



SPI 347

How to Organize a Massive Event (Brick by Brick with Chad Collins)

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Chad Collins: The way this started, I went to lunch with a buddy of mine when I was at this start up in New Jersey, and we went to the mall. At the mall there was a LEGO Store, and I had never been in a LEGO Store before. In fact, I didn't even know they existed. I was like, "Man, we have to go in there," and he's like, "Oh, you're into LEGO," and I'm like, "Yes." We went in, and at the back of the store, there's a wall where you can fill . . .

Pat Flynn: You're listening to Chad Collins, the founder of a number of extremely large events. We've had episodes in the past about putting on your own workshops, putting on your own conference with maybe a few hundred, but imagine putting together an event in your space with tens of thousands of people. Not necessarily an event where it's just a bunch of speakers the whole time, but massive amounts of vendors in the space that you're in coming together. Imagine like a Comic-Con in San Diego, but for your industry.

This is what we're gonna talk about today with Chad Collins. You might be like, "Well, Pat, that's way too big for what I'm thinking and it's out of my league," but I want you to hear the story about how Chad got started, why he's going down this direction, and how you could possibly do something similar, and how powerful that can be for your business and your brand and your life, changing not just your life, but the lives of the attendees of that event too.

So we're gonna talk about all that but first, music please.

Announcer: Welcome to The Smart Passive Income Podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host—he doesn't like foods where the skeleton's on the outside of the animal, you know, like lobster—Pat Flynn!

Pat Flynn: What's up, everybody? Welcome to Session 347 of The Smart Passive Income Podcast. Thank you so much for joining me. My name is Pat Flynn here to help you make more money, save more time, and help more people too. Today, like I said, we have Chad Collins from ChadCollins.me, as well as OpenWorldEvents.com. He's

gonna tells us how this all got started and how you could possibly follow the same route too.

I met Chad at an event that I was speaking at in Boise called [Craft + Commerce](#); this is the [ConvertKit](#) conference. Chad was speaking on stage, and he talked about the story that you're gonna hear about, and it was just completely mind blowing. Plus it really made me feel like, that anybody could do this too. Is it for everybody? Not necessarily. We'll talk about who this might be for and how it might fit into what you're trying to do. [Full Disclosure: I'm a compensated advisor and an affiliate for ConvertKit.]

But let's not wait any further. Here's Chad Collins. Let's do this.

Hey, what's up, Chad? Thanks for joining us on the SPI Podcast. Thanks for being here, man.

Chad Collins: You got it, Pat. What's up?

Pat Flynn: Dude, I want to know how you got into what you do. Before we get into that, tell everybody what you do. What are you known for in this space?

Chad Collins: Well, we have an event production company called Open World, and at the end of the day we do one thing and we do it well, and that's we produce massive family events.

Pat Flynn: So define massive family event, because we've had people come on the show talking about events before, like conferences and little workshops and things like that, but tell me about, what does this family event look like?

Chad Collins: Yeah, for us massive really it's the size and scope of the event, right? So we do events in the LEGO space, so we have an event called [Brick Fest Live](#). We also have another touring event called [Minefaire](#), which is a Minecraft fan experience. Those events will go into something like the LA Convention Center where there's

150,000 square feet, and it's between 10 and 20,000 attendees over a weekend.

Pat Flynn: 10 to 20,000 attendees?

Chad Collins: Yeah, 10 to 20,000 attendees per weekend, and right now we're running at about 20 or so events every calendar year.

Pat Flynn: Dude, that's insane. Why? Before we get into how you got into this, tell me, what do you enjoy about that? That just seems super overwhelming to me to manage that many people at an event. Why do you do it?

Chad Collins: Well, at the end of the day, we got into this because I'm a LEGO fan, right? As a kid I was a LEGO fan, and when I was able to introduce my daughter to LEGO it kind of brought me all the way back. At the end of the day, the reason why is because we want to get into the brains of these kids, and the events we have are also educational at the same time. We believe that the more time you spend creating, whether it's in LEGO or in Minecraft right now, it's wiring your brain a different way. Really, there's an unlimited return on the investment in your time and dollars that you're spending in those two spaces at the moment.

