



SPI Podcast Session #86 - Everything from iPhone Apps to AdSense, Twitter and Klout – Fireside with Joel Comm

show notes at: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session86>

Pat: This is The Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn Session #86.

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. And now your host, who misses Ecto Cooler Hi-Cs, Pat Flynn.

Pat: Hey, what's up? Welcome to Session 86 of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. My name is of course, Pat Flynn and you are awesome. Thank you so much for listening in today. I have a great guest who is going to share a lot of great information about a lot of different topics actually and you'll get to know him in just a bit.

But before that, I just want to say thank you to the entire Smart Passive Income community because once again for the third year in a row, you have nominated the Smart Passive Income Podcast as the top business podcast out there. If you go to PodcastAwards.com, just again, I can't believe. I'm just so honored that I've been nominated again. I haven't won the award yet. The last two years, some other great podcasts have won the award. But I think this is the year, 2013 is the year.

So if you could do me one small favor, starting November 1st, if you go to PodcastAwards.com in the business section, right there close to the top, you'll see the podcast, the Smart Passive Income Podcast. You click that little button and you click vote. It would go a long way and help out so much. You can actually vote daily up until mid November. And that would help out so much. This is something I really want. I want to show the world that this podcast is worth listening to. And if we win this award, this is all of us together. It will be so awesome. So just thank you so much.

Again, PodcastAwards.com starting Friday, November 1st, for a couple of weeks go in there daily. Just once a day, just make it a part of your routine for a couple of weeks. I will just love you all so much. I don't know how I can love you more already because you've already supported me so much through listening to the show. But let's show the world that Smart Passive Income Podcast is the top business podcast out there.



Congratulations to all the other nominees. But you know what? This is the year of Smart Passive Income. So let's make it happen. Thank you so much.

Now on to today's featured content, there's a lot of content. You'll hear a great guest who is actually somebody who inspired me when I first started doing business online. This person and something he did in the iPhone application market inspired my friend from high school of mine to get together and start an iPhone application company. And together, my business partner and I in the iPhone app business, we have since, over the past four and a half years, have earned over six figures doing the app stuff and we have Joel Comm to thank for that.

So, our guest is Joel Comm from JoelComm.com. His last name is C-O-M-M so JoelComm.com. He has recently come out with a new podcast. He has been around for a really long time in the internet marketing industry. He's a very forward-thinking person when it comes to a lot of the things that people are doing online. He was one of the first people to write about AdSense and talk about AdSense strategies for example. And we actually get into a little bit of AdSense on today's podcast because I am still using AdSense on some of my content sites and I know some of you are too.

We also talked a lot about Twitter. He has written a book on Twitter called [Twitter Power](#) and that's actually something I haven't really talked too much about on the SPI Podcast or even on the blog, how do we use Twitter and how does someone get started with Twitter, how did someone go from zero followers to potentially five, six figures of followers and what can that actually do, how do you use Twitter, what's the benefit? We talked all about that as well.

Gosh, we covered a whole bunch of different topics here. I think it will be a nice, fun, casual conversation as if Joel and I were just chilling at a coffee shop together and you just happened to be there listening to us. Imagine that and I hope you enjoy this episode. Let's get right into it.

All right everybody. Let's welcome Joel Comm to the Smart Passive Income Podcast. What's up, Joel? How are you today?

Joel: Hey, Pat. I'm doing great. And thanks for having me, man.

Pat: Thank you so much for coming on. And for everyone out there who doesn't know, Joel actually was someone who I caught on to early in my days doing online business



and it was really his success in the App Store that inspired me and my buddy to get into the App Store as well. So first of all Joel, I just need to thank you for that. And I'm curious, the app that you did that got so much publicity and did so well, it's really interesting. It was called the iFart.

Joel: Yes, it was.

Pat: Tell me about that. Like where did the idea for that come from and why did it just explode like it did?

Joel: Oh, there's an iFart pun, I get it.

Pat: I wasn't even going for that but wow, that's good.

Joel: They kind of come out naturally though, an app that made a bit of a stink.

Pat: Nice.

Joel: When you've got a team that is largely comprised of men, unusual things can proceed. Actually, our first app was one of the first thousand apps in the App Store. It was called iVote. And that's still there. And after we developed iVote, we sat down in the conference room and we had a huge whiteboard and we just began whiteboarding ideas.

And one of – I don't remember who mentioned it. It might have been Dan Nickerson, my VP of ideas, but somebody thought of, if we have this fart machine and we started laughing about it. And the more we talked about the style and the features that we can include, the more we thought, "You know what? This will be easy to produce and we could do some pretty cool PR stuff around it. So let's go for it."

