



FlynnCon1 – The Unexpected Story – A Behind the Scenes Interview with Pat Flynn

October 2, 2019

Pat Flynn: This is a really special episode of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. Exactly one week ago, there were 400 entrepreneurs in town, here in San Diego, California to join me at a live event that me and my team put on called FlynnCon. It was a two-and-a-half-day event here in San Diego, and I finally recovered enough to talk about it. And what you're about to hear is an interview with me—actually, a great idea that a good friend of mine, Michael O'Neal, who is the host of the Solopreneur Hour Podcast, a great interviewer and one of my favorites. He said, “Hey, Pat, how would you like to have me come on your show and I'll interview you about FlynnCon because I think your audience would be really interested to know what it was like to put on this event. Some of the things you did, some of the unexpected moments, the things that didn't go right, to just share how things went.” And I thought that was a great idea.

So what you're about to listen to is Michael O'Neal come onto our show here and to interview me. He'll also be simultaneously . . . I'm not exactly sure when he's going to do it, but he may be posting this on his particular podcast as well. But if you're listening to this and it is October of 2019, that means that you're getting to listen to this when most people do. Some of you, however, may be listening to this way ahead of time. I'm going to be giving this episode to the attendees to FlynnCon and a few certain communities that I own early so that they'll get some insight on what FlynnCon was like, fresh off of FlynnCon and not having to wait a couple months. But if you're listening in October, all good. By now I will have announced FlynnCon2. And there will be tickets available at flynncon2.com. You can go there and check out the theme for 2020 as well as some of the programming. And we'll talk about some of the big mistakes that I made during FlynnCon1, what it was like to bring sponsors on and the different areas of the conference and some of the things that were unexpected. Things that I didn't plan until in the moment that worked out at the event too. So sit back, relax. Let's play the intro and on the other side of it, we're just going to dive right in. To Michael O'Neal and Pat Flynn in the studios, in the WeWork in San Diego, California talking all about FlynnCon1.

- 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 secretly wishes he could do woodworking all day, Pat Flynn.*
- Michael O'Neal: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income studios, ladies and gentlemen.
- Pat: We're using a brand new piece of tech right now called the RØDECaster Pro. I'm turning it down so we can have a little bit of ducking, but—
- Michael: Oh, Look at you.
- Pat: . . . This is the default song that comes on it and it kind of pumped us up a little bit.
- Michael: It does. This is a great piece of kit that I've never really played with. So this is really cool.
- Pat: Yeah.
- Michael: And I've been nerding out, you know me I nerd out about all this.
- Pat: Absolutely. So that's really cool, but I'm really stoked to have you in my studio at the WeWork in San Diego, California to interview me. We're kind of doing a fun little thing. I'm going to be on Mike's show. This interview is going to be on my show as well because something really crazy just happened last weekend. I ran my first event and Mike came up to me and had this really amazing idea to interview me for the podcasts and just ask me all the things that were going in my head since I'm fresh off this event right now. Great idea and thank you.
- Michael: Thank you. And before we get started, and in the interest of gear, I wanted to give you a little thank you present. For just being awesome for many years.

- Pat: Thank you. You didn't have to do that.
- Michael: I know. But I did.
- Pat: You're like I'm here, you're welcome.
- Michael: Yeah. But you have kiddos and sometimes you want to work and you want to focus and you're not here at your lovely WeWork, so these will come in handy for such things.
- Pat: Oh dude, what are these? So I was just handed this leather or pleather-looking container that has a zipper. I'm opening up the zipper right now. Can you hear that?
- Michael: Yep, that's—
- Pat: It's a very long zipper.
- Michael: . . . Okay, we'll leave all that alone.
- Pat: And I'm opening it up. Whoa, some really nice looking headphones. That—
- Michael: Yeah.
- Pat: Whoa, okay. From—I'm reading it on the back, it says NightOwl. And I think the company name is AudioQuest. Tell me about these. Thank you by the way.
- Michael: As you know, one of my other shows is all about high-end audio. And it's one of my passions, so I get to review some really great gear.
- Pat: Nice.
- Michael: So when we get that stuff in, there's only so much I can put on my head. This company—as I've gone through the ranks of hi-end audio, if you've never heard of it, it's probably some hi-end audio company.

It's usually a guy's name or something like that. AudioQuest makes phenomenal gear and these are one of their best sets of headphones.

Pat: Thanks man.

