



SPI 288

Interview with Bec and Joe from The 4 Blades

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Pat: This is the Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn, session number 288. The 4 Blades.

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast, where it's all about working hard now, so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. Now your host—he continues to learning with you each and every day—Pat Flynn.

Pat: Yo, what's up everybody? Thank you so much for joining me today in this session of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. We have a fun one today. We have a couple onboard with us, who is behind the brand The 4 Blades over at The4Blades.com, that's the number or numerical four, The4Blades.com, what is that? Well, I'll let them tell you what it's all about, but it's about a topic that I never even knew existed, because when I met these two people, Rebecca and Joe Winston over in Australia, which was actually at an event hosted by Darren Rowse, one of my favorite people, over at ProBlogger, I met this couple and they told me . . . First of all, they just thanked me like crazy, because apparently I had a lot to do with their success, and they'll tell you all about that. But, you know, I always like to say that I'm just the guide, and it is those who succeed thanks to my guidance who are the ones who deserve all the credit, because they are the ones who are taking action. I could guide people all day, but if they're not going to do the work, then you're not going to get any results.

Rebecca and Joe have definitely put in the work to create an amazing brand, again, in a topic, in a realm that I never even knew existed, and to tease it a little bit, it involves a kitchen appliance, hence the blade thing. Maybe some of you who are in Italy or in Europe or in Australia might know a little bit about where I'm going with this, but if you're in the US, you probably have no idea, because you've never heard of this kitchen appliance before.

We're just going to get right into the interview because it's so fantastic what they've been able to do as a result of putting their personalities into their brand, as a result of actually just providing a ton of value in building a digital magazine as their primary tool

for generating an income, that has allowed them to, as a couple, be there with their little one at home. This is why I do what I do. I want people to succeed, but when I see that they are living the lifestyle that they want, because of the action that they've taken, if I've had a little bit even to do with that, it just makes me so proud and happy and motivated to do this even more. Hopefully, you all will be motivated after listening to this episode. It's a lot of fun, and Rebecca and Joe are so cool, and I cannot wait to see them again, but here we are, just a few weeks after I met them for the first time in Australia, and let's get right to it. Here we go.

Hey guys, what's up? I'm so happy to introduce Rebecca and Joe from The4Blades.com to you. Bec and Joe, just thank you so much for being here. Welcome.

Bec: Thank you for having us.

Joe: A thrill to be here. Thanks for having us.

Bec: We have been listeners since . . . like, back in 2010. It was just so great to meet you in Brisbane recently, and it was kind of nice because a lot of our decisions that we've made along the way with our business have been based on advice you've given us via the podcast. It's kind of exciting to come full circle and be invited on the podcast.

Pat: Totally, I had to invite you when I learned about your story and what you had going on and where things were going. I'd love to start in the beginning. Actually, Bec, if we could start with you, tell me about what The 4 Blades is all about. We'll start with what that is, and then we'll go kind of back even further in time.

Bec: Sure, no problem. The 4 Blades is, well, it's referring to this kitchen appliance called the Thermomix. It's really big in Australia, and it's just growing in the US right now, but basically it's this kitchen appliance that pretty much does everything. You can cook a whole meal in it, but you could also make a smoothie. Thinking kind of like around . . . like the Vitamix or something, where you can really blitz

up a smoothie at really high power, but you can also, in this, cook as well. For example, like, you put the onions in and you chop it up, and then you add in like your meat and your tomato or canned tomatoes, and a whole lot of veggies, and then you set it to cook for an hour. Then you've got, like, a casserole at the end of it.

Pat: Like it does the chopping and everything for you?

Bec: Yeah, it does the chopping, it does the sautéing, and then you do steps along the way.

Joe: It can build flowers and all sorts of stuff, it's like the power tool for the kitchen.

Bec: Absolutely, it is like the power tool of the kitchen. I'm dairy-free and gluten-free, in fact we're grain-free as a household, and I don't have sugar. I've got a few dietary intolerances, and it means that we do everything from scratch. We make our own grain-free bread. We just . . . Literally, we make everything from scratch. It's a really healthy way to eat as well. In Australia, while there are lots of people who use it to make amazing cake batters and pastries and things like that, there's also a huge contingent of people who do have dietary intolerances, who love knowing that they can really run almonds into almond meal, or almond flour, I think you call it in the US. That's what we're referring to by The 4 Blades. But then it's a pretty expensive purchase—in Australia, it's around about the \$2000 mark.

What we try and do is make it . . . like improve the investment by making our digital magazine and our blog. We have previously had a podcast, which ran for 150 episodes, we want to be like this great companion to the Thermomix, to help people make the most of their investment. That's where The 4 Blades comes from.

