



SPI 317

Make Money with Your Skills —Creating Awesome with Roberto Blake

May 9th, 2018

Pat Flynn: I want to do a little thought experiment with you, if you don't mind us playing this game for a little bit. I want to go back into time, back to 2008, and it's June 18th, 2008. This is the day after I was laid off from my architecture job, and I'm not feeling very good about myself. You and I, we run into each other and you hear about this layoff of mine. What would you say to me to make me feel better? How would you get me out of that slump? Would you?

This is the thought experiment that we run in today's episode with our guest, Roberto Blake. Somebody who is known for helping build brands from the ground up, helping creative entrepreneurs make money with their creativity, and their skills, and this is going to be an episode that you're going to want to listen to, especially if you're just at the start of your journey. Even if you're not, you're going to learn some important insights from Roberto Blake, who is just crushing it on YouTube right now. A big inspiration to me. You can put that phone in your pocket. You can turn the volume up. You can get ready to go on your walk. This is going to be one to listen to. Thanks so much for listening in. Let's cue the music.

Speaker 2: 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 once had long hair and a goatee in college, and it was weird, Pat Flynn.

Pat Flynn: Hey, hey. What's up everybody? Thank you so much for joining me today. This is session 317 of the Smart Passive Income podcast. My name is Pat Flynn. I'm here to help you make more money, save more time, and help more people too. Today we got Roberto Blake in the house, a big inspiration to me and a big reason why my YouTube channel just passed the 100,000 subscriber mark. He's got a huge fan base as well. If you are a part of the Roberto Blake tribe, you guys are awesome, obviously and thank you for being here. I appreciate you. Make sure you hit subscribe to the show if you haven't already. Sit back, listen in. This is Robert Blake from robertoblake.com, helping you create awesome stuff. That's what he does. Roberto, welcome to the show, man. Thanks for being here.

Roberto Blake: Thank you so much for having me, Pat. It's always a pleasure to talk to you.

Pat Flynn: I'm excited for a number of reasons. Number one, you and I have connected on many stages and levels this year. You've helped me out so much with my YouTube channel. We actually dive a lot into your story about how you got started in our little tactics in a Tesla video on YouTube, and we'll definitely link to that in the show notes so people can dive a little bit more into your story and watch us ride in a Tesla and talk about how to crush YouTube, but I wanted to also ... Just for people who don't know who you are can you in a minute, or two ... What do you do Roberto?

Roberto Blake: I'm a creative entrepreneur who has a background in advertising, design, and marketing. And what I currently do is, I'm the founder of Awesome Creator Academy and I also run my own small digital agency Create Awesome Media where we focus on video marketing, and consulting for brands, and businesses, we also help them with growing their relationship with influencers. I have my hand in a lot of different online ventures, but running those two primary businesses, Awesome Creator Academy being my coaching where I work with people to build their brand, and market themselves, develop their social media presence. And then, Create Awesome Media where I do that with workshops, and with consulting for the businesses.

Right now those are my primary focuses, but I put out a lot of content as you well know, on YouTube to help other people that are creatives, or entrepreneurs.

Pat Flynn: We'll definitely talk about that. And I think what's important ... One of the things I definitely want to dive into later in this conversation is, how you create so much great content. I think a lot of people, whether they consider themselves creatives or not, they struggle with this hamster wheel that we feel like we're on with having to consistently sacrifice to the Google gods, or the YouTube gods like we were just talking about to hopefully break it through. And you've done it very well. I mean your subscribership on YouTube is crushing

it you just passed 300,000 subscribers, congratulations on that.

Roberto Blake: Thank you for that.

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Roberto Blake: And you just crossed 100K yourself. Congratulations all around.

Pat Flynn: I did, yes. Thank you. We're gonna skip more about your story, we'll save that for the Tesla video and we'll again, link that in the show notes.

Roberto Blake: Such a good video.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, it was so much fun. But I do want to talk to you specifically, the creatives in the audience. Can you define for us what a creative, or who a creative actually is? And then, we'll dive into how to help them.

Roberto Blake: Everyone has creativity in them Pat, and I think that you understand that we're all born with creativity, and curiosity, and a desire to explore the world, and also to build things in it, but for a lot of people that gets drilled out of them, by the time they're 10 or 12 years old and they stop being creative, they stop questioning things, their intellectual curiosity gets stunted and they get locked into this narrow funnel of just absolute ruthless practicality, and systematization and they don't question things, and challenge things because they've been taught that, that's being a bother, that's inconvenient, it makes them unmanageable. It's very hard for most people to hold onto their creativity. Creatives are the people who have managed to go through that sifting and fire process, and have stayed hungry to challenge the world, to make new things and bring it into it, and not accept the world that's been presented to them.

They dream to imagine something more and greater, and they work toward the materialization of that thing. And I think you know that better than most people as somebody who went from playing Legos

as a kid, to designing and wanting to have these great magnificent buildings, and things done with your careers in architect.

