

SPI Podcast Session #31 - Seeds of Opportunity & Pat Goes Hollywood

show notes at: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session31>

Hey what's up everybody and welcome to the 31st session of the Smart Passive Income podcast. Pat Flynn here and I just wanted to quickly wish you a very very happy new year!

This is the first session of 2012 and I wanted to start it off with something more inspirational, something that actually happened as a result of doing this podcast which led to me eventually fulfilling a life long goal of mine, which was mentioned briefly in one session of the podcast, in the intro, although I can't remember which one it was specifically.

Now, if this is your first time listening to the show - thank you, and welcome! I typically have some interviews or do a solo show with a ton of advice and tips about blogging, entrepreneurship, online business, productivity, niche sites, affiliate marketing, passive income - you name it, so if it's your first time and you want to really get down into some of the getting started material and actionable items, I recommend you start by listening to sessions 15, 16 and 17, which is a three part series on the types of passive income available to you and what comes along with each as far as investments in time, money and effort, so I encourage you to check that out if you're just getting started - you can find them on iTunes or in the podcast section on the blog.

But for today - like I said, I have something special to share, so just sit back and relax because I'm going to tell you a story...

On January 1st 2011, about a year ago on New Year's day, I received an email through the contact form on my blog. Now, I get a lot of emails, and I do read them quickly but usually after that I'll move them into a followup category, if a reply is necessary, and I answer them in batches later - that's a tip I picked up from Tim Ferriss' *The 4 Hour Work Week*, and it does work really well, at least for me it does..

But after this one particular email on New Year's Day I got really excited and made time to respond. The email came from a guy named Mitchell Peck who said he had found me on iTunes, enjoyed listening to my podcast and he asked me if I was interested in helping him with web and social media stuff.

I get asked to work with people, to consult or coach or mentor, every single day. It's kind of a weird thing for me because on one hand, I'm extremely honored that people reach out to me and know that I can help - that really means a lot to me and it shows that I'm doing something right in my business online, but on the other hand there are so many requests it leaves me a little depressed because I can't possibly help everybody, as much as I really want to. I hate saying

no, but I've learned that that's exactly what I've had to do - simply because there just isn't enough time in the world to really bring each and every person under my wing, and if I were to take people in I would only do it if I had the ability to give them 110% of my time and energy, and with the projects I'm currently working on now, plus the thing that's most important to me - my family, my wife and son who I want to spend most of my time with - I just can't possibly say yes to everybody, and if I say yes to one I feel like it's not fair if I say no to another.

I mean, that's why I spend most of my time working doing stuff for the blog and the SPI community, because I can reach and teach more people at the same time.

But this email was different, because Mitchell Peck is a Hollywood Producer, and he was asking for help with an upcoming movie that's scheduled to be released in April of 2012. I've always been interested in Hollywood - not really like, I want to become an actor and star in a film or anything like that, but it's just a really interesting industry, I love the dynamics of how it works - it's sort of like blogging, you know, a lot of people do it, but it takes something special and unique to stand out of the crowd and you can literally have an impact on people's lives as a result.

I doubt I'll ever audition or anything like that (although if you know of any roles that would be right for me, let me know, I'm always down to try, haha) but to be honest I've tried acting before, just for fun, and I'm TERRIBLE at it - but I've always wanted to be on the big screen, which is why one of my goals, you may remember from an earlier podcast episode, was to become an extra in a movie.

So when Mitchell contacted me, at the beginning of a new year and asked for help with this movie of his, I replied back and we began to talk about the project and what it was about, and what I could do for him, and long story short I was hired, sort of like a consultant, for this movie.

We worked out a contract which included deliverables like a brand new website (they had one but it was a generic looking Yahoo business website), and pretty much being in charge of their entire social media campaign. My official title is Director of Web and Social Media, and you can actually look me up in IMDB for this movie and you'll see that title there next to my name, it's pretty awesome - again, all because I put myself out there in a podcast...it's crazy.

So - more details...the movie is an independent movie with a relatively small budget that's around 5 to 7 million dollars, which if you know anything about the movie industry - it isn't much, especially when you consider some movies nowadays have budgets around hundreds of millions of dollars. But this movie had a smaller budget, but as a result of being independent they could be a little more liberal as far as their approach to the movie and the marketing behind it, which is why I was contacted because Mitchell knew the power behind the Internet and Social Media for building a brand - so it would be worth investing some time and money to reach out to fans this way, instead of spending hundreds of thousands on billboards, television and things like that.

The movie is called *Crooked Arrows* and it's about the sport of lacrosse.