Pat: Then Joe, when did The 4 Blades start, and how soon before that were you actually introduced to the Thermomix?

Joe: Well, The 4 Blades as a podcast started four years ago, Bec?

- Bec: Yeah, May . . . April, May 2013.
- Joe: 2013, yeah, and we probably bought the Thermomix the November before that, so 2012. We'd only had it for six months before we started the blog and the podcast.
- Pat: What made you decide to say, "You know what, I think there's something here that we could do to help other people related to this?" I think it's kind of interesting that people might be listening to this, and I think you created a business out of a single kitchen appliance, a podcast about a kitchen appliance. Where did this idea . . . Tell me the origin of it.
- Joe: Well, it's one of those things that when you're listening to all these podcasts and all that sort of stuff, you're always . . . people are always talking about niches or niches. The riches are in the niches, and then that seems to be the stumbling block over all sorts of internet business startups is, "I don't know what my niche is." That had been us for years, and then Bec sort of looked at me at one point and gone, "What about the Thermomix? Clearly people spend a lot of money on it, and there's a lot of people that are interested." There was a lot of hype around it on the internet when we started, and it just seems . . . it just seemed perfect. It kind of came and hit us on the head.
- Bec: Totally, and we're quite . . . We're into food, and we're into health. In terms of answering the question that you asked Joe, about how we first came to know about it, it's actually called the Bimby in Italy, and it's a really big phenomenon in Italy. We were visiting some family in Rome, and we hear this [sound], which is the sound it makes when its finished, and we're like, "What is that?" My cousin had said to me, "Oh, that's the fourth member of our family, that's the Bimby." We saw it for the first time in Italy, and then when we came home we followed it up.
- Pat: Wow, that's incredible to have it described as the fourth member of a family. That means something, right?

- Bec: Here, there's kind of two groups of people. They get their Thermomix and they love it and will do everything with it, and then there's the group of people that get the Thermomix and they're quite overwhelmed by it, or they go, "I don't know what to do with it." It's a new way of cooking. We really try and cater to both of those people, and really, one of our key points is to grow kitchen confidence, because we really think that when you're cooking at home, automatically it's going to be healthier because you know what's going in it.
- Pat: Absolutely. I love that frame kind of going into what The 4 Blades is all about. Let's get into the beginning. You have this idea: "Guys, let's do something with this Thermomix thing," and was it to start a blog first? Tell me about the first steps and the first motions that you took. Joe, if you could speak that.
- Joe: Sure. Basically, we had this thing, and Bec actually . . . It might be actually good for Bec, because Bec was listening to podcast and this idea of a magazine came through. Bec, do you want to . . .
- Bec: Well, yeah, kind of. I was listening to this podcast, and there was a guy talking about the fact that at the time, on the iPad, the Newsstand app couldn't be deleted. It was one of those things. You know how when you get your Apple device, there are certain things that can't be deleted? And the Newsstand app was one of those. He was talking about digital publishing, and he was selling software for a . . . basically to develop your own magazine. I just . . . I listened to it, and then I listened to it again, and I think I listened to it a third time and I was like, "I reckon you could do a magazine for Thermomix users." That was kind of what I thought when I was listening to it, and I was like, "That could be great," but we didn't want to . . . We didn't want to just open up a paper. Pat, we were students of yours, right? We wanted to really try and create and serve a community. That's kind of where Joe came in, because he was really wanting to start a podcast.
- Joe: I was just a big fan of podcasts, yours in particular, but just a fan of podcasts. I wanted to be on a podcast or start my own podcast,

and I didn't know what to start it about. Bec had brought this up, where to buy . . . to produce a digital magazine, and we thought the Thermomix would be the guy, but we didn't have an audience. I thought, "Why don't we start a podcast about the Thermomix?" Literally an audio cooking show, which everybody says is a bad idea, but it ended up being great. Where I started was, with you, I went straight to your website, followed the system. You had a free podcasting system of YouTube videos, and I literally watched the first one. I think there were six. I watched them one by one and it was within it . . . I'm using that every day. We had . . . because in that as well is How to Build a Blog in Two Minutes as well, one of the videos in there. I followed that step by step. We've got the microphones. We're talking in to the microphones that you recommended on that. I just followed it by step-by-step, and then in 24 hours, we had a blog and a business, and then within a week of that we had our first podcast out as well.

Pat: Tell me about that first episode. Did you even know what to say? How much planning was put into that first step into the finally publishing something online? Rebecca, can you talk about that?