And what's really interesting is the day we were getting ready to submit the app to the App Store was middle of October 2008. It has been five years, if you can believe that. And a story broke on CNET that Apple had rejected a similar app called Pull My Finger from the App Store. They wouldn't include it. And so we thought, "OK. Somebody else thought of this. Who would imagine that?" And we looked at the video of their app and thought, "Well, ours is more impressive."

But there's no point in submitting it. And it wasn't until a month or so later that I told my team, "Go ahead and just submit it. What's the worst thing that can happen? They



will reject it." And it sat for a number of weeks and I got a notice. I believe it was December 12, 2008 that Apple approved this app into the App Store along with our competitor, Pull My Finger and two other flatulence novelty apps. And the rest is history.

Pat: Can I ask you, like how successful was that app? Like can you give us a dollar amount or download amount?

Joel: Sure, happy to. It was wildly successful especially immediately. With a little publicity in my end and some unique storytelling, the app shot up to number one, I believe ten days after it came out, number one in the world, not number one in the category. It was number one.

Pat: Wow! And that's right by Christmas time so that's perfect.

Joel: It was right close to Christmas. And what I did is I crafted a story around it. It's not really a story that there's a fart app. There was a little bit of a story in the fact that Apple had previously rejected one and now, they changed their tune and were approving them.

And of course when that happened, Pull My Finger immediately shot up because of the previous press they got. But I decided that this time, nobody really knew what it meant. The sales to rank, they didn't know what it meant if your app was number 75 in entertainment category. How did that translate into sales? How many downloads? What if you were number 60 overall? What if you were number 10?

And what I did is I documented on my blog day by day what our ranking was in various categories and how many sales we made. And then I put out a press release to VentureBeat and TechCrunch and Mashable telling them that this is data that is interesting to developers. And sure enough, it was interesting to them.

They began talking about how I was publicizing my numbers. And of course, that led to more sales. And the big explosion was on Christmas Day 2008 and we hit almost 40,000 sales on that day and that then became a story. You can still go back and Google TechCrunch iFart and you'll find the story they wrote then about a Christmas holiday explosion literally.

And so to date, I know we've sold over 800,000 units plus app purchases of additional Fart packs and there's a free version out there as well that has had a number of



downloads. And of course at \$0.99 a piece, Apple takes their 30 percent so you can do the math on our profit on that.

Pat: Yeah. I mean that is crazy. And this story here, I mean congrats on the success. This isn't about the farting app really. It's about how you approached this and how you crafted a story around it even all the way down to when you first were creating that idea. You talked about, you just got on the whiteboard and start writing with your team and throwing out ideas and you gave it a shot.

I think a lot of people would have just thrown this away and not even consider doing something like this. And you even thought about doing that even after you created it. But you said, "Hey, what the heck? We created it. Let's see what happens."

And really, that's what entrepreneurship is a lot about. It's experimentation, trial and error. And I talk about that all the time. You never know unless you try. So it's so cool to hear the details of that story and I can't believe it has done that well.

Joel: I know.

Pat: It's crazy.

Joel: And you're right, some other people would have flashed that idea.

Pat: Nice. We could go all day with this, Joel.

Joel: I'm sorry, I apologize.

Pat: I was like trying to think of one more to add and that was like the perfect one. So I guess we'll stop with the puns there. But this is crazy, Joel. This is crazy. But ...

Joel: Let's just wipe that last comment, shall we?

Pat: Yeah, the audience is probably like, "OK, stop." But I know some of you out there are starting to think of your own now. So leave them in the comments.

Joel: It totally led to copycats. I mean at one time, there were over 200 fart-related apps in the App Store, people trying to tug on to our success. There's not room at the top for so many of the same app and there were probably two of them that ranked it all



and I don't even know if they made their money back but the rest of them were just a little blip in history. They were there and they were gone.

Pat: Yeah, that's interesting. Let's talk about that really quick because I remember seeing like hundreds of those kinds of apps come out. I mean how do you deal with that if you were like one of the first ones to create something and then all these copycats are coming? Is that something you can take a legal action with? Or I'm sure there are a lot of gray areas but what was your reaction to all that?

Joel: Well, we were on top and we had the established brand and I was getting the press and I thought that why bring any attention to the competitors? And sure enough, ignoring them led to their own demise. And so, it wasn't worth having attention even though there was a number of them and still are a number of apps that use iFart in their name.

Pat: Yeah, that's interesting. That's really interesting. Well, were there any other apps that you created after that?

Joel: Actually, I took another risk with a multiplayer game platform that we called GameDock. And this would allow people to play our own version of Battleship which is called FleetMaster and we created another original game called Blast 4 that was a mash-up of Bejeweled and Connect Four and then we have one of the first multiplayer chess games.