Pat Flynn:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. I mean, I think a lot of people in the audience are those who, they've always been creative and have sort of stood out amongst others, as being the type to always want to build things, they hadn't lost that thing that all kids have, but then like me there was a number of people ... Cause even in architecture I lost that I mean, I was drilling down on AutoCAD and I lost the fun behind it in some moments even though I completely loved my job. But I think getting out of architecture allowed me to explore and be fully creative myself and I think a lot of people are in that position now, where they are doing something and maybe they lost touch of their creative side, but they know that it's there somewhere and that's why they're exploring online business, and freelancing, and doing all these other things to hopefully get some of that back. And you've done a great job of doing that yourself, and helping others do the same.

Before we get into the tactics and stuff mindset wise, what does it take for a person who is a creative to actually succeed, as creative something of their own in this online space? I've talked to a lot of artists before and, designers who have wanted to break through and build their own thing, but they just feel stuck and they have no idea how to break out of that mentally and we all know that the mental part is the most important part. What would you say to them?

Roberto Blake:

One of the things is, they get discouraged because they're not seeing a result either, in the form of monetary gain immediately up front because, they do need to feed themselves and there's anxiety attached to that or, if they're doing it and they're trying to build a market themselves, and build an audience, and a following, they're working so hard to do all this stuff that nobody quote on quote sees, and they get discouraged ... And I constantly hear it from people, "Why make something if no one's going to see it in Instagram, or YouTube, or whatever, or if I'm gonna get buried, everything's already been done." And they get really discouraged. And my answer to that from a mindset standpoint is, "You have

to absolutely remove all of your emotional attachment to those numbers, even as gratifying as they can be, as gratifying as the acceptance, and the accomplishment there can be. And you have to completely fall in love with the process and the craft again. And knowing that you turned a thought into a thing.”

And I know it sounds really woo-woo and fluffy, but it’s the most powerful thing when you love the process because then, you know realistically ... Something we’ve talked about, and heard in entrepreneur land so much is that, all success is a byproduct of work. There is no success without work the only time success comes before work is, in the chronological, alphabetical order of words.

Pat Flynn: In the dictionary.

Roberto Blake: In the dictionary and that’s it. That’s the only time when success comes before work, right? That’s real to me and if people love the work that they’re doing then, it means when things are hard they will keep going regardless, which means they have a better chance of succeeding than the person who quits halfway through Pat.

Pat Flynn: How do you get started then? Do you do it on the side? Because like you said we need to feed ourselves. What’s the best way to get started with all this?

Roberto Blake: You can absolutely do it on the side and the thing is what I tell people is, do something very simple give yourself at least a 30 minute window of time when everything is said and done to where you’re going to do this work, and you’re going to force yourself to get fast, you’re going to force yourself to do the best job you can in 30 minutes.

Some people think that they can’t produce something of quality in 30 minutes and I beg to differ. You’d be surprised what you can accomplish in 30 minutes. Part of my own personal experience with this is, I remember back in school we used to get weeks, upon weeks to do one project that we’re gonna present. And then

I remember agency life, working at an ad agency and needing to comp stuff in two hours you know what deadlines are like, Pat, when you give yourself a time constraint you're putting in some constraints here from this blank canvas and all of a sudden that's a challenge, and creatives rise to the challenge that they're presented with. If you have 30 minutes to do something, you'll use the 30 minutes, but if I gave you two hours you'd probably produce the same thing with two hours and it wouldn't be that much better, maybe it's 5% better. But you and I both know that 5% isn't enough of a difference in quality to charge that much more for it.

I think realistically if somebody is working a 9-5 job, and they have an hour commute and they're exhausted, they're gonna give 30 minutes to something, they're gonna give 30 minutes to literally sitting in their armchair, or maybe watching something on the television, or flipping through social media anyway, why not give the 30 minutes back to yourself to create something that represents you, and that you're proud to put your name on and just to know, "I have a thing." And if you did that every single day, that's where my philosophy comes from. Create Something Awesome Today also the name of my podcast, but it's not just a tagline or anything. It's not like ... it's the philosophy that I feel saved me in the sense that, if you dedicate yourself to a single execution every day. You could have a 50% failure rate and the end of the year, you'd still have over 150 results to show for yourself, and every one of those 150 things you made, could do something for you because it only takes one.

Pat Flynn: I love that, and I love that in terms of the micro-level of creating these pressures, and these constraints. I think that's very powerful because, I mean for me and many other people knowing there's a deadline there is going to get us moving right?

Roberto Blake: Absolutely.

Pat Flynn: Let's zoom out a little bit, and talk about the macro-level and ... I think we all know that we should set macro deadlines for things as well, but I think a lot of times we put false constraints in there. Things that don't actually provide the pressure that's needed. And

for me, I got really quite lucky. And it really was that I got let go because then my pressures were, “Hey, I have this wedding to pay for, you know I have to make it work, I have no other choice.” And I guarantee you if I didn’t get let go from my architecture position I wouldn’t be here talking to you, people wouldn’t be here listening to us, and I wouldn’t be a business owner because I had been pushed out.