So STEM education is a big deal. You, knowing from your architecture background, I'm sure there was time spent creating with different toys that you then applied to your career. Some of my best friends growing up are now in that space as well, and I know that us hanging out and playing LEGOs as a kid is what led them to go achieve what they've achieved.

Pat Flynn: Now, I remember watching your presentation at Craft + Commerce, where you introduced to us this world of massive, massive events like what you do, and you made me feel like I could really do it if I really wanted to. I never have even thought about it. Why would you say that this is a business model that people should potentially be interested in?

Chad Collins: Because it's the most powerful thing that you can do for your audience. Really, we actually wanted to go to an event. My daughter and I started a YouTube channel, and through the growth of the YouTube channel, we wanted to show our audience that they could be in a room of people just as enthusiastic as you are, right?

So we wanted to go to a LEGO event and the closest one was several states away. I live in Philadelphia and it's a big city, and I was surprised that there was nothing in my area, but there were other LEGO events happening, right? The idea was, well, let's create one locally. Let's create one here so people don't have to travel so far to go to one. When we did that, really, the intention in the beginning wasn't to scale and create an event production company. The intention was just to have this one event in our backyard where we can invite LEGO enthusiasts to participate, and also open it up to the public.

It's not until we saw how there was demand, how we scratched this itch of so many families, that we thought, "Wow, this is something that we can bring on the road." To your point of, "Is this a viable business model, is this something that I can do," I believe that you don't have to come out of the gate and have a 20,000 person show. You can have an event, whether it's for 15 people or 1,500 people or 500 people, and do it well even if there's other events that are in your space. You don't necessarily have to create something that doesn't exist, because the fact that you're creating it and it's your people that are gonna be coming to your event makes it unique enough. They're there oftentimes because of who is putting on the event, not necessarily because of the output at the end of the day.

Pat Flynn: Right. I'd love to understand the difference between something like what you said—it's a show, it's kind of an event like that, versus a conference, which most of us are kind of used to, which is you go and there's a stage and speakers. Maybe there's multiple speakers at the same time, and maybe there's some networking events at night. How does what you do differ?

Chad Collins: Well, we are open . . . basically it's the public. It's a consumer show.

It's open from 9:00 or 10:00 in the morning to 5:00 or 6:00 at night, and we bring in and we host different hands-on activities and attractions that families can participate in together. For something like LEGO for instance, where normally a child is at home and maybe they're playing with their mom or dad or brother or sister, they've never really played with hundreds or thousands of other people at the same time or competed in building challenges.

Same thing with Minecraft. We even have what we call Learning Lab at our Minecraft Community event, where Minecraft, there's curriculum now that's being used in school. We bring in these mentors, and they're teaching kids how they can leverage their experience in Minecraft and start applying that to coding and more advanced things.

These are things, again, that yes, you can play Minecraft all day at home on your device or on your console, but when you come to an event like this and there's hundreds or thousands of other people, now you're experiencing it with them shoulder to shoulder. Your parents are now being able to understand exactly why their kids are so immersed in this, and the light bulbs are going off in their heads too.

Pat Flynn: That's cool. I like that. What's the price point of an event like this usually?

Chad Collins: We range anywhere between \$19 and then we'll go all the way up to close to \$100, depending on the type of experience that you want. So early entry bundled with some swag, you're going to pay a higher price point. Then we also have afternoon entry where if you just want to come in for the last half day of the show, then you're not gonna pay for a full price ticket.

Pat Flynn: Okay, so it is a lot different than a conference in that, number one, the price point definitely lends itself to more of the consumer level, and so I'm imagining someone in the audience right now listening who may be in the field of fishing, for example. Maybe they have a fishing blog. Why not consider putting together an event where

you can bring vendors and people who are interested in the space to come together to learn about things, versus a conference where you have professionals who are coming in, and people sitting in chairs listening all day? This is a completely different feel, and I love that.

Before we move on, because I have so many questions about, logistically how that all happens, I would like to know, what were you doing before this? Tell me a little bit more, also, about your daughter and the YouTube channel, and how did that even begin?