And so, we created this platform that other people could then build upon and then Apple announced Game Center and basically desiccated ...

Pat: Wiped that one out.

Joel: Yeah. And so, that's what happens when you take risks which why it's always a good idea to own the platform. And that's why Apple is so brilliant because they are the gatekeepers.

Pat: Yeah, that's a great lesson. I used a lot of apps or I previously used a lot of apps that in Apple's recent update, Mavericks, sort of wiped out. I mean they're taking control. I mean I remember downloading and purchasing an app for creating tabs on my finder window so I can open up multiple windows in the same window. And now that app is probably dead now because Apple is doing the same thing. So I mean that's a really, really good point there. You want to own the platform. And it's tough though



because you see these solutions that can work and you can build on but then there are bigger things out there that can just kind of crush you easily.

Joel: Exactly. And that's what happened. Well, it's not a problem. We just go back to the drawing board and figure out the next thing.

Pat: And so, what was the next thing for you after that point?

Joel: I think app wise, we might have done a few things but I was focused in so many other areas at that time. I had just finished – come off producing the internet reality show, *The Next Internet Millionaire*. I was in the midst of writing the first edition of *Twitter Power* and social was coming on strong. So I think I put a lot of focus into the social space and we still were doing some apps on the side but none of them equaled the success of the now legendary iFart which even had its own Wikipedia page.

Pat: Really? That's great.

Joel: Yeah. I kid you not.

Pat: That's great. Well, you're like me Joel. We have a lot of things going on and projects that we're doing. One of the first things I remember seeing from you after iFart was a book you had released called the [AdSense Code](#) and it's all about using AdSense on your website. When was the *AdSense Code* published?

Joel: It was 2006 and I believe it was March of that year that the book hit the New York Times business bestseller list which was just – it totally took me by surprise. But there was just so much interest in how to create content and monetize that content. And of course, I was sharing strategies and tips for how to best monetize your site years before Google ever put up on their site.

It's funny because the strategies that I figured out for best color schemes and blending is now what their default added on the AdSense site.

Pat: Nice. I'm pretty sure you've had a lot to do with that. So how was this book, the [AdSense Code](#), I mean are you still using AdSense in your sites? Do you still believe that's a great way to monetize a website? What are your thoughts on AdSense today?

Joel: It's a good way to monetize a website that is a content-base site that has a significant amount of traffic. Back in the day, if you created any content and I'm not



talking about the junk sites, I'm talking about original content. You could put AdSense on there. And if you were getting traffic, you were getting a higher per click revenue on it. And I actually sold my most popular content site a few years back. And so, my AdSense revenue is very minimal because I don't have many content sites anymore. I don't put it on my blog at JoelComm.com or any of my sales pages or the like.

But there are people that are still making good money with AdSense and the principles that I teach are still sound principles. In fact, I've got the sixth edition of the AdSense eBook which is what the traditionally published book came from ready to go. I just haven't launched it yet. And I was actually listening to a podcast you did about Amazon Kindle. And I've released books on Kindle. And please refresh me the gentleman's name that was on the show with you.

Pat: Jonny Andrews?

Joel: No, it wasn't Jonny. There was another guy and you were doing a test.

Pat: Oh, [Jeff Goins](#).

Joel: Yeah, it was Jeff. And I'd love listening to some of the suggestions you got. In fact, with the last physical book I launched just a few weeks back, [So, What Do You Do?](#), I took Jeff's advice and did pre-released copies of the book in order to ask people to post reviews. And a week later when the book launched, we already have 75 reviews up on site, which was really cool and I credit listening to your podcast of that idea. So you can use that as a testimonial, if you want to.

Pat: Thanks, Joel. And I'll make sure to forward that to Jeff. He'll be happy to hear that.

Joel: Yeah. But I'm seriously thinking, I've always sold my AdSense eBook anywhere from \$27.97 and this new edition, I'm thinking of putting up on the Kindle and offering it for \$2.99 and just making it available to as many people that want it for as lower price as possible.

Pat: Yeah. I mean if you use it in that regard as far lead generation and getting people to get into your brand and you have so many other great things to offer which we'll get into in a second that could be a really great strategy, so definitely a lot of lessons to be learned there.



But going back to AdSense really quick because I know there's a lot of users and listeners out there who do use AdSense. I use AdSense myself. I mean what are the one or two top things that are really working for AdSense users right now if you don't mind sharing?

Joel: Well again, you got to have content and you got to have traffic. Assuming that you've got original content on a regular basis and you've got traffic coming to your site, blending your ads with the inline on your content is still going to yield the best click-through.