Bec: We looked back . . . I don't know if you do the same thing, but the first episode is quite cringeworthy. Our podcast really evolved a lot over those four years, and in fact, Episode 150 of the podcast, and we've taken an extended hiatus now, so Episode 150 only came out a couple of months ago, and we actually threw back to some of those early awkward moments and had a huge laugh about it, with just the fact we were a bit stilted and what have you. We started off just like started talking basically just about random stuff, and then we developed themes around it, and then we developed more systems. It grew as we did.

Pat: Well, that's great. I mean, I think that's always going to be the case. I look back in some of my earlier episodes too, and it's just like you said, very cringeworthy, but also great to see . . . kind of realize where you came from, and so 150 episodes later, you put a stop to the show, at least for now. I'm sure it's still getting listens now to help drive even more traffic to the website. What role did

the podcast play though, in your overall business? Talk about the business model as well.

Joe: Look, it was crucial. Number one, it gave us confidence that we knew what we were talking about, and we had to develop a habit as well. Talking about Thermomix every week became a habit, that was really important, but it also allowed us to grow an audience. We went from nothing to 5,000 people in our Facebook page, which isn't huge, but it's 5,000 people more than nobody. Then the other thing we could do as well was it allowed us to interview people. We could get in touch with some of the bigger names in Thermomix blogs and interview them in the podcast, which is another thing that you talk about all the time. Who doesn't want to be interviewed? It's such a great opportunity to connect with people, and that actually led us to our business partner, who had a huge community. She had something like 60,000 people on her Facebook page. Now she's got over a 100,000. Her name's Peta, she's got a blog called The Road to Loving My Thermomix. We didn't even meet in person, but we had . . . We started this business, the three of us together, which is really, really exciting, and just so cool that we could build business from home with this person that's in another state of the country. It was critical to get everything, to get us started and to where we are now.

Pat: That's really cool, and you said 5,000 people. Was that . . . you have more than that now, right?

Bec: Oh yeah, this was when we started the magazine.

Pat: How soon until you had gotten to that point after starting the podcast? Because that's a significant amount of people. What was the timeframe like to get to that point?

Bec: Let me think. Probably about a year and a half.

Pat: A little bit of time, and in the beginning were there any moments where you're like, "What are we doing? Is this really going to work for us?" Or Bec, did you always know that if you just kept going, this

is something that would eventually turn out to be something else?

Bec: To be really honest with you, it was only literally a couple of months that we ever even considered that we would ever not have a podcast. We never really do . . . We were just kind of like, “Okay, we’re just going to keep going.” There were times, like, where we . . . Our regularity definitely improved later on. Our goal was weekly. Sometimes it was fortnightly when we had our baby. I think we took, like, seven weeks off. That wasn’t our plan to take that long off, but we just realized that being new parents was really hard. It was a little bit of a journey.

Joe: In fact, something you need to know about Bec is she’s quite driven. We had started the podcast, and then before launching the magazine, which is a paid product, we launched that when Bec was eight months pregnant.

Pat: You guys are crazy.

Joe: But it was also driven by . . . We’ve been listening to Smart Passive Income and heard about your lifestyle around family, and that was really important to us as well. Bec was just working really hard, eight months pregnant, to launch this and did the Jeff Walker launch, product launch formula, pregnant, with the videos, pregnant. It was just really . . . it was really great, and it worked amazingly.

Pat: That’s cool. Joe, did the podcast come out first and then the magazine? Is that correct?

Joe: Yeah, big time. The podcast was great, that was the whole, like, the key driver of the podcast was to build a platform to sell to.

Pat: Then the magazine, tell me about that launch. What is it that you’re selling exactly? How much does it cost? What did you do to promote it?

Bec: Basically, we have a digital monthly magazine, which is available for Apple and Android mobile devices. It’s called The 4 Blades

Magazine. It's a monthly magazine. It's a monthly publication. The first issue came out in November 2014. We also have some, like, bonus issues for subscribers. To subscribe currently is \$5.99 a month, and individual issues of \$6.99. If you subscribe now, you obviously get the current issue and issues while your subscription is current, and you can buy back issues. We, again, kind of like what we're talking about with the podcast, where you look back and it's a bit cringeworthy, we did a similar thing with the magazine. After about 18 months we moved back and went, "Oh wow, we've really come a long way," but the cool thing about digital publishing is we actually were able to do a complete revamp of our early issues. We brought them up to the standard currently, and it was free for everyone to upgrade their copies, because we just want to . . . I don't know, we just want the best for our community.