And I think that we all know we need to do the work, but we don’t feel forced to do it in some way, because we didn’t get let go, or we don’t have this real deadline. We might say, “Oh, we want to finish this project in two months,” But then what happens if you don’t? Nothing. You’re just where you were before, there’s no real negative consequence. How do you structure macro constraints, such that a person would actually feel compelled to do the work?

Roberto Blake: Necessity is the mother of invention. What you talked about with the macro pressure, that’s very real. For me, I think for a lot of people if they really focused on what their dissatisfied with their life? And they challenged themselves to be a champion in their own life, and that they could slay their dissatisfaction. I think if they literally put down a list of the things that they’re unhappy with in their life, and made those targeted things in an almost aggressive adversarial way.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Roberto Blake: That, that lets them, from a mindset perspective start to make real progress because they have something to fight against, that they’ve clearly defined. If they don’t have a larger, and I would hope in some ways ... in a weird way I almost hope they don’t have a larger macro pressure knowing that they’re getting ready to lose their job in the next 60, 30, 90 days, but for the people who do need something that serious I would say that there’s a couple of things they could look at. The culture of work and the future of work is shifting, automation is real. The culture of work is such, to where pensions that our parents and grandparents got, that’s dead to us Pat.

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Roberto Blake: Nobody is coasting to a pension, mommy and daddy's advice ... I mean I hate to say something almost borderline controversial here, but basically if you're ... Aside from good parenting advice, and certain basic things I would challenge people that, if your parents made their money before the cellphone, the smartphone, before the iPhone came out in what? 2007 or if they made their money pre-Facebook. That any advice they give you career wise, or business wise is outdated and it's probably a bad idea at this point. Just because they had the luxury of a cultural system that was not open to disruption, and to where decades could go by with no real major societal, cultural, or infrastructure change. They grew up in that, and that's no longer the case. It's a completely different environment. They grew up in this lush, decent, prairie where they could farm and grow things. You grew up in the desert. Their advice in that regard is not coming from a place that's as harsh and unforgiving.

For all of our benefits of technology the job market as you know Pat, is not what it was. We had things like the recession, we're in a bull market right now. The other shoe's got to drop at some point, college kids not being able to use their degree, or find employment. Those pressures should be real enough to people to understand that, there is no such thing as job security, and so the only way that you can make yourself truly future proof, and guarantee yourself the ability to produce income, and provide for yourself and your family. Is to take ownership and control of your ability to work, your ability to produce a result, take control of your reputation and you're standing and take control of your body of work.

You could be let go, and all the credentials, and accolades, and things you worked for your employer could tell you that you don't have the freedom to use that to pursue other employment or your future. That happens to people, on a regular basis and they're unprepared for it, if people need fear and a little bit of anxiety to motivate them, I want them to imagine the process and cycle of what happens if they're let go today, no fault of their own. Or more realistically for some people, what if the company goes under

tomorrow? You did everything you could, but the company goes under they have some kind of reputation based thing, and even just being associated with that company would make you a persona non grata in the traditional market, what do you do now?

Pat Flynn: How do you build a business out of a skill that you have, so that you can stay above the surface in that situation?

Roberto Blake: Well you and I as people who have employed other people to work for us, either in freelancer's or in your case ... In the case of Team Flynn, you know that entrepreneurs and business owners absolutely value skill, and clear demonstrations of skill and value.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Roberto Blake: The thing to get started would be, know that you own a solid 30, 50 pieces of work that represents you, that is not beholden to anybody else. That demonstrates your knowledge, and your skills and in addition to that, I would say you need documentation of your expertise in the form of some type of public commentary, on the nature of your craft and your industry. And that could take the form of blog posts that you can write out, if you don't have your own website, or blog. You and I both use Bluehost for that, you could use medium.com - it's completely free or, more practically you could go to LinkedIn. LinkedIn is one of the most powerful publishing platforms right now, and it allows you to not only post articles, and that could give you some more credibility and you can do commentary on the industry.

You could start a group for other professionals like you, to have open conversations about the industry. By starting the group and leading it, and curating it you become a thought leader in that micro arena and you could attract notoriety to yourself. You also have the ability to upload Native LinkedIn Videos. That can show you to be a subject matter expert, or at least a practitioner of your craft, or skill whatever it is. By talking about it, or you could show instead of tell. It doesn't matter how big the numbers are here, the point is that you have proof. You have a body of work that you have complete

ownership of, that nobody else has their hooks in. That can show your skills, and your capabilities.

Pat Flynn: Almost sounds like you're telling people that they need to build a brand, personal brand?