Michael: You plug them in and you're in this different . . . They really are different. You will notice a difference especially if you run something like Tidal, which is a higher resolution version of something you get on Spotify or Pandora. And all of a sudden, you can literally sense where the band was. You go, oh, the bass player's right there, the singer's right there, the drummer's over there on the left, and you can hear it in the music where with Pandora and Spotify, it sort of mushes into one kind of mushy pile.

Pat: That's awesome man, thank you. And I know you're an audiophile, you are a proficient drummer. I've seen you drum. It's amazing.

Michael: Thank you.

Pat: And this is really cool. Thank you, man. I wasn't expecting that. And so this episode, I don't know on your end, but on my end at least it's not sponsored by this company.

Michael: No.

Pat: And just to get that out of the way, but I appreciate that man.

Michael: This is a real, actual, gift that I thought you'd like.

Pat: No, I appreciate that.

Michael: These kids, they got to sleep and you want to listen to your Tchaikovsky or whatever.

Pat: Thank you, man. (*The sound of applause.*) Yeah, I had it on mute.

- Michael: That was—
- Pat: I'm playing with the soundboard on this RØDE.
- Michael: Yeah, it was a little bit of a— (*Trombone plays sad “womp womp womp.”*)
- Pat: Nice, nice. Okay, that's enough of that. Thank you, man. I appreciate that.
- Michael: So walking in the door today of WeWork, and we work in La Jolla, there's a big placard sticker on the door that says “LEED Platinum.” And I'm wondering if you have noticed that as you've walked in and made the connection between where you started and where you are?
- Pat: Yeah, definitely. I haven't really sat down to really let that sink in. But every time I walk in this building it says, “LEED Platinum,” meaning it is one that qualifies for a certain certification within the green building, sustainable, environmental design sort of space. And that's where I got my start as many of you listening to this might know. I graduated with an architecture degree and after getting laid off, it was the LEED exam that I created a website for to help people pass that really changed my life and helped me become an entrepreneur. And here we are now and I'm now working out of this building that is LEED Platinum certified which is the highest level of certification in the LEED industry. So yeah, every time I come in, it's kind of a little tiny reminder of like, hey, you used to do that. And you've kind of graduated beyond that now.
- Michael: How often or are you capable of reflection on this last, it's been about nine, ten years I imagine, right? How often do you pause and go, whoa?
- Pat: It happens once a week because I do a lot of podcast interviews, right? And a lot of people will ask me about my story and I don't mind and I love telling that story because it reminds me, every single wee.

And I think that helps me because it keeps me grounded, “Jenny from the Block” situation. And I think a lot of it also comes up in conversations at home with the kids and my wife, April. We often just sit and after the kids are down we go, how did we get here? Then we talk about it. Remember when I got laid off and I was supposed to be an architect, imagine what life would be like if I was working nine to seven every single day. We wouldn't have the kids be the way they are today. And of course, it just makes me reflect on, wow, I'm so glad I got let go back in 2008.

Michael: And your kid's polite and delightful and fun and your son was on stage at the first annual FlynnCon, which had to be a huge thrill for you.

Pat: He was. It was really cool and a lot of people go, wow, he's a natural up there but just like their politeness, just like how kind and caring they are to other people, just like how they are very social, our kids, they don't mind speaking to adults, they're comfortable doing that. Obviously, we control that to make sure they're safe while doing so. But it was a lot of hard work. Much like anybody who seems like a natural, it's usually not that. April, especially, has worked so hard to give Keoni confidence and to work through his a lot of mental blocks that a lot of us experience as well. “I'm not good enough,” or “I'm so scared, what are people going to think about me?” And it's a daily thing for us.

I mean, April and I work so hard to ingrain in our children that you have to share your ideas because there are people out there who can benefit from them. And there are going to be people out there who are going to judge you but there are people who need you and that's who you need to focus on. And that's often what helps the kids get over sort of any fears. Kai dancing in front of the audience at FlynnCon at the pool party afterwards and having the confidence to go up there. It reminds me of her first time on stage. And it was this big luau sort of situation. And she just cried the entire ten minutes at her performance. She stood there, cried, and I felt for April, I felt for her. Then the next time she only cried half the time. The next time, it

was a quarter of the time and then now she just has confidence to— with just two other girls—go up there and make it happen and deliver a good show. It's a lot of work.