Digital publishing is what we have done basically, that is our paid product, and it is our way, like we give 40, you know, probably 40 to 60 tried and tested recipes. Obviously Thermomix is super popular, especially in Australia and Europe, and there's a really wide range of recipes out there. Our key thing is, in terms of helping people make the most of their Thermomix, is that we have . . . No one has time for a thermo-fail. We have a recipe-testing community internationally of about 70 people who tests all of our recipes to make sure that they're good to go before publication.

Pat:

That's pretty cool. That's a cool way to get through, kind of community involved, and getting people to step up and become the more super users of your fan base and . . . I want to get into the fans and the community in just a moment, but let's go back to the numbers really quick. You said \$5.99 month. If they stay on for a whole year that's around \$70, \$72, which is a subscription. It's essentially kind of like a membership model on a lower price point. The benefit is that for less than a \$100, you can get the most out of this really expensive product. It kind of makes sense to upgrade to get what it is that you're offering. There almost seems like an obvious affiliate relationship that can be made here with the company. Is that something that you guys had ever thought about doing, to sell this product, the Thermomix, or is that a no-go?

- Bec: No, that's a bit of a no-go, just in terms of the company that sells them. They're not really interested. I think they've got their own . . .
- Pat: Distributors?
- Bec: That's probably the other key thing, is that the way that you buy a Thermomix is actually through a consultant. I guess the most widely recognized model of that internationally would probably be Tupperware. You can't just go to the shops and buy a Thermomix; you actually have to do that through a Thermomix consultant.
- Pat: Interesting. It's so cool that you guys have sort of built a business model off of a business model like that. You're offering value, you're offering information, and you're building a community at the same time. That answers that question. Let's talk about community really quick, Joe. What do you guys do beyond just offering the magazine and the podcast to foster that community and get your audience involved?
- Joe: Obviously we had the podcast with 150 episodes. We're active on Facebook. That sort of way we're moving towards a little bit more from the podcast is into more Facebook Live stuff. We're looking to maybe turn that back into a podcast, as well as use the content in to different ways. We haven't decided on that 100%. We also do a yearly challenge. At ProBlogger, where we met, Jadah Sellner talks about her 30-Day Green Smoothie Challenge, we took that idea from Jadah and made our own. It was called 30-Mix, which is about making meals in under 30 minutes with the Thermomix using all the different functions of the machine. We did one year, which was over a school holiday period, which is . . . and it worked, it went so well. We went from . . . Again, it was really to build our list and to build a community around it.
- Pat: It was a free challenge?
- Joe: Free challenge, yeah, free challenge to anybody that wanted to get involved. They just went to a landing page, signed up, and we got 10,000 people sign up to both challenges. We've run it the last two

years. We're about to do a third one this year, and we got 10,000 people both years, and 80% of them were brand new people both times. It was just such a huge, huge boost to our community that way. People got so involved in it. It's so great to see their creations, and they'd make videos, and they'd hashtag it with 30-mix so we could see everything that was happening. It was a really great way to just get people really involved hands-on in what we're doing, and we were also able to sell on the back of that as well. Not really a big hard sales pitch, but just sort of say, "Hey, this is from the magazine, if this is the kind of thing that you'll like, this is where you'll find it," sort of thing. It was really good.

Bec: Jadah had spoken about that, when she was talking about her challenges, she went through different ways that some people might monetize their challenge by selling something at the end or what have you. But because the recipes that were chosen were from the magazine, what we actually said was, "Today's challenge is brought to you by the Dinners Issue," or, "Today's challenge is brought to you by the Sweets Issue," or, "Today's is brought to you by the Freezer Issue," and on that day, that particular issue for 24 hours was reduced in price.

Pat: Nice.

Bec: A lot of people used that opportunity to fill their libraries of issues that they might not have. I think I worked that just from . . . not from new subscribers, because obviously new subscribers are in that period, but just . . . We also would sell normal issues, but just for the back issues that were on sale that day, I think within a seven-day period, I think probably we made like \$2,000, which covered the costs of all of the video production. Because we did videos, we made it really fun. We dressed up like 80's Olympians and try to make it . . . because we just . . . Some people get quite stressed in the kitchen and they kind of go, "Oh, you know, I'm not a good cook," and we just want to break that down and have some fun. We dressed up and Joe had this massive wig on and we're just . . . we're being really silly and kind of going like, "It's okay to have fun in the kitchen, basically."

Pat: That's cool. I love that. The challenges are great, they are always fantastic for getting your audience and your community to actually take action within a short time period to give them those small wins. I could imagine like somebody being really interested in a particular kind of meals, such as desserts, for example, and then there's this whole challenge, and there's a day specifically about desserts. I'm like, "I'm going to get excited." That's the point at which I would then want to jump on board and see how much else you might have to offer. I love that idea, sort of hitting in all those different angles, and then it's just a really cool system that you guys have created. If you wouldn't mind sharing, in however much transparency you want, like, how well is the business doing at this point? What are numbers or subscriptions like? However comfortable you are at sharing.