Before getting into this, I knew hardly anything about lacrosse. Growing up here on the West coast, lacrosse isn't as popular as it is on the East Coast, although my high school did have a club team and a couple of my friends were in it and let me practice with them a couple of times. It's a tough sport but it's a lot of fun to watch - it's fast, it's exciting and it can get pretty rough - it's like hockey combined with soccer, two sports that I was at one point in my life completely obsessed with - I used to sit down every day with a legal pad while watching the games and wrote down all of the players names, their numbers and positions and things like that - I was 8, and there was no Internet back then so I had to do it all on my own.

Anyways - now that I've been involved with this movie for over a year I'm totally in love with the sport - the pride that comes along with it and the die hard fans that just eat sleep and breath lacrosse - it's awesome, and of course, the history behind the sport as well is inspiring. It's America's oldest sport that was actually played by the Native Americans - and they called it "The Creator's Game", a game handed down to them from God. It was a ceremonial sport used to promote health and strength among the people, and it was also used to vent aggression and resolve territorial disputes - and back in the day, get this, games used to last for days, with over 1000 people per side on a field up to 15 miles long - isn't that crazy?

The movie *Crooked Arrows* is a story about a mixed-blood Native American, Joe Logan (who is actually played by Brandon Routh, who you may recognize from *Superman Returns* - he was THE Superman in that movie, which is pretty awesome. His dad in the movie is actually played by Gil Birmingham who was Jacob's dad in the *Twilight* series, which is cool too.) So the lead character, he's eager to modernize his reservation, but must first prove himself to his father, who is the Tribal Chairman and much more traditional. He is tasked with coaching the reservation's high school lacrosse team which competes against the better equipped and better trained players of the elite Prep School League.

It's a story that's sort of similar to *The Mighty Ducks*, but what separates this movie, in my opinion, and is the main reason why I agreed to help out, is because there has never been a movie that could truly be considered a lacrosse movie. There are millions of lacrosse fanatics out there who don't have their own sport movie, and this movie was made to fill that hole. There's sort of a joke that the only movie that had lacrosse in it was *American Pie*.

Also, no mainstream movie has ever featured and highlighted the Native American community and culture this way which is why a lot of the Native American communities all around the US are super stoked for this movie as well.

So as a result of agreeing to do this project, I was of course compensated for my work, but part of the agreement was that if I were to do this, I would be able to come out to the set one day and be an extra on the film - and they happily agreed and in August of 2011 I flew out to Boston for 4 days, was on the set met all of the actors, Brandon Routh, Gil Birmingham, Chelsea Ricketts,

and the Director, Steve Rash - it was an awesome experience.

I got to see what production is like, which is - to be entirely honest, pretty boring after a while. I mean, a lot of the scenes were shot over and over and over again and when you're not a part of that particular scene you just sit there and wait. It was worth it though, and I did get a few times on camera although I'm not sure when or if they'll use that particular footage, but yeah it's just been awesome.

So what was my strategy here? I got paid a little and I got to be an extra, but of course it wasn't all for nothing. I had to apply what I've learned over the past couple of year, combine that with new things I learned about the movie industry, and come up with a plan and then execute it.

The strategy I adopted is very similar to my own strategy for Smart Passive Income - a multi-media, multi-platform "BE EVERYWHERE" approach.

Now with blogging, the hub for a be everywhere strategy is typically the blog, with other components like podcasting and YouTube and links from other bloggers all driving traffic back to the blog. In the movie industry - that's normally not how it happens, you don't see people flocking to blogs to become part of a community there - the website for most movies is sort of like an afterthought for some, but I wanted it to be a pretty major component of the strategy - not necessarily the hub, I think the hub is more YouTube and Facebook, but still the website is important which is why my first task was to totally revamp the site.

I came up with about 5 different design proposals - all done in photoshop, and you can actually head over to CrookedArrows.com now to see what the final design looks like, which was a group decision from the producers, co-producers, the director and other people on the team.

Did I code the site myself? No - actually I didn't. I have Mike my VA from the Philippines to thank for that one - he did a great job quickly putting the site together and working out the bugs as it was getting posted up.

I don't know if I talked about Mike before, but he's a person I hired full time from Chris Ducker's service at <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/virtualstafffinder> - we're like buds now and I sent his son a Christmas present last month and he's always helping me out, it's a great relationship. So yah, having Mike on board made this job a lot easier and more passive actually - I'm basically the mastermind and the designer, and then he does all the dirty work, which is what he's good and enjoys.

So the website - it incorporates a bit of stuff I learned over the past few years that work for bloggers and online businesses, along with what would work better for a movie.