Michael: The confidence piece is really interesting, especially coming from you. The way we're sitting recording this episode is reminiscent of now what would be seven years ago in New York City at NMX where you were speaking and we had a quick. . . We went to a smoothie bar because you were in smoothies at the time.

Pat: It was juice I think.

Michael: Yeah. And it was the first time we'd met, and we talked on email a bunch, and this was hours before you were about to present. You were going back to your room. You were going to put on what you're going to wear on stage and then rehearse your speech another five times.

Pat: Yeah.

Michael: Really, it's been cool for me to watch this. I came from a showbiz family and I was a professional drummer for a zillion years.

Pat: So you're used to it.

Michael: Used to being on stage. And there's also something about riffing on something you know versus something you don't. And it's like, oh, if you give me a subject and give me a microphone, I'll go talk about it. I have no problem with that.

Pat: Sure.

Michael: So I remember watching you then and then a few years later at something, whatever it was, I've seen you many, many times. And then this was really fascinating. You were on stage, you were interviewing that great dude that had the Forrest Gump photography career. That he just kept stepping into a new amazing thing. All of a sudden he's Usher's . . . Usher?

- Pat: Yeah.
- Michael: Usher's photographer.
- Pat: Usher's photographer, Walid Azami who is our most popular guest on AskPat.
- Michael: Oh yeah. And so, I remember I was sitting there watching him, but I was watching you. And you were so comfortable. You were just chilling on stage. You had a real utter confidence about you. And I remember thinking that human didn't exist seven years ago. The one that didn't know exactly what was going to happen, and would have been okay with it, and I love that evolution. The evolution of Pat in the last seven years, especially as it pertains to confidence in something you didn't really know that well. Give me a little bit of the evolution from your perspective.
- Pat: Yeah, from my perspective it was an evolution of trusting myself more than anything. Realizing that no matter what happens that I'm able to get through it. I mean, there were times where I prepared so much for a talk and yet still things went wrong. And I realized that it wasn't necessarily the preparation that made me feel better. It was just knowing that no matter what happened, I'd be able to figure it out. And this is why I feel I'm a better interviewer now. I don't prepare my questions ahead of time like I used to. I trust myself to cover the content in a way that will be helpful for people. On stage, specifically, I know where I'm going, but I don't know exactly how I'm going to get there. And oftentimes, it's those moments that happen unexpectedly following that gut instinct, like Walid was talking about at FlynnCon, that really make moments special.
- There was a moment where I spoke on stage about the ladders I've been on. Which I really love that analogy of, in college, I was on the educational ladder. And then a literal ladder as a student director of a marching band. It was really cool. I did this little experiment, where I had the audience sort of sing a note. And then I had the middle

group of the audience sing the third and then the other side sing a fifth and I had them all kind of in chorus.

Michael: Da da da.

Pat: Yeah, and the whole audience together and kind of raised my hands up to make him go louder and put it down to making those softer. Just like I was in band again, and I was on the top of the ladder—

Michael: It's like that Bugs Bunny thing, “waaaaaah.”

Pat: Yeah, it was exactly like that. And it was really cool moment. And that was sort of done on the fly. But even those ladders themselves, I don't know if you were there, because I know you were at two events this weekend. And I appreciate you for making time for mine, in addition to this other one that you were a part of as well.

Michael: I missed that one.

Pat: But what ended up happening was I wanted to talk about the ladder I was on in college and then how I moved over to the ladder of the corporate ladder, right? Just how we always hear climbing the corporate ladder and how I was doing that. And then after almost getting kicked off that ladder, seeing this new ladder, this new entrepreneurial ladder and wanting to go there but I couldn't climb that ladder because I still had a foot on the other ladder. right?

Michael: Right.

Pat: And so—

Michael: You weren't fully committed to it, yeah.

Pat: Wasn't fully committed. And so many things happened only after I fully committed in my head that I was meant for this new ladder because I went to five years of school for architecture. My parents paid their way through for me, I was like, this would be letting them

down if I didn't do what they had set me out to do, right? So the day before the event, I go to Jess, who's my amazing executive assistant, and I go, "Hey, Jess, I need three eight-foot ladders." And she goes, "Okay." Like she always does, and she gets it for me. And then I tell the AV crew beforehand, I'm like, "Okay, guys, this is what's going to happen. I increased the transition between these two slides from two seconds to forty-five seconds. So it's going to be a really slow transition." And the transition was showing the slide that had the tops of ladders, and then it would go down to the bottom of the ladders really easily. But just visually on slides, that's how I was going to do it. But now I wanted physical ladders on there.