If you put banners up at the top of your site, people are banner blind, they don't see them. And if you put them at the bottom, by the time they get done with your article, they're ready to leave. They usually don't see them there. Side bar ads don't work as well either, unless you got something really attention-drawing that grabs your eye and pulls you there.

But people are reading content. And so, you want your ads closest to where the content is. I find that 300x250s and 336x280s with – assuming your blog, your site got a white background, no border, white background, black text, blue links because blue means click me is still going to net the highest click-through rate.

Pat: Yeah. And I can definitely agree 100 percent with all of that all down to the size of the ads. I use in context ads as well and those are the ones that are producing the highest click-throughs, the highest cost per clicks. It's just working really well still on SecurityGuardTrainingHQ.com, one of my content sites. And so, perfect. Thank you.

Now beyond the AdSense, you have a lot of other stuff going on. You've written a book about Twitter. And what's interesting about Twitter is I actually haven't talked too much about Twitter. Your book is called *Twitter Power* and all these books and everything we're talking about here, you could find at JoelComm.com. So check all that stuff out there.

But let's talk about Twitter really quick. And I still have a lot of people in my audience who don't find or don't believe that there's value with setting up a Twitter account and just chatting randomly with people, it seems to them. What would you say to those people who were saying, "You know what? Twitter just doesn't seem like it's right for me."



Joel: Every social site is not right for everybody. But in a very general sense, wherever the conversation is taking place that's where the power is. And you've got 200 million active users on Twitter everyday talking about anything and everything. These are your customers. These are prospects. These are your friends, your family, and your clients.

And it's the big water cooler. I used this analogy back in 2007 or 2008 I believe that Twitter is the water cooler of our time and it's where that spontaneous conversation that crosses all barriers of topics and discussion is taking place and it seems silly to me to not saddle up to the cooler, belly up to the bar as it were, and engage in the conversation. Enter. Be relevant. Be present.

Bring value to others even though it's a 140 characters at a time, there's a lot of business being done on Twitter as a result of people engaging. And so, you can ignore it if you want to but you're missing out on where one of the big parties is being held, one of the largest networking events that never stops is taking place.

Pat: Yeah, that's a great way to put it. I love the water cooler analogy. Now, for someone who's just starting out that has a zero followers, posting anything is not going to be seen by anyone. How would somebody who is just starting out, these people who are convinced now, "OK. It's the water cooler. I should go on there." What are their first steps? Do they just start following as many people as they can? Do they – I mean where do they go? What do they do?

Joel: Yeah. The concept of just following everybody is really a scatter shot approach. What you do is you look for people that you already know and respect or interested in. Follow them and then do a search for some hashtags. Maybe you're into photography so do hashtag photography. See what people are saying.

If somebody catches your attention, you think, "Wow! That's interesting. That's a cool picture." Or if they've got a cool tip, follow that person. Engage with that person. Tweet them back. Re-tweet what they're saying. Ask them a question. Answer a question if you can bring value.

It's not rocket science. Pretend that you're walking into a room and there's this networking event going on. You don't know anybody in there. And as you're walking through the room, you're picking up bits and pieces of conversation that's taking place. And the moment that you hear something that catches your attention, you pull up to that circle of people that are talking. You listen. Maybe you ask a question, you answer a question, you bring value through your own expertise, and now, you're in the



discussion. And if people are liking what you have to say because of the value you bring, guess what? They follow you back. They become more interested in your knowledge and expertise.

And over time, based on the value that you do bring, you begin to endear a certain level of trust which goes both ways. And of course, this is how a transaction, the field that these seeds are sown for a transaction to take place whether it's selling a product or service or whether it's just selling a concept or an idea, philosophy, it's all about relationships.

Pat: Yeah, absolutely. And I love that analogy. I used that before. Going into a party, there are people there. That's why a lot of people who use Twitter fail because they go into this party and start just saying, "Hey, I'm Pat. Buy my product." Like nobody is going to buy your stuff if that's how you enter a party.

Joel: Yeah. They whip up the megaphone and they stand on the table in the middle of the room and say, "I've got this great deal. You should take advantage of it now." And people are putting their fingers in their ears and they're tuning you out and a lot of them are just blocking you so they don't have to listen to you at all. And that is not the way to go about doing business of any kind in any form.

Pat: Yeah, absolutely. I love using Twitter. I mean I am fortunate enough to have earned this really large following on there now over the past few years. I love using Twitter to test certain headlines and things that I might potentially use in a blog post for example or a podcast.

It's a great, quick, easy way, 140 characters to see reactions to certain things or get immediate feedback. I love asking for opinions from people because people love to share their opinions and opening up those lines of communication. So it's not just you saying things but it's you going out there and asking the people who have chosen to listen to you to get feedback from them.

