidence during the struggles of establishing a business.

Worried that she couldn't be a Facebook marketer when she couldn't even generate Facebook leads for herself.

Realizes now that lead gen is very different than e-commerce and event ads.

"So you could be, actually, an amazing Facebook marketer at e-commerce and fundamentally suck at generating leads and that's okay, that's actually normal."

Since she was hiring and trying to scale while dealing with feelings of inadequacy, she ran into another snag that many entrepreneurs struggle with: trusting her reputation to the work of people that she hired to help her grow.

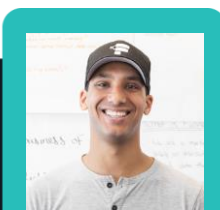
Didn't have any processes or training in place and constantly felt like a failure.

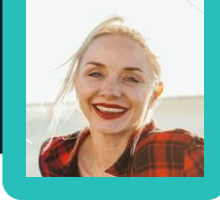
"...I couldn't confidently hire people and scale and hedge my bets on my business and that was one of the biggest problems."

"I was a perfectionist and I didn't train anyone, and I expected everyone to read my mind, and then I got extremely frustrated when people couldn't read my mind and then I was ending up doing twice the work but having less personal salary because I had bigger overhead."

Lost trust in her ability to even provide services because she felt like she was constantly dropping the ball.

Finally talked to her coach and decided to trust in their system in order to help build her own processes and training.





PROCESSES & LEARNING TO OUTSOURCE

[I've learned that] if you intend to scale, you will need help. There are only so many hours in the day, and you should be using your time on the things you're best at.

"The awkward stage where most freelancers get stuck is about 10 to 15k per month. Most freelancers can only take seven to ten ad accounts or seven to ten clients before they really start dropping the ball."

Found out the hard way that you shouldn't jump right into hiring employees for your agency and recommends outsourcing while your revenue is still inconsistent before bringing on full time staff.

"Why are you going to hire staff versus outsource? Well, if you're in the startup phase and your revenues aren't solid, you don't buy a property. You lease until you can actually buy the building and put that on your capital expenses."

Exceptional workers are fantastic, but if your revenue is inconsistent, direct hires may not be the right option.

Even with consistent income, she ran into a ton of issues with growing her team and creating processes so she could step away – every time she tried it would blow up in her face.

Had to learn to implement standardized processes to assure everything goes as smoothly as possible every time she brings on a new team member.

"Once you have a process that is efficient in your business and it works really well then I would say the next step of that is... you template that."

"You can't just build it once and set and forget. As soon as you add one person to your team, processes change, but it's the only thing that will allow you to step away from your business."

"I went from being a freelancer to having 8 to 10 people, \$80,000 within like 2 months, \$100,000 the next month."

BECOMING AN INFLUENCER

Started building a personal brand because:

"I realized if I advertise from a person, Cat Howell, I was getting better results than when I was advertising from a brand. It's a simple concept... that people buy from people."

People need to know you to buy whatever you're selling.

Developing a personal brand beyond the agency helps build trust with her clients.

Building a rapport and addressing these trust points can be the key to success later on.

"I've come to realize one of the best long-term strategies that anyone can do is to build an audience. You're probably not going to see ROI on that in the first year, but just do it."

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEWBIES

What advice do you have for freelancers and entrepreneurs who want to build their client list?

"If you want to do it properly, the first step would be to establish your online presence. Get the foundations down for that because your authority and your credibility (especially nowadays where there's a lot of people that have been burnt by Facebook marketers or by agencies) will go a long way and will really, really, help you."

What about for people who are completely new to their industry?

"If you've never ever worked with a client, what I would recommend is that you take it on the chin at least once, really screen, and do a pro bono for at least one client to get that experience and that case study under you."