So then what ended up happening was in that forty-five seconds, they played some background music and I just went off stage, I brought a ladder on, went off stage brought a second ladder on, went off stage brought the third ladder on and then there's three ladders right there on stage. And I'm climbing them and I'm conducting the audience, and then I climbed a second one for my career, and then I straddle the second and third one. So I'm like right in between. And then there's this very sort of impactful moment where I talk about the moment I finally made the leap. And in that moment, I stepped from fully the second ladder all the way to the third. But then the ladder started moving back and forth. The middle one, which was unexpected. It almost kind of fell. And then I got on the third ladder, and I was just like, "See, sometimes it's not always going to be an easy transition." And that stuff just, it was unplanned—

Michael: Perfect.

Pat: I'd never rehearsed it. And it was perfect.

Michael: You couldn't have rehearsed that better.

Pat: No. And things like that I trust myself to figure out as I go now, which would have never happened back then. I was so . . . I remember the first time I spoke on stage in 2011. I wrote every single word I was going to say because I didn't trust myself.

- Michael: Right. And then that evolved into this think on the fly.
- Pat: Yeah. I feel like FlynnCon and what I do on stage is a performance. It's not speaking, it's not public speaking, it's performing, it's entertainment.
- Michael: Sure. That's what I think about podcasts.
- Pat: Storytelling. Yeah. Oh, absolutely.
- Michael: Podcasts are to me, they have to be entertainment first. This is one of the big differentiating factors I think between at least the concept of my show and others, which is a lot of people are like, "I'm going to lead with value." And I go, "Alright, I'm going to lead with entertainment." Because if someone is engaged and entertained, they'll learn way more than if it's just like, I'm going to give you ten tips for how to blog better.
- Pat: For sure.
- Michael: That's the teacher you remember, the one that told stories and the one that was really engaged and people were entertained by. You weren't falling asleep in their class.
- Pat: Right. They made you laugh. They made you cry. They made you smile. And that's what I tried to do on stage. And it was really cool, because FlynnCon was really a combination of the hundreds of events that I've ever spoken at. I want to slow down my speaking elsewhere and just—
- Michael: Have you spoken to hundreds of events now?
- Pat: Mm-hmm.
- Michael: Wow.

- Pat: Probably over a hundred, not more than two hundred but it's a lot.
- Michael: Yeah, it's a lot.
- Pat: Especially with a family and the kids are growing up and I'm starting to see . . . Stu McLaren said this, I think it was Stu. He said, "You know what? Your time with your kids it's like eighteen summers and that's it." And that made all—I heard the audience kind of go, whoa. And so for me with half that amount with my son, now that he's nine, it's like I want to spend more time with them. And so I found that I'm at this point now where I have the confidence to put on my own event, a team, an amazing team and volunteers as well, big shout out to them for helping put this together. Why not just do what I love to do, which is speak onstage? But bring everybody to me, and bring everybody to San Diego and treat them to nice weather, treat them to a nice location. And what I also loved about FlynnCon was that I got a lot of comments because there were teachers there and they're like, "I never get to go to conferences because conferences are in September when school's already in session or in March and April when school's ending. Never in the summer." And people brought their kids there. You were there, you saw a bunch of kids and they were playing the Mario Kart tournament. We had the Mario Kart tournament finish—
- Michael: But live. It was like watching eSports.
- Pat: Yeah, it was so cool. Giant screens in the final four going in. It was two kids versus two adults and the adult took home the grand prize which was kind of funny. But you're never too old to be a kid. There were so many fun things and having it be family-oriented and family—not centric, but just family friendly. I mean, we're creating something really cool here and we've already sold twenty percent of the tickets and we haven't even announced FlynnCon2 tickets publicly yet.
- Michael: So take me back to what were you doing? How long were you percolating on doing a live event for yourself? I imagine it was probably quite some time.