Roberto Blake: More than anything, I'm telling them they need to build a body of work that they have ownership with. Yes, I believe in personal branding so do you, Chris Ducker, friends of ours and it's worked. I want them to understand that a personal brand isn't being a Kardashian because they'll have so many people telling them that you're building a personal brand, you're not a bottled water, you're not a product.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Roberto Blake: I want people to understand that an employer, or someone offering you an opportunity will give the same scrutiny to you, as anything else that they're making a buying decision around and how are you positioning against that? Your personal brand is your personal power, and your body of work, your reputation, the influence that you have and it's your credibility, and a degree, and your previous employment may not cut it if there's something that happens as a cultural shift in the market, to undermine those things. And people need to be prepared for that, and I believe that when you ... I mean I was a graphic designer, you were an architect. When we went out, we had to bring our book and then it's evolved to you bring your book, you have your website for people to find you, and to reference you. But also, we know that if you have some people that are in your network, that can vouch for you that's always been the case. That's why some people go to a great name brand school is, they want the network, they want the credibility right?

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Roberto Blake: They want that brand association, but they also know that there's a little bit of nepotism in hiring so that the right person can walk you to the door, you can bypass the application process, skip to the

interview. Your personal brand can do that without the same amount of financial up front investment if that's the barrier, then you can supplement your lack of money with time because between you and me Pat people could develop a new skill but they may not have the ability to go to college and get a degree that says, "Hey, I have this skill, and I've been vetted, and I put four years in."

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Roberto Blake: But if you just have a body of work of 25 pieces of work. From the standpoint of someone like you or I that's like, "I need this thing done and I've got two weeks to find someone." What they show us is much more important to us than a piece of paper because the piece of paper doesn't help our customers, our clients, our audience, the execution does so we just need to see executions.

Pat Flynn: Alright let's do a little thought experiment here I'm gonna challenge you Roberto, if that's okay?

Roberto Blake: Oh, I love this.

Pat Flynn: We're gonna take the DeLorean back into time, you and me.

Roberto Blake: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Pat Flynn: And, they can't see me, but they can see you. And we actually go back to the day I was laid off.

Roberto Blake: Okay.

Pat Flynn: And you see me back in 2008, crying. And you kind of wait till I finish crying cause I'm in a very emotional state at that point, but then I get up and I'm like, "Alright. What do I do?" And I see you and I go, "Hey, Roberto." And you tell me what you do, and how you help, and the fact that you know now that I have this lay off coming in two months I have an opportunity in front of me, but I don't even know where to begin. What would you tell me?

Roberto Blake: The first thing I would start off with is, "Pat, tell me what it is that you

want? What is it that you want out of life long term? But also, if you could have your wish other than getting the job back in the next 60 days, what is it you actually want?"

Pat Flynn: For me more than anything and you're talking to younger me now?

Roberto Blake: Yes.

Pat Flynn: First of all I'd be like, "Where did you come from?" But also I'd be like, "Okay, okay. What I really want right now is just to survive cause, I have this wedding that's coming up, I need money soon cause it's gonna go away in two months and I just need something. I would love if I had a magic wand to be doing something creative, because I came from a world of architecture and actually, in architecture I was working my way toward that point where I can start to be creative." And that's what made the layoff even more dramatic was I was getting close to that point where I could finally start to have a say in what actually things look like versus, I was just doing the grunt work of creating blueprints, and CAD files and stuff I was getting there, I was on my way and to get that taken away from me hurt a lot.

I'd love to do something where I could create, and share, and have people benefit from what I was doing and if it was architecture or design related that'd be awesome because that's my passion. Where would you take me from there?

Roberto Blake: From there I would tell you, "Pat, get a piece of paper and we're gonna do some homework here. First of all I want you to make two columns and I want you to call one practicality, and then the other creativity. And in the practicality column I want you to come up with how much money you need to survive right now, how much money you need to be comfortable every month, and also how much money you need for this wedding and the things that you're getting ready to do."

That way we have a specific clearly defined number that we can

attack, and if we have that clarity it can reduce anxiety because we can make that manageable, we can break that down, we can figure that out, but then for you to be emotionally satisfied and fulfilled creatively, I want you to write down the things that make you happy, and that you like spending time on, and that would let you feel satisfied and like you're sharing things because I'm sure we can carve out time for those things too, and that you can balance these because that's the goal here, but we have to make them specific that way if it's not an abstract we can take action.

Pat Flynn: I love that. I think a really important part of that is the practicality this is 2018 Pat talking now, the practicality part is really, really important because I know a lot of entrepreneurs who have been in business for, years and they never feel satisfied because they don't even know if they've reached they're goals or not cause they didn't even have goals right?

Roberto Blake: Exactly.

Pat Flynn: When you, or when I talk to somebody whose just starting out that's usually the first thing I ask them is, "How much money do you need?" Because really, when you're in that desperate time, you forget about being practical sometimes cause emotions take over. I'm very appreciative that you shared that. Let's say I was like, "Okay, I just need what I lost." I was making \$2,500 dollars a month, at that point.