Bec: Well, we've got around about 5,000 subscriber mark. Obviously we've got my business partner, Peta, she's in Canberra, in terms of before, that . . . You asked about the launch, which we probably didn't answer in entirety. That part of the launch as well, as Joe said, Peta had a huge community. We were launching to both of our individual communities like a new product. There's her and I, and then we've got about 5,000 subscribers. In terms of revenue, our revenue our grew by about 41% in the last financial year. It's kind of in the multiple six-figure range. Obviously that kind of goes down into expenses and Peta, and Joe and I.

Pat: Of course.

Joe: But it's absolutely allowed . . . Bec works . . . We've always sort of worked for ourselves, and Bec's also an osteopath, which is what's . . .

Bec: Well, kind of like a physical therapist, like hands-on . . . yeah.

Joe: But it allowed us to stay home with our baby, which is just incredible.

Bec: It's an amazing experience, and Peta would say the same. Peta's got three young boys, and we kind of . . . Whenever there's a school,

like, swimming carnival or athletics day, she'll send me a message and go, "It's so cool that I can be here." We love that we're able to be at home, and Joe's absolutely right. My goal was to be at home with my baby for six months, and my overarching goal was that Joe could be like a Pat Flynn dad and be at home. We totally were able to do both of those.

Joe: That's her actual words.

Bec: That was my actual words.

Pat: Are you serious? That's funny, but that's so cool. I mean, congratulations to you both. It's kind of crazy when you look back at your story and how it all started, and just the Thermomix, like, who knew? I mean, most people listening to this probably have never even heard of that before, and are probably going to finish this episode and have a stroll around the kitchen looking for different appliances they can maybe create a podcast episode about or something. I'm super thankful for your honesty in sharing the process along the way. Were there any moments where you faced challenges in building this business?

Bec: Definitely. I mean, like the magazine has been such . . . Peta and I will continually be like, "Oh," like, you know . . . Now we have a photography team, but there was a time where between us . . . And Peta really took a lion share of cooking and taking photos, but she might do, like . . . have done like 30 recipes in a month, and I might have done 15. It has been chaos, and we're in like a really big transition phase at the moment. We've had the magazine for nearly three years, by the time this podcast comes out to your audience, Pat, we'll be coming up to our third birthday. Obviously, technology changes in that time. Our big challenge at the moment is making sure that our technology fits . . . continues to fit the needs of our readers, and to listening to our community, so that we are able to still serve them in a really effective way.

That is sometimes just a huge . . . a leap of faith, having to majorly upskill to be able to understand what we need to do. Even though,

yeah, you can outsource things, I think you still need to have a really . . . understanding of what you're doing in decisions you're making in your business. It's a really big transition time for us at the moment, while we try and make sure that the technology improves.

Pat: Right, I mean that all makes sense to me. It's also comforting to know, however, that you have this community who knows who you are, you have their e-mail addresses or many of them. Wherever things end up being . . . wherever the shop goes up later on, you're able to survive and you're able to thrive with that community that you've built. I think that's just super cool. In order for people to stay up to date on what's next or what's coming, and we've talked before we recorded, about a particular link, because some people may have already visited The4Blades.com, but that may end up looking a little bit different down the road. If you'd like to listen to this and stay up to date with everything that Bec and Joe are up to, the best place to go would be where?

Bec: Well, definitely we will still be at The4Blades.com, but in terms of for your audience, because what we would love to do is . . . There might be some people listening that go, "Oh, I wonder what that looks like in the backend." For example, we've created, as Joe talked about, the 30-Mix Challenge. Actually, the way that we use that challenge to drive people to our app, which is really our main place of business, is we actually created . . . At the time it was free, and currently it's subscriber only. We created a free issue for that period of time, and we updated it every day. There was like . . . Because I set . . . it was kind of a bit of like an Olympics theme, so we gave like a gold, silver, and bronze medalist, because everyone created their things and created their recipe, and then shared photos of it online. We would pick like a gold, silver, and bronze medalist for the day and give them free subscriptions and things like that. We had that. That's the way we drove people to the app, but we'd love to give your community a bit of a subscriber view of that. If you go to The4Blades.com/Pat, we'll just make sure we can kind of hook up all the podcasts listeners with a free subscription to make sure that they can go in and see what we've done. Obviously, they're always willing to . . . we're always willing to answer any

questions. If they want to reach out to us, they're more than welcome to.

Pat: That's awesome, thank you for that. The 4 Blades, and that's with the number four, right?