Chad Collins: For sure. I started my career as an engineer for Lockheed Martin, so I was in government contracting for a long time. Then went to work for a startup in New Jersey, and those two experiences, working for one of the biggest companies in the world and then working for, literally, one of the smallest companies in the world, really lended itself for when I decided to launch this and go on my own, to take a lot of what I learned in corporate America and for startup and apply it to this business.

The way the startup . . . I went to lunch with a buddy of mine when I was at the startup in New Jersey, and we went to the mall. At the mall there was a LEGO Store, and I had never been in a LEGO Store before. In fact, I didn't even know they existed. I was like, "Man, we have to go in there," and he's like, "Oh, you're into LEGO," and I'm like, "Yes."

We went in, and at the back of the store there's a wall where you can fill a cup with as many LEGO bricks as you can. I used to, as a kid, write letters to LEGO asking for like, "I want to buy 4,000 of this specific piece." It was impossible back then. All they would do is send me back catalogs in the mail, like, "Oh, well, here's a catalog of all the new LEGO coming out."

So to see this and be like, "Oh, my God, this exists now," was incredible. So I filled up a couple of cups, I brought them home, I showed my daughter, she was seven years old at the time, and we started creating. The next day I went back to the LEGO Store, filled

more cups, brought them home. I didn't know this, but she was at home going, on her iPad, onto YouTube and typing in LEGO and watching all of these LEGO videos.

So the second day when I brought home more LEGOs, she asked, "Hey, could we create a YouTube channel all about LEGO?" I really didn't know anything about YouTube other than how to consume content. I knew nothing about how to post content, but I said yes. We literally just leaned her iPad up against the couch, and we hit record, and we started making videos and posting them up to YouTube.

Long story short, over 18 months we posted over 500 videos, accumulated over 12 million views on our channel. That's kind of what led me . . . I found you through that process, just learning about monetization of the channel, learning about growth, and that's what led us to initially create that very first event.

Pat Flynn: How are you able to produce 500 videos that consistently? Was it a daily thing for you guys? I'd love to know that process.

Chad Collins: It was just about every single day. I would come home, I would either buy a LEGO set from the nearby Toys R Us, or get some other stuff from the LEGO Store. I would come home, after dinner—because it was always after dinner—we would build the LEGO set, and then we would film. So Jordan and I would sit in my office at home, and we would talk about the LEGO that we built, and then after she went to bed I would go back downstairs and I would edit the video and upload it to YouTube.

It legitimately was the 7:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., almost every single day, just getting those videos up because during that time I still had my full-time job. And there wasn't the intent to create this event, right? All we were doing was connecting with our audience, and we were doing it consistently for eighteen months.

Pat Flynn: Why? I'm curious what kept you going because I can imagine a lot

of people, myself included, doing something similar for a month or so, and kind of just like, “Okay, this is cool.” Then to do it for that long and have that many videos, there’s gotta be some reason why you kept doing it every single day. What was the main reason?

Chad Collins: The main reason was family bonding. That was the number one thing.

Pat Flynn: Love that.

Chad Collins: Jordan was super into it. It was like, as soon as I got home from work, immediately that’s what we’re starting to talk about. It really became like a fun family game. We learned about YouTube, and especially in our space, especially with toy reviews, we really dove in and were like, “All right, what makes a channel pop?” It was being able to get product before anyone else. If you were able to find that product before anyone else had it or anyone else had a review on it, you delivered it first, well now that gave your channel credibility that maybe some of the other channels didn’t have. It really became a game where we started to learn the schedule, and especially of LEGO. When are these brand new sets going to show up in the stores and how can we get our hands on them first? Then it was almost like a race. We had this game where we’d get all the new sets and then we’d build them and try and get the videos up. That’s when we really saw our view count and subscriber count grow.

Pat Flynn: That’s so cool. I would imagine that at your house you just have this giant collection of LEGOs. How many would you say you have at this point?

Chad Collins: Oh, well with Brick Fest Live and a personal collection I mean, literally millions and millions of LEGO bricks.