Roberto Blake: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Pat Flynn: I would say, "\$2,000 - \$2,500 dollars that would relieve me of any pressure because that's the number one concern I have right now is, I'm not gonna have any money coming in."

Roberto Blake: Alright. We know that on a breakdown you need to make at least \$100 dollars every single day, in order to survive.

Pat Flynn: First of all, now that I'm thinking that, when you put it that way, I'm like, "No, actually I don't," this is even breaking it down even further

cause I think a lot of people will do this exercise and say, a number, but then when you break that down even further it may not actually be true.

Roberto Blake: Exactly.

Pat Flynn: Maybe I focus on the month in terms of rent, in terms of groceries, in terms of gas.

Roberto Blake: Because the \$2500 a month that you had, it was helping you be comfortable. It wasn't you were having more than enough to just get by.

Pat Flynn: Right. And I told you earlier that number one thing is I just want to survive, right? What would it take for me to survive? Probably, at that time with the rent I was paying probably, \$1500 a month.

Roberto Blake: Which means that okay, for survival, it'd be \$50 dollars a day, but if we set the goal at \$100 you could have a 50% failure rate and still survive.

Pat Flynn: Mm. I like that.

Roberto Blake: Yeah.

Pat Flynn: But then my head is like, okay this all sounds great Roberto, but how could I get \$50 bucks a day? Nobody's hiring any architects right now, I can't get back in.

Roberto Blake: You are an architect, but that's your title and your career if I asked you what your skills were you'd probably say, "Well, I'm an architect." And you might leave it at that, but architects have a lot of skills, you have the ability to use CAD software, which means you also have the ability to teach other people how to use CAD software, but we'll get to that in a minute. But you have executions that you could do with CAD software, a single execution of something you can do even in a 2-3 hour period. With CAD software given who uses CAD software I would imagine, that an execution

with CAD software easily could clear \$200, \$300, or \$400 dollars on a singular execution as long as you can find somebody who wants that execution and it would still only be a 2-3 hour thing to do.

Pat Flynn: I also have Photoshop skills, from creating some of the design documents that were in proposals to clients and stuff.

Roberto Blake: Exactly. With Photoshop skills, there are plenty of Photoshop skills that have a \$10, or \$20 dollar execution to them that take 10 minutes. Because someone doesn't have that skill ... because the thing is, you only have to be better at something, than the person paying for it.

Pat Flynn: You only have to be better than something, than the person whose paying you for it.

Roberto Blake: Exactly. You only have to be better in execution than the person who wants to pay for it because, that person wants better, or they don't have the time to do it. Your skill level only has to either offset their lack of time because that's their real anxiety point.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Roberto Blake: Or, you're incrementally better at it than they are, or at least even if they perceive you to better at it than they are that's enough to say, "Take this off my plate because I won't have to spend time on it and, I'll get equal or better delivery from you, and I get back my time? This is worth that much to me because I don't want to deal with it."

Pat Flynn: I also, have this uncanny ability ... this was when I was in architecture, to make jobs more efficient. I was able to take something that took two hours, with my team in the office, I was able to make it more efficient such that it would only take 30 minutes so I know that I was helping that company make more money.

Roberto Blake: Cause you were a great project manager I'm assuming.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Roberto Blake: Automatically, I know that you can go to, at the time, back then, the websites were called different things. You had oDesk, Elance, Freelancer.

Pat Flynn: Yep.

Roberto Blake: I think Guru.com still existed back then. You had all these websites where people were starting the gig economy, and where people were hiring out for this for you, I would go to the jobs and immediately filter by price, and go to the most expensive ones, and not the ones that go hourly, but that have a flat price attached to them and then you would go in and you would slightly underbid by 20% pretty much anybody else for the same task, as long as it's a task that has hundreds of dollars attached to it. And then you know even if you get that one thing out of the way as a gig in your spare time that you, might have cleared what you needed to make for the week, on one execution, one task and that's just using some of those skills.

And then the other thing I would say is you could, go online at this time you said this was 2008?

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Roberto Blake: Okay. In 2008, there's a slight chance that you might've been able to get into the YouTube partner program back then, because they were still cherry picking they hadn't opened it up to everybody I don't think just yet, but even if they didn't you could've used CAD tutorials on YouTube to try to sell a course that you could've made, on your own for AutoCAD. And there would've been people who bought that because as you know it's expensive to go to college to learn to be an architect, if people can buy a course and get those skills, or the parents can buy it for them even when they're in high school they can see if they're any good at this, affordably they can learn the skill, and then maybe if they have to go to a community college they still know that they got real training directly from

someone who's a current practitioner of architecture.