In business, I mean I'm in three mastermind groups so I find so much value in hearing directly from other people about what I'm doing. And I think a lot of people are afraid to ask questions or put themselves out there or allow other people to comment on what they're doing. But I found that's probably the most powerful thing about Twitter is opening up those lines of communications with those who are following what I do.



Joel: Absolutely. As you say on your Twitter stream, “Lead by example.” I love that. “Lead by example beyond and hold nothing back.” I’m looking at your Twitter stream now and I’m actually going to recommend. I’m going to give you a tip, Pat. Can I do that?

Pat: Yes, please.

Joel: So I would love to see a new background on your Twitter stream, something that does a little bit more branding. Perhaps provide some URLs, maybe something free, maybe something about your podcast on your stream because Twitter basically says, “We’re going to take over the center part with the menu and with your profile picture and your brief bio and your tweets. But we’re going to give you that left side and that right side.” And right now, you got that little, “Welcome to Smart Passive Income on Twitter.” And you got nothing on the right side. And this is real estate that you can really be leveraging to solidify your brand with people who come to your page.

Pat: All right. So you’re talking about [Twitter.com/PatFlynn](https://twitter.com/PatFlynn) on the web.

Joel: Right.

Pat: And you’re absolutely right. I mean Twitter doesn’t give you too much real estate but the background is really important. I’ve seen some really interesting backgrounds. There’s nothing – you’re absolutely right. I mean I do have the brand and the logo but I don’t have any call-to-actions or giveaways or any sort of – I don’t even have any URLs. I do have the URL in the profile. But even behind the profile, I could probably – what do you think of the background behind my profile picture at the moment? It says some stuff about me but it’s still kind of ...

Joel: It does. I think the level you’re at right now, I would have a branding expert like my friend, [Matt Clark](#) at [TweetPages.com](#). He did branding across my website. And I think consistent branding is really important. So if you look at [JoelComm.com](#) and then look me up on Twitter @JoelComm, look me up on YouTube/JoelComm, look me up on Facebook, and you’re going to see a consistency across all these. And Matt did this for me and I’m really thrilled with them because it creates a consistent brand and anywhere people look for me and find me, they’re going to see the same branding.

And you’re at a level now where I think you deserve that.



Pat: Well, thank you Joel. I mean I am looking at your Twitter page right now, [Twitter.com/JoelComm](https://twitter.com/JoelComm). It looks great. It looks just like your website, same coloring and branding. So I love that.

Joel: Yeah.

Pat: So people do actually visit these pages.

Joel: Oh yeah, absolutely. And I get comments about the profiles as well that people tell me that they really like the color scheme and the consistency and the layout and it's friendly and there's my smiling face and they know what I do. It's very clear from my profiles, what it is I do and how I try to bring value.

Pat: Yeah. I mean it says right there, author, speaker, entrepreneur, and consultant.

Joel: Yeah.

Pat: OK. Quick random question because this is something I've been wanting for a long time and I don't know if this is even important but it's just one of those things. Other people have it and I don't so I want it too. It's that blue-verified check mark. How did you get that?

Joel: Boy! I wish that I had the Twitter pixie dust and could help people get those because I get that question frequently. When Twitter first started verifying accounts, they had an application on the site. And a number of people, myself included, went there and we said, "Please, verify me." And lo and behold, they did. Well, they must have just gotten inundated with that and they shut it down. There is no application for verification.

And I actually know somebody at Twitter and asked them about this and they said, "We can't do anything to help you. You could give us a name and as much as we love you, Joel, we are not involved in the verification process. Our team verifies who they want, when they want." And that was it.

And that makes me sad because I think there's a number of people that should be verified and it's almost like – I think they bit off more than they can chew and they just kind of left it by the wayside. And I feel fortunate that I've got this stupid little blue check mark and it's like this trophy that doesn't really mean anything but because there are so few people that have it, everybody wants it.



Pat: Right, right.

Joel: They do that on Facebook too. They have it on Facebook. And I was talking to Mari Smith a few weeks ago asking her the same question, "How do you get verified?" And it was pretty much the same answer. She doesn't know how – they emailed her one day and said, "Please send us a copy of your driver's license or something so we can verify this is you." And she got the little verified on Facebook thing. But there's no format that can open it up to anybody. And I hate saying that. I wish that I could just sprinkle little Twitter verifications everywhere.

Pat: Yeah. I mean it really doesn't mean anything. I mean nothing has happened as a result of me not having it. It's just one of those things, and that's a good marketing lesson there too. It's just like the social proof aspect and what – I see this little check mark here and it immediately makes me feel like you're an important person.