Pat Flynn: That’s so cool. Let’s talk about the first event. You had this idea to kind of bring the community together, just the local community. What all was the process of putting that first event together and how many people showed up to that?

Chad Collins: Yeah, the first thing we did is I found a venue. There was an expo center just outside Philadelphia and I called them, and here I am just someone who wants to do a show with zero event experience and got an in-person meeting with them. Which I thought was important because I really wanted them to get to know me and get to know what we were all about, because oftentimes big venues, like they don't want to necessarily take a shot with someone that doesn't have experience, right? Normally a hotel with a couple thousand people is something a first-time event would do.

They had about a 20,000 square foot space that they had available for us. Then the next phone call I made was to some of the local builders and some of the big blogs in the space. The builders—there are clubs. Like any niche, there's a club or a group that you can go to. I went to them and told them that I was thinking about doing this event and would they participate? Really, anyone that we asked, anyone that we had a connection with from our channel, everyone said, "Yeah, we would absolutely participate," so it was a good sign. Now, no one threw any money down or anything like that. It was all verbal.

Pat Flynn: Had you thrown money down for the event space at this point yet?

Chad Collins: I had not thrown money down for the event space. All I had them do is hold the dates, and then . . . You can get a venue to hold dates for you for a certain period of time, pencil it in until someone else comes and says they're definitely serious and wants to ink a deal. The next phone call was to LEGO directly. They, at the time, had a community event liaison. Because there are these other LEGO shows happening, they already had a process for approving fan-created events in that space. When I talked to them at the time and laid out that I had already talked to the local LEGO fan groups, I've already talked to a venue, I already have dates penciled in, it really made it easy for them to say yes because I had already done all this homework ahead of time.

Typically, when people called in the past it was, "I want to create the event." And then they would say, "Well, go out and get all

these things, check all these boxes, and then come back to us.” But we had already had those boxes checked, so once we got that okay after speaking with LEGO then that gave me confidence to go ahead sign the agreement and then put some money down. Interestingly, I was also able to connect with a lot of vendors. These are the people that are going to pay for a space for a booth at your show. I was able to start selling vendor space, selling booths, and that helped with the initial outlay for the venue.

Pat Flynn: Had you had an event planner or somebody who had experience with events involved yet at this point when getting vendors to come and book booths and that sort of thing?

Chad Collins: Yup, no. Again, this was just leveraging experience that I had in implementations of different projects in corporate America. I think like anything, you guys probably talk about this a lot, it’s like you need to have the vision of what this is going to look like and feel like at the end, right? What does a successful event look like and feel like? Then work backwards from there, so that’s exactly what we did. With an event, there’s a date certain, so it’s not like you’re planning necessarily a launch where if things don’t go right you can always delay it and push it out. I mean, once you sign that contract with the venue, you know that it’s going to happen and there’s really no moving it, so we just went backwards from there and we gave ourselves a bunch of time. We had like eight or nine months to plan it and start selling tickets and filling space.

Pat Flynn: The vendors are really important because that provides a lot of income for yourself and the event and to pay for the venue and all those kinds of things. Is that where a majority of the income comes from? I’m curious to know tickets versus vendors in an event like that, like what percentage is . . . Where does the majority of the income come from?

Chad Collins: Yeah, the majority of the income right now is ticket sales. For that first event, it was absolutely ticket sales, interestingly. So we built up all this buzz that this event is coming and we didn’t have tickets on sale right away. It was building up on our channel and then our

vendors were talking about it, and the local groups were talking about it, that this LEGO event is coming but tickets weren't on sale yet. Then the October before the first show, which was April . . . The first show was April, 2014. October, 2013, we put tickets on sale. In the first weekend, we moved nearly 5,000 tickets.

Pat Flynn: What? Oh, my gosh.

Chad Collins: Yeah. It was unbelievable. Then we actually stopped. I hit the pause button like, no more tickets are going to be sold right now because as a rookie event producer I had no idea what 5,000 people in a room even looked like.

Pat Flynn: Wow.