That would be worth it to at least enough people, to maybe make you a few thousand dollars on sales and it's your beginnings of passive income. And I would say you could do that, you could also sell this cause you have to have a website anyway, you could have a blog about this because then a couple things happen, by you talking about this, and by also talking to your peers in architecture and maybe you start interviewing them, and writing articles about them you have people that you're getting more information out there, and that you're excited to talk to, you're deepening your relationship with people that might be able, if you still want to stay in the game, introduce you to a new job opportunity, or bring you into where they work because you have the ability to offer them exposure, the opportunity to talk about themselves, everyone's favorite subject.

You have a leverage point with, "Hey, it was so great talking to you and everything like that. Here's some things that are going on with me I was wondering what advice would you give me?" And then people love to give advice, I know I certainly do. Maybe then, they also on the back of that advice, they choose to then go out of their way to help you. A couple of things happen here, you're making the money to survive, you're still hedging your bets because you could stay in the game and you might be able to get a new job opportunity through working the network, and working the attention in the 60 day period but if it doesn't work out, you have a means of beginning to sell something. You have the ability to deliver on freelance services for your up month survival cash, and now you're creating a product, a distribution platform and a funnel where maybe you could get sponsorship, or ad revenue from Google adsense, things of that nature by either building a blog, or then a podcast, or a YouTube channel.

You're creating a media platform that allows you to, one give attention exposure to the industry, and to other people working in the industry, which makes you enough of a name to where maybe you can attract an opportunity, stay in the game or, you can

leverage this and monetize it and then you still have a creative outlet because you have to throw all your creative skills at this, so that helps satisfy a couple of things. It satisfies the practicality aspect of everything we're talking about, it future proofs you and still establishes you in your credibility even if you got a countdown on staying in the game, and then it's building your network and your reputation.

Pat Flynn: Dude, that was awesome. You know, I know this works because I did essentially that. But using information that I learned about a particular exam. Now that didn't fulfill my quote, creative side of things but it was still something that was top of mind, something that I knew more than other people of, and I started to build a name for myself. I don't think I even mentioned this ever, but when that site grew I had a lot of job offers as a result of me being the owner of that website. But I didn't even think about that because those came in at the point at which I didn't even want to go back. Because I was having so much fun as an entrepreneur.

Roberto Blake: Right. And you had the autonomy, you had the freedom, you had control.

Pat Flynn: Right. Yeah, I felt it for sure. But I could have definitely seen me going down an AutoCAD route. Number one, is this something people can still do today? Because you had mentioned back in 2008 you could've joined the YouTube Partner Program, is this all irrelevant information for today as well?

Roberto Blake: Most of it is, in the sense of the YouTube Partner Program from specifically that is, they opened it up to everybody with no vetting in 2013, which created some problems in 2017-2018 and they changed it now to where you have to have at least 1,000 subscribers, and 4,000 hours of watch time, 4,000 hours of watch time, which is not that bad. A lot of people who are small YouTubers do complain but the thing is, you wouldn't be making sustainable money, if you don't meet those thresholds anyway so it shouldn't be discouraging that, that's the vetting process now, because you need to make a significant amount of views to get the ad revenue money. But

having the brand on YouTube, is the direct opportunity to sell, whether it's merchandise, courses, or your services so that's still practical.

And today I would tell someone who is looking at YouTube as an opportunity, that instead of the ad revenue you won't start making money day one, but you could make money day one if you sell something and you use this as, the way that you would use a television program. You could be your own sponsor so to speak, and it's an opportunity to build brand and to build traffic to something you want to sell and attention around that. The other thing I would tell them is that the same equipment, and skills that you use as a YouTube creator, you can edit for other people and make a lot more money a lot quicker. Our friend Caleb can tell you about that, that the money producing content and editing content is very lucrative by itself, and for some people that's more lucrative than the people who are trying to monetize that in the form of ad revenue, usually up front.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative). That's so funny, and it reminds me of a story of a guy named Matt Donley, who followed my blog a long time ago. I haven't heard from him in a while but, I remember him emailing me because he quit his job to do ... He created an online course to help people use the program called SketchUp, which I actually used when I was in architecture.

Roberto Blake: Oh yeah. I remember SketchUp.

Pat Flynn: He has a site called MasterSketchUp, I think it's called .com and he started to create YouTube videos on showing people how to use SketchUp, just like you were talking about with me and CAD and he's built this name for himself, and he's built products, and has created this brand that has been supporting him since then. Definitely possible for sure.

Let's go back to 2008, Pat. You tell me this and I say, "Okay, this CAD thing sounds real interesting, you know I have some skills in CAD and I've learned a lot of things, things they don't teach you

in school this is great I can share this stuff,” My head would likely be, “ This would probably be a great opportunity for me to create something so that when I go look for another architecture job, I’m going to have that much more ahead, it’ll keep me practicing AutoCAD along the way, it’ll make my skills even better,” but then I go and I look on YouTube and I say, “wow, there’s a lot of people doing CAD stuff already, and it’s so much better than me, I’ve never done this before, that’s probably a sign that I shouldn’t go down that route.”