Joel: And it's not – I'm the only Joel Comm in the world. Literally, I have not been able to find another person with my name. And so when you do a Google search, you have hundreds of pages, I think probably a million results that are just me. And so, it has not been a problem. Occasionally, somebody will spoof my account and we can usually get those shut down quickly. But a Twitter or Facebook verification is not nearly as important as say, something like Klout score, which I do believe carries a significance and will continue to grow in importance as time goes on.

Pat: Yeah. Let's talk about [Klout](#) because it's something I don't know very much about. I mean I know what the word "Klout" means but there is this website, Klout.com that sort of give you a score based on recommendations from others and what you're doing. I mean can you give us an introduction on Klout and why you really feel like this is an important thing?

Joel: Yeah. Well, [Klout](#) really, it's not a social site that you work. You go in and you connect your social accounts. And I've connected them all, [Twitter](#), Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Instagram, and I think Tumblr and maybe a couple of others.

And what Klout does is it connects to your accounts and it gauges through their very complex algorithm a social influence score from 0 to 100 and they're continually refining how their algorithm works but the idea is, if people are interacting with you, if they're re-tweeting what you say, if they're giving you pluses on Google+, if you are well-connected on LinkedIn, if you have a lot of friends following you on Instagram and so



on, it gives you this number between 0 and 100 based on the activity that you have in the social space.

And of course, the higher somebody else's Klout score, the more impact them mentioning or engaging with you has on your Klout score. Like when I look at my Klout, they'll score activity, perhaps somebody re-tweets something you said and if they only have 100 followers themselves and a low Klout score then the impact on your score might only be a 1 out of 5. But on the other hand, I'm looking at my Klout activity in Salesforce, a very popular company, posted about me on Twitter and it has a 5 out of 5 for score impact on my score.

So initially Klout said, "Our score is important. Pay attention to us." Well, in the beginning, it really wasn't but you say something often enough and loud enough and people start paying attention. And now, people are paying attention to Klout score especially the corporate world. I'm finding corporations are starting to offer perks to people that have a higher social influence.

For example, American Airlines a few months ago had a perk on Klout that said, "Anybody with a Klout score of 50 or higher, we want to give you a free visit to our Admirals Club at your next visit to an airport because we believe you're a person of influence." And I think we're going to see that more and more, Pat, not just with Klout but with the social realm in general that companies are going to look at finding people to endorse their products and services based on their social influence rather than just corporate bombing and saying, "Everybody talk about us." They're going to be targeting more.

Pat: Yeah, that's really interesting. When I first heard about Klout, I thought it was just this company that made up this algorithm to try and get publicity and make something out of nothing basically. But now that you put it that way and I see corporations and American Airlines and other companies, I mean I could see how it could be influential. My worry is it's that other thing that people have to worry about that is just adding to the mix of everything else we already have to do. Like is this something you would honestly recommend? I mean I didn't even sign up and I already had a Klout score. I mean is it something that only takes like a minute to set up?

Joel: Yeah, it's really easy and it's not something that you work in and of itself. It's something – you just connect your accounts. And I'm looking at yours right now. You have a Klout score of 70, which is excellent. And the only participation you really can do on Klout is you can give people +K. It's giving them Klout and you're entitled to give



away ten per day. For example, I just went to your Klout page and I gave you +1 in blogging, business marketing, social media, and internet marketing.

And what will be really interesting is when you go to Klout maybe in the next day or two, to look at to see if your Klout goes up at all because I've got an 83 Klout. And so, somebody giving you Klout that has a higher score theoretically should bump your score even if its decimal points. You should see it increase. And I'm curious. I'd like you to follow up with me and let me know if me handing you Klout actually has an impact. But it's not something you have to work on. Just connect your accounts and just do your regular social activity and Klout will measure that influence for you.

Pat: So is this similar to LinkedIn and sort of recommend – I think it's called recommendations on – I could like for instance say, I can go to your LinkedIn page and say, "Joel Comm is skilled in these areas." Is that sort of similar to that?

Joel: It is only – LinkedIn doesn't really give you a score for it. It just says, "X number of people have recommended you." Of course, so many people – I'm kind of disappointed that LinkedIn instituted that feature because it's so easy to say, "I recommend this person and this person and this person and this person." Before you had to – recommendations where you actually wrote something about the person you were recommending, and it was a higher bar to pass because people won't take the time to do that.

So when you could just push a button and recommend a bunch of people, blink at recommendations, it kind of loses its impact. Whereas Klout actually gives you a number that says, "This is how we believe – this is where your influence is at." And it's not perfect. They're still working through it. And my particular Klout score is high because Klout also can determine if you have a Wikipedia page, if you're somebody that has done a few notable activities then you have your own Wiki page and Klout will measure that as part of it.