Bec: That's right.

Pat: The4Blades.com/Pat.

Bec: Pat, yeah.

Pat: No, A-U in there, right?

Bec: No. No, A-U.

Pat: Cool. Let's talk about the podcast. A lot of listeners have a podcast or they're going to start one or were very interested in starting one. You had stopped at episode 150. I'd love to get into why you decided to put a stop to it and what the plans are moving forward. Joe, if you wanted to speak on that, that would be awesome, because I was curious about it too. Like, why put an end to it if it's working out so well for you?

Joe: Yeah, sure. I think it's something that's really important to think about, and something that isn't really spoken about or thought about very much, is, what is the goal and what is the end point for a podcast, or anything like that, that you're putting through? Even if you don't stick to it, it's good to have a plan. We didn't, but it's one of those things, like . . . I'm sure everybody's had a podcast that they love and they'd listen to it, and then one day just disappeared, like, it just fizzled out of nowhere. That's something that we really didn't want to happen for us.

One of the reasons, or the biggest reason why we did end it on 150, is that it was just really a lot of work. Because it was effectively a cooking show as an audio format, we would cook three, at least three recipes every week to test them, to make sure that they work.

Because you wouldn't want to recommend something that we knew didn't . . . like, we didn't know worked really well. We would test them in, which would mean that it would be three recipes if they all worked the first go. The reason why we have a magazine that's successful and all that sort of stuff is because there are so many things that don't work on the internet as far as cooking goes. We would test three, and of those, maybe one would work, so we'd have to find another two. Sometimes we have to come up with a whole new theme, and then I was still editing every week. I would be editing the podcast and I really needed to find somebody else to edit.

Bec: For our 150 episode.

Joe: It was just . . . It just a lot of work. We thought, "We will put an end date to it, wrap it up in a bow, and find the best way to move forward with that." We didn't say that we're going to stop doing the podcast forever, but just find the best way to engage with our audience moving forward.

Pat: I like that a lot. It's really hard to make that decision sometimes, especially something like that, that is working. But I also know that by doing that, you're opening up so much time for you to focus on a lot of the next steps, and what got you here won't get you there. I love that you've kind of wrapped everything up in a bow. Tell me about the download number, since actually just stopping. It's been a couple months now since the last episode, are you still getting download numbers? Does it still seem to be actually helping out?

Bec: Totally. Absolutely, and like within the thousands per month still. I checked the last one, I think . . . Well, obviously this is coming out in October, but we finished in June and we finished early June, and in July we still kind of had, by the end of July we had 3,000 to 4,000 downloads of the podcast, and obviously we haven't put out any new content.

Joe: I've encouraged people not to get too wrapped up in numbers of podcast downloads, especially if you've niched down, like you're not going to get millions of downloads when you're a cooking . . . like a Thermomix cooking show. It's those core fans that, as you know,

you're in somebody's earholes. It's quite intimate and people feel like they really know you. That kind of connection, you can't beat it. I'm still a massive advocate for podcasts. I think they're such a great medium, especially when you can use them well to build that connection with your audience. Don't get too hooked up on the numbers. Sometimes having that small group of committed fans is the best thing for you.

Pat: I love that. Now besides the podcast, are there any other traffic generation strategies that you've used? Now you obviously said the challenge earlier too, but are you doing anything else, like social media-wise, or using any other tools or strategies to help your audience to grow?

Bec: Well, we have . . . I mean, look, because of . . . I've got to say that I am not someone who loves being on social media. Kind of my work-around with that is that I kind of used Edgar to break it down into our podcast, recipes, and I have, like, different categories, so magazine, podcast, recipes, and just kind of miscellaneous. In Edgar, I've kind of created an Edgar strategy, because obviously we have more content than you can poke a stick at, with all the recipes that we've put out for the podcasts, and then 150 episodes of the podcast. That's what we're doing at the moment, and that kind of, then, drives traffic to the blog as well. Obviously, we've been around now for quite a while, and I guess also email. We have a pretty strong email list.

Joe: Also, Bec's doing this cool thing on Facebook Live at the moment, where she just gets people to . . . she just goes live and says, "Okay, what are your allergies, and what have you got in the fridge? And I'll find a recipe for you."

Bec: I give like, personal . . . Basically I say that, "To grow your kitchen confidence, you should try one new recipe a week, something you haven't tried before. To grow your repertoire, try new things." I've done it a couple of times now, where I've gone online and people have given me their scenarios, how many people they're cooking for. If there's any things that they like, any kind of aversions, anything that they're intolerant to, and then I'll personally come up

with a recipe for them to try in the next week.