Roberto Blake: And I would say to you, but no one’s doing it your way, Pat. No one’s doing it your way, and no one’s doing it the way that you will teach it. And there are other people like you out there. Every single one of us is a misfit, and we can attract the other people that fit the same misfit mold as us and that’s enough because for all the people that are out there, that are already doing it. That’s not to say that people don’t want something else. This is just all they have as an option. Why not present them with another option, and allow the market to decide.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I like that. Dude, great thought experiment thank you. You crushed it. I appreciate that. I hope that was I’ve been really enjoying the process of random though experiments, if you’ve read Will It Fly you know in the beginning there’s three in there for you. It really puts context in to some of the decisions that you might make and I hope that was helpful for you.

Roberto Blake: It was. And I love that, and I love when people give me these kind of challenges. I love it.

Pat Flynn: That’s my role here man. I’m going to start doing more of that to some of the interviews, to people who come out for interviews because you know, I think that really helps a person shine on what it is that they’re really good at. And it’s very obvious that you know how this space works, and can help people who are in that position so thank you for that.

Roberto Blake: Yeah, absolutely.

Pat Flynn: As we finish up and again a reminder, go to the show notes page, click on the link or actually look and watch for video of Roberto in the Tesla. He talks a lot more about these kinds of things, and we talk a little bit more specifically about YouTube in that video, but also we get into your story. I highly recommend people watch that so don't forget. As we close in, you are somebody who creates a lot of content. Just like we were talking about, when you're getting started that's one of the best things you can do to make a name for yourself, to have a position in a particular space. You've been doing it for a number of years now. Can you go over your process of content creation? And how you are able to keep up with it? And still be creative? Because, that's the big worry I have, is creatives might hear this episode, they're going to go out there and they're going to feel now the thing that they enjoyed before, is something they don't enjoy any longer because it becomes a job. How do you speak to that?

Roberto Blake: Me, I always challenge myself to play the game differently than anybody. I understand the concept of the content treadmill, the YouTube treadmill.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Roberto Blake: Now I'm hopping on the podcast treadmill, but I figured out something interesting. For me, I prioritize what has my attention and my excitement, and then I think about, "How can I make that evergreen, quote on quote evergreen, everlasting how can I make that relevant at any given point in time?" And so I pick the combination of excitement and evergreen, so that no matter when this goes out, or how long this is out. It has value for other people, and it's also creating value for me. For me that's a thought exercise, that's a thought exercise of what's the Venn diagram look like of that? I do that, and then I jot that stuff down in my Apple notes, or in my Trello and I keep track of it and it happens throughout all the day, so I use my smartphone to just keep track of inspiration and things all day, every day.

I bookmark things in Instagram that excite me, and that motivate

me because it will trigger an idea later. Then I can siphon the idea for content or something from that as time goes on. Or I have a conversation with somebody and I'll make a note, or I'll make a quick Apple memo recording. I use the things available to me in terms of time and technology, in a very efficient way. And that's what I think is my secret, my secret is efficiencies, and that very moment to moment thing but then, I systematize that, and what I would say to someone especially if they don't have all day to set their own schedule the way I do, I would tell them well, "If you know that you have an hour of quiet time before the kids come home, use that time to either record your podcast, or film your YouTube videos. While you have that quiet time, because it's something that requires quiet, as part of the delivery of quality," So you have a controlled quiet environment in that window of time.

When things are noisy, and the kids come back home and everyone's screaming, that's when you put your headphones on and you edit. If you have the moment to do that, because then you're batching the priority of, "I don't need it to be quiet, I can make it quiet enough to do this other thing and the quality will not be affected by the environment." I look at things very practically like that. Now for me, batch recording is three to six videos back to back. I have the stamina and the energy for that. Not everyone will, but I also know what I'm going to talk about because I'm only talking about things that I know, and that I'm comfortable with so I don't have to do a lot of granular research, except unless I'm doing a product review, just get that information right.

Even on that, I might cheat and just pull out my smartphone, read the specs off and then put B roll footage of the product in front of that to cover, so that's a hack right? But what I did was, I just looked at what is it that I want to deliver on? What's the volume? In the early-ish days, I went to seven days a week of content for a while. I did that for over two years, and that's where a bulk of my content came from. I've scaled back since then, will ramp up again once I start outsourcing more parts of my day, because between Awesome Creator Academy and Create Awesome Media, there's a lot on my plate.

I still do the majority of this by myself, too much in fact, but I'm changing that, that's the 2018 goal is to hire my Power Rangers, and to deal with that. With that said, what I would tell someone who's in that position of wanting to get into this, is that they don't have to do daily content, they don't even have to do weekly content, Pat. I'll give your audience a really cool hack, if you want to own a space, and if you want to be the Netflix of your niche. You could just do seasons, and you could just do seasons of content. You could do 10 episodes like Game of Thrones, you could do 15 episodes or whatever like House of Cards of something, whether it's a podcast, or whether it's your YouTube videos and do that in cycles, and you could do a season a quarter, or two seasons a year and know that you just have it.