Right at the top it includes an opt-in form to collect emails for an email list which has grown to about 7000 over the past year. Now, whenever we have anything new come out - an

announcement or a new trailer, we just send an email blast and get a ton of immediate feedback, which is nice.

The site also incorporates a place to feature the latest YouTube video that we've posted. Since it's a movie there's always going to be footage to show - an interview or preview or trailer, so I made sure that there was a spot front and center for a video.

And then of course, we have sponsors and people who endorse the movie, so there's an area for that - the main one being Reebok so we have a big Reebok logo at the top too.

I also helped to build the store that's on the website - you can actually buy merchandise from the site which was something totally brand new to me - I had to do a lot of research and figure this out on my own, but I went with a service called Shopify at shopify.com, to create the store and thanks to Mike it's integrated with the website and we've been selling some shirts and hats here and there. So if you're thinking about setting up an online shop and selling real merchandise, I definitely recommend shopify, my experience with them was great and since it was my first time doing anything like that I had a lot of questions and they were very very responsive and helpful.

Now like I was saying, the website is not the hub of the entire brand, it's an important component and it has some legs - especially with the email and rankings now in Google for some important keywords, like the movie itself, naturally, but also terms like Lacrosse movie or lacrosse film - but what seems to be more important in this world is YouTube and Facebook - working together actually.

After building out the website, it was time to create a YouTube channel - and this was going to be where all of our interviews, behind the scenes stuff, stuff filmed during production from their EPK or Electronic Press Kit, trailers, previews, things like that - and this is actually where more of our content gets started. The idea is to post something on YouTube - and use all of the same strategies I've outlined here on the podcast before - rich tagging and description, making sure the url is the first part of the description, conscious video thumbnail selection - you can actually listen to podcast session #19

[\(http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/youtube-blogging-online-business/\)](http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/youtube-blogging-online-business/) to get more of those tips, and then after posting on YouTube, then it gets embedded onto our website, posted on our social media platforms, then an email broadcast goes out, we alert our marketing partners, and then we get, as a result, maximum exposure for all of our stuff - again, all starting on YouTube.

So in addition to the website and YouTube, there's also a thriving Facebook Page - and Facebook has sort of become the center of most of the interaction that comes with the fans, which is fun, but also challenging.

I'm mostly in charge of posting all of the updates and announcements, and I respond to fans too - and the challenge is making it seem like I'm there at the production office. I mean, I am a part of the Crooked Arrows team - I'm going to be in the credits, but I'm just chillin' here in my home

office in San Diego while responding to messages from people on Facebook about a sport I only just recently grew to love. It's fun though, and I enjoy the challenge, and of course if there's something I can't answer the producers who are also admins of the page step in. You can check out the page at [Facebook.com/Crookedarrows](https://www.facebook.com/Crookedarrows) - since you're probably not a fan already you'll see the fan gateway I created, one that you'd have to click LIKE on to see the trailer, using the html iframe application strategy that I've shared on numerous posts and YouTube videos.

I also setup a Twitter account and connected with a few thousand lacrosse fans through Twitter. I also worked with people on the set to make sure that we were all connected and when I share something on Twitter they blast it out to their fans too - most of the crew and of course the actors, most of them have twitter accounts so this is a really cool, fast and fun way to spread the word quite quickly. I actually spent a bit of time upfront following people who I knew were lacrosse players or interested in lacrosse.

How did I know they were fans of lacrosse?

I followed the followers of US Lacrosse - the governing body of the sport here in the US, Followed the followers of Major League Lacrosse, Inside Lacrosse, which is one of the biggest blogs on the sport, Reebok Lacrosse and some of the more popular lacrosse players like Paul Rabil. All of their followers were obviously following them for a reason, so when I followed those people, many of them followed us back. That was a good way to start building connections on Twitter. I also noticed that once production started and some of the stars started tweeting about being on set, uploading pictures and that sort of thing, their followers began to follow the account too.

I'm also about 50% complete with an iPhone application that we have coming out for the movie, since I do have some experience with that already - co-owning an iPhone application company that, I have to say, has picked up a little bit since Christmas - we just put out a few new updates to our apps and getting good results, making about \$150 to \$250 a day now.

Back to Crooked Arrows...

Now we did technically start from scratch here, but at the same time because of the nature of the film - being sort of the first real lacrosse movie AND film to really focus so much on native american culture and history in a modern day setting, it was relatively easy to get a following and build a fan base because we reached out (and when I say we I'm mainly talking about the producers - who are amazing and are really good at what they do), they reached out to all of the lacrosse entities and Native American communities out there and built relationships with them, and not just through a measly little email too, I mean like really forming friendships and partnerships with them, going out of there way, which I think is a great example of how to succeed in anything really - you have to build those important relationships and help each other out if you want to grow and grow fast. In blogging it's other bloggers in your niche and doing things like guest posts and going out of your way to get to know people and help them, and help

them so they can help you too. In this example, it's helping to spread lacrosse throughout the country while getting exposure because of these new relationships, and them being kind enough to share our story and promote the movie and what it's about with their existing fan base and communities.