Pat: That's cool. That's a scary thing to do, but obviously very cool because if you can pull it off, it's like, super impressive. "She has authority." And it just shows that you're there for your community too. I think a lot of people . . . That's what Live is great for. It's like showing how well you do with ad lib or just right there at the moment. How do you do that?

Bec: Well, look . . .

Joe: I think you've got a talent for it, because I'm often off the side just answering comments, just going, "I have no idea."

Bec: I think because I am . . . I know the magazine recipes really well, because of the editing process, and the recipe testing process, and I know the feedback that we get from the recipe testers, and I think about that person. Also, I suppose in my role as an osteopath, with my patients, I'm looking in terms of—whether it be exercises that they do or habit tweaks to improve their mobility—I'm recognizing where people are at and then helping them make a small change to move them in the direction that they're trying to go.

Pat: I like that. It's similar to like when I go Live and I do site reviews or reviews of people's products and stuff. I don't know how I do it. I just do it because it's just the life I'm involved with right now. It's like . . . I'm immersed in that stuff, just like you are too. The recommendation for everybody listening out there is, if you want to try that do it, it's not going to be easy at first, but it can really benefit you and your community at the same time, to challenge yourself to do something like that. I don't know what that might be for individual listeners out there, but we can brainstorm if you have questions about that. I think it's a really cool thing, because it can help you elevate in the niche quite quickly, when you can do that on the fly. It just shows that you're there for your community too. I love that.

Joe: Absolutely, and I think it's probably what you find yourself giving advice on most of the time anyway. You know what I mean? If you find yourself always critiquing someone's website or giving

any advice or offering recipes or exercises and stretches, that's probably . . . if you find yourself to be able to do that on the cuff in person usually, you're probably going to be okay live as well.

Pat: Yeah, I love that. Let's do . . . from each of you. Bec, we'll start with you, but for the listeners out there who are at that stage where they're just kind of getting started, they're maybe kind of just getting into a niche finally, and they're looking to just get to that point where you guys are at, where you can live that lifestyle you want, any words of encouragement or motivation for them in their start?

Bec: Well, I suppose just acknowledging that, like, I think it's such a journey, and like . . . I'm one of seven kids, and I've got six brothers and sisters, obviously. A lot of them had their own business. I've got a brother who has like a 25 year-old business, and he's doing really well. We've got a business that's now, kind of . . . all the magazines, like three years old. I've got a brother who has a business who's around the 15-year mark, and I think it's important to know that it just changes. It's not so much that you kind of might overcome a challenge that you might have in the first six months, but then there's a different set of challenges at 18 months. Does that kind of relate to your business, Pat? Like soon, you know, maybe you've got some challenges now or things that you're working on, things that you're trying to improve for your community, and they're different to the challenges or things you're working on at the 12-month mark? But they're still growing and . . .

Pat: I understand.

Bec: People might look at you and go, "Oh, Pat has got it sorted."

Pat: Nope.

Bec: But I think it's good. I think it's good to recognize and go, "Hey, yeah," like there are businesses like my brother's who's 25 years old, and is doing really well and making a really big difference in the community, and yet there's still challenges in that business that are very different to the challenges we're facing at three years. I think it's just kind of good for the people starting out not to kind of go,

“Oh, I’m never going to get there,” because kind of you never do really get there. Like, it’s just . . . it just changes.

Pat: It’s almost like, similarly . . . like building muscle, right? Getting stronger, you’ve got to break those muscles down, and you’re going to have to go through those challenges in your business, in your life, to get through all that stuff. As my buddy once said, “Every master starts as a disaster.” Every master goes through more disasters to . . .

Bec: Totally.

Pat: To continue to grow. Thank you, Bec, I appreciate that. Joe, any final words of advice from you?

Joe: I think I’ll probably say, like . . . One of the key things I’ve learned from you, Pat, and I think what makes you a really great teacher, is if you go back, and I’d encourage people to, like way back to the start of your podcast or all sorts of things that you’ve done, you can see that you’re really an open learner as well, and that commitment to always being better, and then finishing something, you’re going, “How can I do that better next time?” Which I can see that you do with your speaking, with your podcast, when you’re interviewing. Everything like that is what makes the difference long-term. It’s just those incremental improvements over a long period of time which lets you become better; it lets you master something. It is those things that end up being what you’re good at in the long run.

We’ve got a digital magazine about cooking, but what we’re good at now is digital publishing, creating communities, communication, all of the . . . and technology around that . . . and the technology that goes around that. It’s not the thing. It’s the things you do to make the thing.