Chad Collins: I called the venue back and said, "Listen, here's where we're at with ticket sales so far. Does the space . . . I just want to make sure that we can accommodate these people in the space that we rented." They're like, "Well, the space that you have would accommodate those people, but if you want to sell more tickets we have more space available." I was like, "Great. Let's move into the bigger room," so we moved into a bigger room. It was closer to 80,000 square feet, and then we were able to put more tickets on sale and end up selling out the event.

Pat Flynn: Do you at this point know what the program's going to be like? Because I'm just considering, "Okay, let's open up more room to get more people in," but it's like, "What are they all going to do when they're there?"

Chad Collins: Yeah, it was a big deal because, yeah, you could open up more room, but if you don't also double or triple the content then you're going to have a lackluster experience. We made sure that we were going to go find more content. For us, for that first show, the majority of the show was displays. People want to come in, they want to see awesome creations made out of LEGO, and it was up to us to go find it and then have them come. Whether it meant compensating them in some way to have it come or just reaching

out to other clubs that weren't necessarily local and then having them travel and come to our event and put displays on. We had people come in from different countries for that very first show and come display their LEGO.

Pat Flynn: That's amazing. I can imagine a team from Switzerland, they're going to build something and they ship pieces of this giant sculpture with them, and they have it in their hotel room on the bed or something. That's just incredible that you could create that sort of experience and then people come and they see. And LEGO is a spectacle, it's definitely something to look at. What was the name of that event?

Chad Collins: That event, the very first show was called Philly Brick Fest. Actually, now we've run that [Philly Brick Fest](#) every year in April, and the first two days are just for the hardcore LEGO fans. We do have special programming that's just for them, and then on Saturday and Sunday we open it up to the public for the event that we call Brick Fest Live. Brick Fest Live is the event that now tours nationwide.

Pat Flynn: Where else have you been?

Chad Collins: Brick Fest Live's been all over the United States. We've been to Denver. We've been to New York. We've been to California, Pasadena. We've been to Houston. We've been to Minneapolis. I mean, we've done that show probably close to fifty times.

Pat Flynn: That's amazing. I want to go back to when you did your first event and go through little thought experiments and situations with you. Let's say, for example, you're putting on your first event and I'm a vendor that you're interested in having come attend your event. But it's your first time, so for me as a vendor I'm a little bit like, "Okay. Well, how do I know if this is going to be worth my time, worth my money, worth my team to go out there?" What's your pitch to me as a vendor for your first-time event?

Chad Collins: I had drafted a letter that I emailed to a lot of these vendors. Now, remember the YouTube channel was our foundation, and a bunch

of these vendors had sent me things in the mail for Jordan and I to review on our YouTube channel to give them more publicity.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome.

Chad Collins: The first thing I did is I called the person that I had that best relationship with, a company called BrickWarriors, and he immediately was like, "Absolutely. If you do this event I'm in." Once we got BrickWarriors in then it was, "Okay . . ." It's, Ryan Hauge is the founder of BrickWarriors. "So who else do you think would want to participate?" He knew from the other events that he went to who would be the most likely to participate. Then we just kind of went down that list methodically.

I also attended other LEGO events before ours to go and get face time with the potential vendors and the potential displayers. There was an event in Virginia that I attended and I was able to meet a bunch of these that would become our clients, these vendors that were already displaying and selling their wares at other LEGO shows. Now I'm introducing them to another market that they could come into.

Pat Flynn: That's huge. What about the example of, I'm an influencer and, yes, you probably at this point with the YouTube channel have already built a relationship with a lot of other influencers, but maybe there's a big celebrity in the space. I don't know if . . . How would you approach that person to maybe come in and draw a crowd, obviously, if they were to say yes to make an appearance?

I'm imagining, for example, like Comic-Con. This feels very Comic-Con to me. It's like a display and an announcement of new things, and Comic-Con is huge in San Diego, and I'm sad to say I've been in San Diego for over twenty years and I have yet to go to Comic-Con, which is quite sad. But I'm imagining you want to get a celebrity but it's your first event. Is that even possible? If so, what is that conversation like?