Last week we actually released our first official teaser trailer, which is for most movies about a 2 and a half minute length feature for an upcoming movie. My job was to make sure this reached the most eyes as possible when it came out, so I helped to coordinate a sort of launch, similar to what you'd see for products in online business, to beforehand build buzz and create anticipation for what almost seems like an event.

So about a week before we were going to launch the Trailer, we started talking about it on Facebook and Twitter, put up a blog post about it, and we actually had a certain date and time in place to reveal it - I think that's important because if you just say oh it's coming later this week, or next week or even just in three days or Friday - it's not specific enough, people will get excited but when they know exactly when it is, it builds more buzz and anticipation because there's an actual time that it's going to happen.

Around the same time, we contacted all of our partners, our lacrosse friends and our Native American connections, and kindly asked them in an email, and then a follow up email to help 1) build buzz with us with their communities on their social networks and websites, and some even have email lists which is very helpful, but also 2) share the link to the video when it was revealed on our end. So this means when it was time, an email had to be sent out to all of them that it was ready to go live, while we also send an email blast to our own list, and then shared the link on Facebook and Twitter - and when it all went down, which was last Friday - you know all that prep work goes into something like a launch, coordination and it gets all stressful, but to just see it all come together and people getting excited about it, sharing the video, liking it, embedding it on their own websites - it's just pure happiness, and I swear it was so awesome - we literally had like 500 likes and 100 shares on Facebook in about an hour and now the video, in just over a day has over 50,000 views and is being shared all over the place - it's awesome.

One thing to remember, especially if you want people to help spread the word about something, is to just ask! In our announcement on Facebook about the trailer, I made sure to include a call to action with it - I literally told people to LIKE, SHARE AND COMMENT on it to help spread the word, and it totally worked.

And of course, content is king and if you're content is great a lot of that stuff will happen naturally, and the trailer is amazing so it's no wonder people are so stoked about it - I literally have watched it at least 50 times already, but of course I'm a little biased because I've been a part of the movie since pre-production, but it's getting some good response, both from the lacrosse community, which is great because there have been a lot of disappointments for lacrosse players lately in movies, but also by non-lacrosse fans, and people who don't even like sports!

On my own personal Facebook profile I shared the link to the video and Cliff Ravenscraft from PodcastAnswerMan.com, a great friend of mine who has been on the SPI Podcast a couple of times who I know isn't into sports, he commented on my post and said "Wow. That actually made me want to see this movie! Sweet!" - so we're hoping the rest of the world actually feels the same way as Cliff, of course -

But really, this has truly been an amazing experience, and to come back full circle to what I mentioned at the beginning of this podcast, which I know I said was going to be more inspirational and motivational, although I did try to include some tips for you here and there based on the approach we're taking - to come back to what I said earlier, this all happened because of the podcast, but not just that - it's so much bigger than that and this is the important lesson of the entire show today - all this stuff happened because I put myself out there, I shared what I learned and have always been trying to reach and teach more people through my brand, and as a result so many wonderful and amazing things have happened just because - it's all Karma, and even if you don't believe in that stuff - I do - but even if you don't, the truth is this, if you don't put yourself out there, nothing will happen - nothing CAN happen, you're not even giving it a chance, you know what I'm saying - like, with this Movie opportunity, with opportunities to Speak a Blog World Expo, to be invited to share my knowledge in Europe this year which unfortunately I've had to turn down because it was such short notice, to all the emails I get from people who want to partner and share ideas, even down to getting readers on my site and subscribers and downloads of my podcast...

EVERYTIME YOU PUBLISH SOMETHING ONLINE, EVERYTIME YOU POST SOMETHING OR UPLOAD A VIDEO OR A PODCAST SESSION, THAT IS A SEED OF OPPORTUNITY.

A seed of opportunity, something that can be there later in the future and can possibly change your life and give you opportunities that would never have happened otherwise.

Plant seeds everybody - plant seeds.

And get something out there for people to get to know you by. Try to make a difference, make the world a better place and try to reach as many people as possible and things will happen to you.

Create opportunity - don't wait for it.

That's going to be it today, and thanks so much for listening in.

Take care everybody, and one more time, Happy New Year!

Thank you so much, and I'll see you in the next episode.