Right now, you just have your Facebook and your Twitter account connected to Klout. So I bet if you connect some of your other accounts, you'll see a go up there as well.

Pat: Interesting. Yeah. And I agree with you on the LinkedIn sort of attempt to do something similar. I mean I saw one of my friends do it and he had like 99 plus on all the skills. And I was like, "I only have like 30 or 40. I'm just going to send an email out." Or no, actually I sent a message out on Facebook directing people to recommend



me on LinkedIn. The next day, I had 99 for each. So it was like how easy is that to gain? I mean this Klout thing is interesting. I'm going to play around with it more.

But a few more things I want to talk about. And this is something – because we connected recently after you came back from taking a break from doing things online. Can you talk to us a little bit about how long were you offline I guess you could say? What is that really mean? What did you stop doing for a while? And what was that like? And also, first of all, welcome back.

Joel: Thank you.

Pat: What are your plans after?

Joel: I was never completely offline but I did crawl into my man cave. I can relate to the people who have experienced downturns in business. Everybody experiences them and through a number of either poor decisions of my own or through some bad hires and changes in the economy, my staff was too large. I had a wonderful staff, very talented people. But things changed and combined that with some personal issues of my own that I was dealing with in my life.

Around late 2010, I started scaling back throughout 2011. I let go of my entire team over a period of time. I sold off a couple of my larger properties and I took the time to reassess my life, to work on myself, to work on myself physically. I got more fit, dropped a lot of extraneous weight that I was carrying, which helped me to feel better. Emotionally, I took time to process and work on the issues in my personal life and past issues and relationships with the people who are important to me, and worked on myself spiritually I think, getting connected with God and dealing on that soul area of my life was really important.

And so, the business kind of went to the wayside. And I took time just to work on these things and kind of remake and figure out what do I want to do when I grow up, not that I'm ever going to fully going grow up. But this year has kind of found me coming out of that cave, that period of my life and still transitioning as I'm starting a podcast now.

I've rebranded my webpage as you've mentioned and my social pages. And I'm still not completely clear on where it is that I'm going but I'm reconnecting with people. I'm doing interviews such as this podcast with you and just kind of letting people know,



"Hey, how can I bring value to your life? What from my 18 years of experiences, my successes, my failures could be useful in helping others get where they want to go?"

And so, it's not all crystal clear yet. I'm in process and still in transition but I'm really excited about what the future holds. I turn 50 next year and I honestly can say I have not felt this healthy in all areas of my life and this good for a number of years. And that's exciting to me.

Pat: Nice. Good for you, Joel. I am so happy to hear all that. Sometimes we do need to reset a little bit especially when we're doing something for so long and we just get down this hole and it just gets too much for us sometimes. I know a lot of people who have done something similar and just stepped back a little bit, kind of had to reset and think about really what it is that they want or what's going on and where they want to go. And I think a lot of it does start with – and I talk about this a lot, your physical health and sort of that helps you become more focused, it helps your mental health, it helps everything.

And so, first all, congratulations to you on losing that weight and becoming healthy, having a healthy body and mind and I think I can almost tell just through your voice that you know you're in a better place now as a result of sort of just taking this little break.

Joel: I am. And what's really interesting is I started going to events again, not just being asked to speak but also just attending events, just re-network. And people turned to me and they don't recognize me. Physically first all, they're like, "Wow! You look different." But I had a person say to me this last week when I went to Author 101 University, they said, "You just feel different." And I do on the inside. And what's really cool is when people feel that as well on the outside. It's almost like this recreation, this reimagining of myself and it's actually what I've got listed on my Twitter profile under my @JoelComm, it says, "Rebooting, reworking, redefining, reimagining." And there's just so much possibility in that for me.

And I'm told that from 45 to 60 but especially in your 50s, this is the most productive period of a man's life. And so, I'm getting ready to produce some really cool stuff and my belief is that what's yet to come is going to shadow that which has been done in the past and it's all about having an impact. It's really ultimately not about me. It's about leaving a legacy and that's what I hope to do.



Pat: Awesome. I'm really excited to see what you are coming up with, Joel. I mean you and I met in person for the first time this past April in Chicago at Internets Prophets LIVE and you looked great, you had an amazing presentation, just the way you started, I mean I don't know if even that is available for anybody to see anywhere but I would love to put a link up to how you started that presentation. I mean I was really focused at that time on presenting which I still am.