Then you have a packaged, finished thing that you could market year round as season one, and then it doesn't matter if you put out anything this week because you have something that is binge watchable anyway. This plays to the YouTube algorithm, this plays to respecting people's time, this plays to the psychology of, "I signed up for this." Versus if you do the one a week, or three videos a week YouTube thing. You could be hit or miss because people may not care about the topic, or this thing, or that thing, or may not have time that day. But with a series, and something episodic, it's built in for people to come back. And it's a great marketing strategy for distribution of something, and you can create buzz around this if no one in your niche has created serialized content like this.

I would tell anyone that's looking to get into the content game, that there's a lot of angles to tackle it with. That's why a lot of what I focus on when I work with people, whether it's brands, or whether it's people building and developing their own personal brand. I tell them to really look at this concept, of episodic serialized content as a really good starting point for launching something, and that they can always add to it, or set themselves on a schedule later. If you, in the first 30 days are releasing 10 episodes and that's a season, then that's a really good strong launch for the month, and then you can go the quality, and quantity balance route, but also gives you a clear objective. I like the clarity, I like the concise nature of that, and

it also sets expectations for an audience.

I would tell people that's a strategy that they could use to get started, or even to grow, if the treadmill feels too intimidating.

Pat Flynn: I like that. It seems more doable and there aren't the pressures of staying long term, consistent every single day, or every single week. But just in short bursts, and I think that's how most people work anyway is in a burst here, and a burst there. And it's playing to how a lot of us consume content these days. We do bursts of podcasts listening, or we do a full season of Stranger Things and then we're done for a while.

Roberto Blake: Exactly.

Pat Flynn: I really like that. I haven't really heard that specifically for YouTube, and it's happening more in the podcasting space now as well, so that's great. Dude, we could talk forever I feel like, but if you want to continue and hear Roberto and I talk, obviously. Head to the show notes page, I'll give you the link in just a minute and watch that Tesla video because it's a lot of fun, and we get to know even more about Roberto and hear some of these ... I mean you just heard a taste hearing this, of all the little tactics and stuff that are really, really helpful.

I've implemented a lot of what Roberto has taught, and it's definitely paid off, and I'm thankful that he is a good friend and we chat, he every once in a while just pings me and says, "Pat, I think you should do this with the description of your video, because I think that'll work out better." He really cares, he's such a nice guy. Roberto, thank you so much for coming on the podcast today. I think it was a great introduction to you, and I hope a lot of people follow you if they wanted to. And I know they will, where should they go?

Roberto Blake: Alright, so they can find me at @robertoblake pretty much everywhere in social media. If you want to check out the YouTube channel it's YouTube.com/robertoblake2, and that is the number 2. And then we also have some great content for you over on the blog

at awesomecreatoracademy.com.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Thanks man I appreciate you, and we'll talk again soon.

Roberto Blake: Alright. Thank you so much Pat, take care.

Pat Flynn: Alright I hope you enjoyed that interview with Roberto Blake, again you can find him at robertoblake.com, and also you can even learn a little bit more about him in the video that we created together. Tactics In a Tesla is one of my YouTube series, and you can check it out and watch it on show notes page, if you go to smartpassiveincome.com/session317 again smartpassiveincome.com/session317 that'll take you there. And again Roberto thank you so much for taking the time to hang out with us today. And that thought experiment, it was a lot of fun. I'm glad you enjoyed that, and I hope you all enjoyed it as well. Like I said earlier, if you haven't subscribed to the show yet make sure you subscribe right now, and also I want to mention, just speaking of creating awesome things, I want to give a big shout out to Nathan Barry the founder of ConvertKit.

You may have heard on the podcast awhile back, his company ConvertKit, which is the email service provider that I use, has just passed the \$1,000,000 MRR mark, which is \$1,000,000 monthly recurring revenue. And it's at no surprise, because he did a lot of things right when building his business from the ground up. He didn't bootstrap it, he didn't get any outside investing but he did a few things right, and one of those things was creating not just a great product, but a great support team to go along with it.

This is why I'm an affiliate for the company, this is why I'm an advisor for the company as well, and this is why I was able to get a special deal for you, if you are building your email list and you don't have an email service provider yet. You can get started with ConvertKit with a 45 day free trial, that's not available anywhere else. 45 day free trial, all you have to do is go to smartpassiveincome.com/convertkit45 again, smartpassiveincome.com/convertkit45 and that'll get you to access to the 45 day free trial. By the way that is an



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Hey guys, thanks so much, I appreciate you listening in, and make sure you subscribe to the show if you haven't already. We got a lot of good stuff coming, like next week's episode where we talk to a student of mine who's finding her stride right now, and you know that's one of my favorite things to do. I'm going to be doing more of it, so make sure you listen in because it's a good one for sure, it'll help you expand your mind, that's for sure.

Alright, thanks so much and I look forward to serving you in next week's episode. Cheers.

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