- Chad Collins: Yeah, in the LEGO space at the time, there was a channel called The Brick Show that was the number one YouTube channel. Right? That's who Jordan first saw. She would show me their videos and that is really what inspired her to want to do YouTube. I knew that I had to have a relationship with these guys, with this channel. It would be great to, of course, have them at our event. The way I initiated contact with them was . . . Remember, we talked about being the first to get LEGO sets, like you're being the first to get something?
- Pat Flynn: Yeah.
- Chad Collins: We got something before their channel had it, and instead of just going right to YouTube and putting it on YouTube, I reached out to them and told them I had it and offered to send it to them.
- Pat Flynn: Wow.
- Chad Collins: Then they replied back and said, "You know what? It's okay. We're going to find it, but do you have any of these other things?" They were cataloging LEGO from old stuff that also people never had reviews on, and I happened to have something that they wanted, so we started our relationship that way, where I shipped them some old LEGO set that I had that they wanted to do a review on and then we just stayed in touch.
- We would go to New York Toy Fair. LEGO would invite certain YouTube channels to Toy Fair so we could get video of all the new LEGO sets before anyone else did. There were only two or three YouTube channels invited. The Brick Show was one of them. We were one of them. That's where we were able to meet for the very first time. That was before we hosted our very first event, so then by the time we were ready to host our event they were one of the influencers that I was able to call and say, "Hey, would you guys come?" Of course they did, so it's been great.
- Pat Flynn: That's awesome. That's so cool. Then the final thing related to this

sort of setup of your first event here, is this is a LEGO event. You don't own LEGO. LEGO is another company. Do you or did you . . . How did you work that relationship? Because I want to encourage people to explore this as an option for a business model, but I don't want people to just go, "All right guys, I'm going to create an eBay event and I'm just going to throw it and sell tickets," and all of a sudden eBay, which I know is very strict on how people use their brand, would like shut them down and even worse. How do you get around the legalities of that?

Chad Collins: Yeah, so first off, we did contact LEGO and let them know what our intentions were ahead of time. They have not licensed their IP to us. We are Brick Fest Live, an independently produced event. There are things that we are allowed to do, there are things we are not allowed to do.

We are not allowed to use the LEGO logo. We are not allowed to use the LEGO minifigure, but we are allowed to create our own brick built mascot that we call Brick Bot. That is the face of our brand. That's a LEGO built character that is only associated with Brick Fest Live. We are allowed to descriptively say that it's a LEGO fan experience. That's not part of our name, the LEGO trademarked name is not our brand, but we are allowed to use it as a descriptor and go on with that.

On the other side with Minefaire, our Minecraft event, we are under license from Microsoft. That's an event that we run in official capacity.

Pat Flynn: Okay, I'd love to transition into that. Thank you for that by the way, that's super helpful. Obviously, reaching out to that company to make sure everything's in alignment and that you're following the rules so that you can keep that relationship moving forward and everybody's happy, that's the most important thing.

You have this other event, so that's for Minecraft.

Chad Collins: Yes.

- Pat Flynn: Minecraft, another huge thing that I am also involved with. Now it's LEGO, but in the digital space in Minecraft, which is really cool. How many years after the first event did you decide to explore this second event?
- Chad Collins: It was a little more than two years after. The first event was in April of 2014. We actually then produced another show called Young Innovators Fair, which is a science and tech show. That was January of 2016, and that brought in different science and biology and all these different innovation worlds.
- Pat Flynn: Sounds cool.
- Chad Collins: It was so cool. One of the worlds was called Hacker's Hideout. In that world we had a group come in and they wanted to do all this Minecraft stuff. We're like, "Great."
- We had this idea that we wanted to do a Minecraft show, but at that event in January we really saw how much enthusiasm there was towards Minecraft, which really gave us the confidence to say, "All right, yes. The next big thing that we're going to do is going to be Minefaire."
- Then we did that show: October, 2016 was the very first time we did that, a little after two years after the first show.
- Pat Flynn: That's amazing. You said that one is indeed sanctioned and licensed through Microsoft.
- Chad Collins: Yes.
- Pat Flynn: Did you approach them in a very similar way? You didn't have a Minecraft channel, did you?
- Chad Collins: Right, we didn't have a Minecraft channel. The first event that we did was not operated under license, it was also operated as an independent production.