And so, I go into conferences and I make sure to watch as many speakers as I can because I want to learn from them. And that's when I learned how impactful a beginning of a presentation can be because I actually had to leave during the middle of the presentation to catch a flight and I didn't want to because you started it off so well. Is there anywhere we can go to see how you opened that presentation? I don't know if use that in other spots. I mean I would if I were you because it's just so powerful. Is there anywhere we can catch that?

Joel: I do use that introduction a lot. And to date, I have not made it publicly available. I've told people, "You've just got to come and see me live because I don't want it shared all over the place right now." At some point, I might. And you'll be amongst the first ones that I will let know if I do so.

Pat: Cool. Well then, I guess we'll just have to see you speak live.

Joel: There you go.

Pat: Are you speaking at any conferences coming up or ...

Joel: I'm actually going to be on stage at the next NAMS conference, David Perde's event in Atlanta in February. And I think it's – I'm trying to remember the URL. It might be Joel@NAMS.com or just look up David Perde and NAMS and this is a really great event. I'm not sure if you've been to one before. But they've built quite a community of people, entrepreneurs that are growing their business online. And it's really a privilege to be able to go there and speak.

Pat: Yeah. I mean I've heard so many great things about NAMS. NAMS is – I mean there's a few different – this is Niche Affiliate Marketing System or Novice Affiliate Marketing System?

Joel: Yeah. Well, it's kind of – it's used both from novice to advance. And I did look up the URL. It is Joel@NAMS.com.



Pat: Cool. Awesome. Yeah. I mean this has been a really great conversation. For those of you listening, this wasn't an interview. This was just like Joel and I chatting at a café shop virtually and you sitting there listening in on us and doing what we can to provide value for you. And Joel, you've come in with some really great gold nuggets. We're really excited to hear and see what you've got coming up next. So if you can make it to NAMS, that's awesome. I'll put a link in the show notes for that. Of course, I'll put links to everything that Joel has going on and everything we talked about.

Joel, are there any final things you want to say before you say goodbye to the SPI audience? I don't know, any tips or any final words of wisdom based on your 18 years of experience and you taking a break and then coming back. Anything that you feel like would benefit the audience?

Joel: Well, I'm never in shortage of words, Pat, so you got to be careful how long you hand me the mic for. But I want to encourage people to – I was inspired by what you've done and I've started podcasting again. So if people want to go to iTunes and look up the Joel Comm show, I would love to get their feedback on that. I think they'll enjoy it.

And I would just really encourage people to figure out what that thing is that they do so – that they're so passionate about that they would do it even if they weren't getting paid for it. Life is short and I believe that every person is created by God with unique passions, talents, skills, abilities, and personality that make us so special that only we as individuals can bring that specific value to the world around us. And that's what we're here for. It's not about us. It's about how we can be vessels that can be used to enrich other people's lives.

And if you do that, the money is going to come. So figure out what that thing is that really sets you on fire that, that fire on your belly that makes you burn to do that thing. And then find a way to do it. Even if you can only do it a little bit for now as you work on your job or getting financially on your feet. Do that thing because it's going to be life-giving for you as you do it and it's going to be life-giving for the people whose lives you touched. And it's a cycle that's just keeps going round and round. It feeds. It's kind of like love. When you give love, you get love. And it's something you never run out of. So whatever that thing is you love to do, give it out and it will come back around.

Pat: I love that, Joel. I preach all the time. I always say your earnings are actually a by-product of how helpful you are and how much you serve another audience. And so,



to hear that coming from you with as much experience as you have, I mean really, we just have to give and you will get back.

So, awesome Joel. Thank you so much for coming on the show. Everybody check out Joel's podcast, look up [Joel Comm in iTunes](#) and I'll put a link in the show notes of course. Joel, we'd love to have you back on the show down the road. We could talk about all the big things you've done.

Joel: Sounds great, Pat. Thanks buddy.

Pat: All right. Thanks. All right. I hope you enjoyed that interview with Joel Comm from JoelComm.com and you can also look up Joel's name in iTunes and get hooked up with his podcast as well. He's got some great content. I listened to a couple of episodes just recently.

And I want to thank you, the listener, for coming and spending time with us today. If you want the show notes, all the resources, links, everything we talked about as well as a place to leave comments or ask questions, you can go to SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session86.

And finally, just one more reminder, starting November 1st, you can go to PodcastAwards.com and vote daily for the Smart Passive Income Podcast for a couple of weeks. It would mean so much to me. It would be awesome to be able to share this award with all of you. PodcastAwards.com under the business section, again, you'll find me there.

Thank you so much. Until the next episode, Episode 87. Stay motivated. Keep pushing hard. Keep pushing the boundaries. Keep getting uncomfortable. And keep succeeding. I will see you in the next episode. Thanks so much. Peace!

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