Bec: I think kind of like the key tip at the base of that is for someone who’s starting up is just to start. If you have a Facebook Live, where you’ve got two people that are viewing you, it’s not going to make or break your career, but from that you’ll go, “What didn’t work about that?”

- Joe: Everyone starts at zero.
- Bec: Exactly. In terms of what Joe said about the style of always learning, “Okay, like that Facebook Live didn’t go so well. I’m going to listen to a podcast about that,” or you know, what do you call it? Pat, you do your just-in-time learning. Maybe you go, “Oh, well, that stuff that I’ve been keeping for Facebook Live, I’m really going to invest some time this week, and I’m going to make some tweaks to my style.” You just start where you start, and if it doesn’t work, then you go, “Okay, well, that wasn’t great, so I’m going to try something different.”
- Pat: I love that. Thank you so much. I think the one question that some people might have before I let you go would be, would you share any tools that you have for how one might be able to get started or any resources perhaps on creating their own digital magazines? If there are any that are available that you can share with the community.
- Joe: Well, Pat, I’ve done a lot of work around this. All the off-the-shelf stuff isn’t great, like there’s . . . Probably the best one, if you’re looking to just get something off the shelf, would be MAZ, M-A-Z, but that’s quite expensive, or Joomag, which is J-O-O-M-A-G. But what I’ve learned in going through at building process and all that sort of stuff is that apps are really tricky, and it’s a bit of the wild, wild west at the moment. There’s all these different coding languages for apps, and this is coming from somebody who’s not a coder. I’m sure there’s coders there and they’re going, “Oh my God, Joe, you didn’t use Swift,” that’s the gold, that’s the gold standard, but it is changing all the time.
- What I find that has a standard is web, creating . . . It’s good, old WordPress for me, like an HTML file is still the gold standard, and you can create that so that it’s very mobile-friendly, and then there are coding languages like Xamarin, which you can wrap a really good WordPress, a really good website that’s mobile-friendly up, and turn that into an app. That’s X-A-M-A-R-I-N, I think. Xamarin. I would still be airing on the side of web rather than apps. It’s probably my . . .
- Bec: As a starting place.

- Joe: As a starting place, especially for budgetary stuff as well, because it's so expensive to go down the app, the app road. There's another company called AppMatch as well, which is quite good. Jared over there, if you got the website, he can help you do the . . . wrap it up into Xamarin too.
- Pat: Jared was featured on the podcast a while back.
- Joe: Absolutely, they're great too, and that is some good work as well. That's probably, like, they're not . . . They're cool. It's the tool to do it really easily because it just doesn't exist.
- Pat: That's awesome. Thank you so much. I think . . . I just want to make sure I got that in, because I think people are going to begin to ask. Thank you so much, Bec and Joe, for being here. The4Blades.com/Pat, that's where you're going to go, and just I appreciate you so much. It was just such a pleasure to meet you not too long ago, and now to have a chance to speak to you even more and learn more about your story and get inspired by it. Just, thank you both so much. I appreciate you.
- Bec: Thank you.
- Joe: The pleasure is ours, Pat.
- Pat: All right, I will talk to you . . .
- Bec: Thank you.
- Joe: Thanks, Pat.
- Pat: All right, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Rebecca and Joe from The4Blades.com. Actually, if you wanted to go and check to see their latest, and them knowing that you guys are going to go check them out, and they want to show you what matters to you, head on over to The4Blades.com/Pat. Like they said, The4Blades.com/Pat. Check it out. Also, if you want to get the links and all the resources mentioned in this episode, just head on over to SmartPassiveIncome.com/session288, and you can take it from

there to get all the links. Then finally, just a big thank you once again to Rebecca and Joe Winston from The4Blades.com for just taking action, like I said, but also just being so supportive of SPI and the brand.

I hope those of you who are coming in to the brand for the first time, hearing me, not really knowing what to do, hopefully you're getting inspiration from Rebecca and Joe, and a number of other interviews that are there in the archive for you, to just walk you through the process of what it's like to get started, to put something up there, and to get results. Like they are saying, "It doesn't happen overnight." It takes time. It takes error, trial and error, but you got to get . . . you got to keep getting up once you get to that point or you feel like you can't go anymore. You just keep going.

Persistence is the key. That's my final word for you today. Thank you so much. I look forward to serving you in next week's episode, and we're closing in on the end of October, and finally, if you haven't already done so, you can check out the Build Your Own Brand Five-Day Challenge. Many people are going through it right now, but you can check it out and begin your five-day challenge to finally get your website up and running, with an email service provider connected to it. Just check it out over at SmartPassiveIncome.com/BYOB, and you can go from there. Awesome. Thank you so much, and I'll see you next week. Cheers, guys.

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