What we saw—and it was interesting in the Minecraft space, that’s where you start talking about the YouTubers and the celebrities. There are way more high-profile influencers in video games now, especially in Minecraft, than there ever were and ever will be again probably in the LEGO world.

We knew that getting these YouTubers, where kids are going to want to have meet and greets with them and all that, was a big part of it. We did our homework and we looked at, “Are there other events that have happened before in this space?” What we found was that Microsoft had their own event called MineCon that they did one time a year in one part of the world. That was it; that was a really high-end event.

Pat Flynn: That’s the one in the UK, right?

Chad Collins: They’ve had it in the UK, they’ve had it in Anaheim. They’ve run it four or five times. There were these other independently produced Minecraft events that have tried to start but they were mired by failure. Some events even sold tickets and then they ended up canceling the event the week before it happened.

There was this black cloud over other independently produced Minecraft events. It’s something that we had to battle against, but thankfully we had this history of all of these other events that we produced. When we went to approach now a potential vendor, or sponsor, or YouTuber to participate at Minefaire, even though there was all this stuff that was happening in the Minecraft community with events that were non-starters, we were able to show, we have this body of work with Brick Fest Live and Young Innovators Fair. That gave them the confidence to say yes and want to participate.

It really all comes back down to that initial foundation that we built. No, we do not have a YouTube channel, a personal YouTube channel all about Minecraft, but it’s still also riding on the foundation of the YouTube channel we had all about LEGO. That led us to Brick Fest Live, which led us to Young Innovators Fair, which enabled us to promote and produce Minefaire.

Pat Flynn: I think a lot of people are going to be wanting to start YouTube channels after this conversation. As you can tell, you grinded for it and you went 500 videos in. It kind of unlocks these opportunities through these connections that you're making, which is really great.

I agree with you on the Minecraft stuff, I know that my son follows a number of YouTubers who initially started as Minecraft streamers and YouTubers, and they're huge. DanTDM, and stampylongnose, and all these.

Chad Collins: There's Unspeakable.

Pat Flynn: Yes, I know these guys. I feel like I know them a little bit more because they're in my house all the time through the YouTube videos that we watch. They're so fun.

Do you pay them to come? I'm just still curious on the bigtime celebrities, how you get them? They're probably being asked all the time for things like this, and they probably have PR people that you're speaking through. Can you give us some insight on that? Those guys are going to be the ones that sell the tickets really, because people will come to see them.

You talked earlier about having it be an amazing place for a family to come in. I know Keoni, if he saw one of his YouTube favorites, he would just have the best time of his life. You want them there for those moments; how do you provide those moments with these celebrities who are so in demand?

Chad Collins: The thing is—there's a lot of things that you said there and I think there's a lot of things to consider. One is, we actually won't announce our lineup until almost two weeks to thirty days before the show.

What that does for us, we do announce that we are going to have YouTubers, we are going to have creators at our show, but we're careful in the sense that we're not leveraging necessarily their brand and their audience to sell tickets. If they happen to cancel,

and a lot of these guys are—they're not professionals in all cases, and sometimes their plans change or other opportunities come up. We don't want to get ourselves into a position where we're necessarily selling a ticket because one person is going to be there.

Unlike a Comic-Con. Comic-Con's different, like you mentioned. Comic-Con, "Oh, The Avengers are going to be there." You know, The Avengers are going to be there, they are absolutely the reason why people are going to buy tickets.

For us, we just want to let folks know, "Yes, we're going to have eight to fifteen creators; we're going to announce them as we get closer to the show." That's not necessarily the reason that they're buying the ticket. Once we announce it, we may sell more. It really put us, the production company, the producer of the event, in the driver's seat where we don't necessarily have to compensate a creator based on their following.

What we are able to do with creators, if they do commit early and they do want to promote, we will give them an affiliate link. Just like any other event, they could be compensated on the amount of tickets that they sell. For the most part, we'll get them to the event and then they're able to monetize by selling their own merch, for instance.

Pat Flynn: Okay, they have their own booths or something.