- Pat: Yeah, years. But never had I gone, oh, we could actually do this. It was always, oh, one day, oh, one day would be cool in the future.
- Michael: What do you have to do when you decide all right, let's do this. You talk to April? You say, "we're going to do a live event?"
- Pat: Well, I had talked to April about everything. Because if I put on a live event, and I don't tell her and then she goes—
- Michael: No, no, but I mean, is the decision made with April first, or is it maybe Ducker first, you know what I mean?
- Pat: Yeah, it was—
- Michael: Is it a business decision? Or I mean, everything's a family decision.
- Pat: Everything's a family decision. But you're right. There are moments when I'm with other people who are business owners who give me ideas, and I go, wow, this is super smart. In this particular case with FlynnCon, it was 2017 and I was in Colorado Springs for an event run by a guy named Pete Vargas. And Pete Vargas helps people with their stage presence, with just everything stage related. That's him. And I saw the impact that that event made on all the people there. And he was also talking about creating your own stages. And that just gave me the idea. And then he and I went up to the little mastermind retreat afterward, and we had a great conversation. And he was like, "Pat, why don't you think about putting on your own event one day?" And I'm like, "Yeah, I do these little workshops. Like podcasting workshops and online course workshops and things like that. But a big event, I don't know. It seems like it'd be a lot to take on." He's like, "It is but you saw the impact that we made here at this event, and that's going to last forever for some of these people. They're going to be lifelong fans as a result of that."

And I was right in the middle of thinking about my new book, Superfans, at the time too, where in my book, *Superfans*, there's a

chapter about bringing your community together and facilitating those kinds of interactions between your people and just what that does for your brand and how you can create lifelong customer superfans as a result. And I had started thinking about—

Michael: Can I pause for one second?

Pat: Yeah.

Michael: I want to touch on something really quick before you go to the next part, which is, this was all happening in 2017. I want people to realize this is two years later. The event happened and the book is coming out.

Pat: Correct.

Michael: Just for people that are impatient about how quickly something should happen. This is two years for a guy that had it pretty dialed. You've had the whole online business, and you had a team and you had momentum around the business. That still took two years to go from that conversation to the opening lights of FlynnCon, FYI.

Pat: It did. And a big thank you for that. However, in the beginning, there was a lot of resistance, which is why . . . I mean it could have happened in 2018 but there were also a lot of other things going on too. But there was a lot of, “No . . . I don't know.” Even with the *Superfans* book, it's like I don't know if I could do this again because Will It Fly? was just a drag to write. I'm so glad I did it obviously but it was a struggle for sure. And this event, I mean, I know also it's not going to be just a struggle for me, but everybody else involved in the team. So it was just a big commitment. But finally, we were like let's do this. It fits in with our plan. It's about time. And it also was announced kind of after the ten-year mark of my business, and I figured you know what? It's been ten years and I haven't yet brought the community together. Let's make it happen now. And that's when we committed as a team to go, hey, we're going to put on an event in 2019. Let's figure it out. And then we started to go, how can we make

this better? How can we make this a safe space for people? How can . . . Because I knew that—not a majority, but a lot of people coming to FlynnCon we're going to be people who had never gone to conferences before.

Michael: Right. Well, take me through that though. So you have a team, do you sit and have a live meeting with everybody at the table and go let's talk about our dream conference. How does that work?

Pat: Yeah, I mean, we meet every other week to discuss what we know we already are working on, right?

Michael: Who's on the team?

Pat: So we have eight people right now, Matt Gartland is my COO, and then Janna is our chief, essentially, Content Manager. And we have Mindy, who's our Solutions expert, and Non who's our customer service person, Jess is my executive assistant, Karen who helps run marketing. And then Caleb is here as well for videography, and those kinds of things as well, and very much part of the team too. So we often get together to talk about the small things that we're working on that we've already started planning.

So once a quarter, Matt and some of the other leadership team will get together and go, okay, what do we want to plan for the next couple quarters? Because we then work backwards from there to understand, okay well, let's do these things within this two week period, let's do these things, and then it adds up, and then eventually we'll get to the end. So we always work backwards from where we want to be, but with FlynnCon, which is a much bigger thing, I mean, we had a discussion specifically about the event and then we had literally a kickoff meeting and we added an additional meeting into our weekly go around to just discuss FlynnCon.

Michael: Just FlynnCon.