Chad Collins: Yes. We set them up on a stage and we create their experience at the show. Then they're able to monetize the fans and the audience that way.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome, that's great. I would imagine as a creator myself, to know that a company is not reaching out to me just to leverage the brand that I've worked so hard to build to sell tickets to their event—you're reaching out to me for the right reasons-kind of thing.

Chad Collins: Yes. It really makes the conversation easier. The flipside is, if you do want to do an event and you want to build it around a certain one

or two or three different people, then absolutely announce them way ahead of time. Leverage their audience, and have them post on their social channels, and give them those ticket links to go sell tickets.

We decided to, for this particular event, to do it the other way. The brand, Minecraft, is big enough where that's what's going to drive the ticket sale, not necessarily the creator that's going to be there.

Pat Flynn: Dude, this is so insightful. The final topic I want to talk about before we finish up, I also want to plug your events and your production company in case people want to learn more about all that stuff. We'll do that in just a minute.

Ticket sales in general: What are you doing for marketing and advertising for more tickets being sold?

Chad Collins: We primarily use Facebook for acquiring all of our leads and selling them tickets. We know that mommy is the CEO of the household, and it is our mission to find as many mommies as we can, whether it be Instagram or Facebook. We've created this process where . . . Imagine, when we used to go to concerts as kids before the internet—I call this the Billy Joel method.

Billy Joel would say, "I'm coming to Philadelphia and tickets are going to go on sale on this day. You can only get them at Tower Records." We used to sleep out on the sidewalk the night before so when tickets went on sale we got the best seats. There's a lot of people that are listening that are like, "Oh my God, we used to do the same exact thing."

Now, how do you do that online? What we've done is we've created this presale waitlist where we get people to opt in. They're not opting in for a how-to guide, they're opting in for the right to be the first to know when tickets go on sale. We'll run a two week lead acquisition campaign where people are just opting in for the right to know when tickets go on sale.

Then we tell them, “Tickets are going to go on sale on this day, at this time.” That’s when they get the email with their secret link that isn’t advertised on the website. They’re only getting it because they opted in. That’s going to get them access to that first batch of tickets that go on sale at the very best price.

Pat Flynn: That’s like phase one, right?

Chad Collins: It’s phase one. Then it’s really a cycle of rinse and repeat. We’ll do pre-sale, we’ll do super-early bird, early bird, advanced. We’ll continue that process all the way up until the event.

Pat Flynn: That’s so cool, thank you for sharing that with us. Before you go, tell us all the good places to go check out more of what you have going on, including your events, and your company, and all that.

Chad Collins: You can definitely check out OpenWorldEvents.com, then you can see all the productions that we have and where they’re going to be coming. If they’re coming to a city near you, we’d love to have you.

Then for me, you can check out ChadCollins.me or look me up on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com), that has become my favorite platform.

Pat Flynn: Love it man. Thank you so much for the value today, it’s very inspiring. I think it could potentially open up a lot of big opportunities for people. I appreciate you man.

Chad Collins: You got it Pat, it’s been fun.

Pat Flynn: Alright, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Chad Collins. Again, you can find him in a couple places: ChadCollins.me as well as OpenWorldEvents.com. I’m looking to bring in my family to one of those events very soon.

Chad, thank you so much man, I appreciate you coming on. Everything you’re doing, especially to help inspire kids in the realm of education and Minecraft and all that stuff, does play a big role in



education as well. Keep doing what you're doing and thank you for the inspiration today.

For those of you that want to get links to all the great things that we talked about today, all you have to do is go to the Show Notes page at SmartPassiveIncome.com/session347. Again, SmartPassiveIncome.com/session347.

A big shout out and thank you to everybody who has recently left a review on [iTunes](#) and wherever you're listening for The Smart Passive Income Podcast. It just means so much to me. I do get notified when I get them in, I have some tools that help me see them no matter what country you're in. Again, thank you so much for all those amazing reviews.

Just keep on rocking guys, I cannot wait to serve you in the next episode. If you are not yet subscribed to The Smart Passive Income Podcast, all you have to do is pull out the device and hit subscribe. I appreciate you so much for that.

Have an amazing day and I'll see you in the next episode. Cheers.

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