- Pat: Just for FlynnCon, yeah. It was a lot of work. And we had to hire an event manager as well to help with because we've never done this before.
- Michael: Right, to be a liaison with the hotel or whatever.
- Pat: Yeah, all that stuff.
- Michael: Did you pick that first? Do you have to pick a hotel first, then work backwards? Or did you have to figure out how many people are going to come first and then find a venue for it?
- Pat: You have to know what you want. So how many people are going to come? And then you pick a date, if that's your constraint. Like what dates do you want? Or you can go the other way, you pick the number of people. The number of people is the most important thing because then that determines, well, what venues could you get? And then in those venues that you like that fit that capacity, are those dates available?
- Michael: Did you have like five hundred in mind?
- Pat: Five hundred was the max. Three fifty was sort of the goal.
- Michael: Okay.
- Pat: But I wanted more than three fifty and we ended up with just a little over four hundred.
- Michael: Felt like a good-sized event to me.
- Pat: It was perfect sized. I mean, I think if there were a hundred more people there, especially on the first year, it might have been a little bit too much for the space that we were in. I think it was a great intimate sized group and in a nice space that wasn't too big, too expansive. That was the other nice thing about this particular event venue, which was the Hyatt Regency here in La Jolla. Pretty close to where

we are right now actually recording this, it's like a stone's throw. And what was nice is the SmartBar, which was another new idea that we had, that we implemented that was a major success, which is where the sponsors were to serve the audience. These sponsors came knowing that they were going to be there essentially be like an Apple Genius Bar with their realms. So ConvertKit for email, Teachable for online courses, and people loved having direct access to them knowing that they could ask questions and not going, oh, okay, I have to spin this wheel and I might win a pen and then I'm going to get pitched to, right? *[Full Disclaimer: As an affiliate, I receive compensation if your purchase through this link.]*

Michael: Right.

Pat: Which is we see it all the time, right? But that was right outside the ballroom. You had to go through the SmartBar, right? And so the sponsors came back afterwards and were like, "We've never had this much foot traffic before. We love this idea. And we love helping." Because a lot of these companies like email marketing for example with ConvertKit, a customer that comes back the next month is just as good as a customer who is brand new, right? Because it's recurring income. So it's really smart for them and I'm glad it worked out and then we had an arcade. There was a video game theme, right? "Press Start" was the theme of the year. What are you going to start? How are you going to get started? How are you going to follow through were kind of the themes of the event. And we had an arcade and the idea for the arcade came because number one I just wanted an arcade there for me, even though I didn't even get play.

Michael: It was awesome, yeah.

Pat: But number two, these were like the old school standup cabinets like Donkey Kong and—

Michael: Galaga.

- Pat: Galaga. So it's kind of cool for the kids because they want to play games then here they are getting introduced to old school games. But in my head I envisioned groups of people hovering around the arcade cabinet, getting to know each other, socializing, cheering each other on. "Oh, I got next," and they put the quarter on there. Afterwards we're like, "Oh, we should have printed a FlynnCon quarter." So that they could put it on the cabinet, right?
- Michael: Right.
- Pat: So that's what I envisioned. And it happened, which was really cool too, that people got to know each other there in the arcade, which is also where the coffee was.
- Michael: I liked that they had an introvert bar too or introvert area for people that . . . Because I know you, like one of our similarities is like, at some point when you're on from eight a.m. on the elevator until sometimes at some conferences it's two a.m. and you're going back. I mean, you're on all day. And it's a constant barrage of questions. And it's flattering, but it's a lot and your head is just . . . You're like, I don't want to talk to another human for five days after this.
- Pat: This is the introvert way, right?
- Michael: Yeah.
- Pat: And you recharge by getting away. But we had a space and this was very much credit to Michael Stelzner and the crew over at Social Media Marketing World. They have an introvert spot. Just full of bean bags.
- Michael: Oh I didn't know that, yeah.
- Pat: It's kind of away. We didn't really have a place to put it away from everything, but it was connected but still separate. And we just had some tables and chairs in there and people used it. I mean, we could

have made it better. We probably could have had more space for people to just relax and more bean bags and things.

Michael: Essential oils.

Pat: Some essential oils, you know?

Michael: Those are the ones to do.

Pat: Right. I'm looking at this sound pad. I'm like, I want to keep playing with it.

Michael: Well, I was just about to say, so take me back. Now I want you to take me to the part because we chatted for . . . You were very kind and said, "I'm really glad you're here." And I thought, "Why?" But you were really nervous about this for quite some time. You had some real±

Pat: About this event?

Michael: —about this event. So take me back if you would.

Pat: Okay. I will. (*Memory chimes play.*) So we're a week before the event. And that was a really good transition by the way. We're a week before the event, and my mind just starts racing, right? Because not all my slides are done. I didn't even . . . My presentations were done. But if you're running an event, it's not just the presentations, there's the slides for the sponsors. There's the slides for announcements of the break and all these other fun things you might be doing. We gave away *Superfans*, the book and a bunch of other surprises, right? So my mind is just—I'm freaking out. I don't think I'm going to be able to get done in time. I didn't have all my slides for all three days done by the time the event started.

Michael: Nobody ever does, by the way, FYI. For everyone you see on stage, they worked on that either at midnight, on the plane, or in their room right before they went on stage.

- Pat: Well, I know that from my personal experience being at other conferences, I'm continually tweaking and our special guests who are seasoned expert speakers also didn't turn in their slides until last minute either.
- Michael: Nobody does.
- Pat: So I didn't require that and that's okay. Because I don't like when I'm required to do that early because I'm always making tweaks anyway. Anyway, let's go to Thursday, the day before the event. I'm working on my slides still, and I'm freaking out and April's starting to get a little stressed because she has a lot of responsibility. The conference too, she's going up to speak. She's never done that before. Completely outside her comfort zone. So proud of her for doing that. But she also has to get the kids ready to speak the next day.
- Michael: So you're a little coach, dad, husband while you're also setting all this up.
- Pat: Right. So it's a lot and I remember it was past midnight. So it was Friday morning, day of the event. Registration's in the afternoon so I do have time to sleep. But I remember filling up my hydro flask with a bunch of water because I got a lot of advice. Drink a lot of water this whole weekend if you want to save your voice and I was drinking a lot of water. So I fill up my hydro flask, it's a forty-ounce hydro flask. I fill it up at the refrigerator and I screw on the cap and I'm walking to bed like really tired. And then all of a sudden this the cap comes off and the water spills everywhere. There's like a puddle. There's like a lake in our living room and it's halfway on the carpet, halfway on the hardwood floor and I'm just like, I get on my knees in the puddle. And I just cry.
- Michael: This is *Shawshank Redemption*. You just came out at *Shawshank Redemption*. That's what it was.

Pat: I am on my knees crying. And April heard the hydro flask, because it's metal, bounce on the hardwood floor and I start crying and she runs down like, "What happened? Are you okay?" And she just sees me in this puddle crying. And I'm like, I don't even say anything. And she just comes over and brings me a towel and she's like, "Get up."

Michael: That's just the kind of support you're looking for.

Pat: And she's like, "Come here." And she gave me a hug. And she's like, "You got this man. You got this. Don't worry about me. Don't worry about the kids. That's my job. You focus on you." And that was huge, right?

Michael: Yeah. That's why you marry them. That's why you married that one.

Pat: Exactly. And so I was very thankful for that. But again, I was still very nervous. And then honestly, when I got to the hotel the next morning and I saw the team and I saw the banners set up, and I saw everything working and just the stage and people were like, yeah, everything's going well so far. I was like, "Alright. The team has it, the team has it. Let me focus on delivering tonight." And then I meet up with Chris Ducker. And he's like, "Alright man, this is your show."

Chris was the emcee for the event. And he was great. And I was like, "I got some time, I want to go down and say hi to everybody at registration, and thank them for coming here." And he's like, "No, you need to stay here." And I'm like, "I'm not going to speak loudly. I'm going to save my voice. Don't worry." He's like, "No, it's not about that." He's like, "You need to wait till it's your turn to come on. Let them talk to each other. Let your team handle it. Let them find the SmartBar."

And then I talked to April, and I ask her the same thing. I was like, "I really want to go down and meet everybody and say hi, and thank you like, that's what I want. Because they made the trip. Some people coming from all the way the other side of the world." And then April—she's so great. She was like, "Do you ever see the bride at a wedding

before the reception go inside the cocktail hour and just thank everybody and like, hey, thanks for being here. No, the bride is announced at this time and everybody makes a big deal because that's what they're there waiting for." And she's like, "You're the bride." I was like, "Alright. I'm going to get my dress on now."

Michael: I wish I had a sound effect of the bride.

Pat: Just pick a random one.

(Trombone plays sad "whomp whomp whomp.")

Michael: I want the laugh one. *(Cheering.)* Is there a laugh one? *(Laughter.)*

Pat: There you go.

Michael: This one?

Pat: The orange one.

Michael: I was going to do that when you were like and then I cried. I was going to do the laugh one. Just because I'm mean.

Pat: Anyway, I mean so there were a lot of—

Michael: I fully expect you to do that by the way. I was looking around going. I'm sure he's here talking to everybody right before the start.

Pat: I wanted to. I really wanted to.

Michael: I think you should reconsider that for next year. I think you—

Pat: It was so great for me not to do that. Because then number one I was in line for three and a half hours signing books for everybody. And that's what I would have done in the beginning. If I'd done that in the beginning, it wouldn't have worked out.

- Michael: Like I said, it was very Tom Bilyeu of you to just stay there and remember he did that after—
- Pat: (*Crickets chirping.*) I don't know who that is. That's the cricket.
- Michael: You don't know Tom Bilyeu? Yeah you do.
- Pat: Remind me.
- Michael: Tom Bilyeu. That's all I know. That's him. I forget his brand. He was the Impact Theory.
- Pat: Oh, Impact Theory, oh, yeah. Okay.
- Michael: Yeah. But he did a thing where he's like, "I'll be outside the room answering questions for as long as anybody has questions," and he was there—true story—from three p.m. until something like one a.m. He just stood at a round table and just answered everybody's questions. And he's apparently legendary for doing that. He just does that. It's insane.
- Pat: Yeah, I would love to do the same thing, too. I would love to do that too. But it was great. My energy conservation throughout the event was great. Actually got some sleep on Friday night and Saturday night. Actually, not Saturday night, Thursday night and Friday night. Saturday night, I was up till two a.m. tweaking slides. And then I had to wake up for an eight fifteen VIP with my team for the VIP people who are in the audience. Shout out to the VIPs. Thank you for getting the VIP tickets. So it's still like so many things happened. All great. Thankfully. Surprisingly, actually.
- Michael: Did you take—years ago, when I was working—we know David Wood. David Wood was originally from The Kickass Life, which is where I got my start podcasting. I would see him speak in front of ten thousand people at this event and we'd be having dinner later or whatever. He would just be making conversation and be like, "Yeah, we came back. I had twenty minutes, so I come back to the room,

and I take all my clothes off, and I lie on the bed.” And I always thought that was so strange until I started speaking and especially emceeing when you're running an event. And it was nothing I could do that would make me happier than having a little half-hour and running up to the room and taking my clothes off and lying on the back and just like—

Pat: Just me time.

Michael: It was really interesting. So those little respites from having to sort of be plugged in, but it's not quite time for you to go out and socialize with everybody but you have like a little forty-minute window, did you go and escape and just kind of chill or were you kind of on the whole time?

Pat: Well, number one, I found that every half hour, I had to go to the bathroom because I was drinking so much bottled water.

Michael: Crushing that heat, yeah.

Pat: And again, that was so important because my voice was perfect the entire weekend. I was so worried because I've seen people who have put on events who by day two their voice is gone, right? And that was important to me. But in those moments—and we had longer breaks, too. That was another thing that we added into the programming was forty-five-minute breaks, right? Which was nice to give people time to think about what we just talked about on stage or to meet people or to go to the SmartBar. It wasn't one of those conferences where you just get drilled with content for eight hours straight.

Michael: Yeah, it wasn't super dense. Which I liked.

Pat: Thank you. And kudos to the team and I for helping make it that way. It was on purpose.

Michael: Kudos to you. You're like yeah, I agree with myself—thank me.

- Pat: I deserve some credit too. But in those moments during breaks I was backstage, mostly. I didn't want to go up to the room. I didn't want to go to green room. I didn't want to talk to anybody. I just wanted to sit and what was kind of cool is I had this security guard. Did you see that?
- Michael: Dude, I totally did. I was like who's the heavy walking around with Pat over there.
- Pat: We hired, apparently, a security guard to watch me and my family, to make sure just watch over our shoulder. To be there if somebody were to kind of want to get too close to me and would just watch over me and stuff, which I don't know if it's necessary or not but—
- Michael: It's like the most family event I've ever seen. And it's got this guy who just looks like he can tackle a football team.
- Pat: But he would be the only one who'd be there just watching me sit and drink water and I was watching YouTube on the phone, just escaping, right?
- Michael: Yeah, what are you watching on YouTube these days?
- Pat: MKBHD, for sure. He's a tech YouTuber. Huge, nine million subscribers just about . . . Peter McKinnon, a lot of video game history channels. I just learned about Super Mario Brothers 2 and how that came to be the other day. All that kind of stuff, I'm just fascinated by It makes me happy.
- Michael: Yeah, FlynnCon was a very video game, very *Ready Player One*, “just start” kind of theme which was very cool. And there's a lot of . . . I took a bunch of pictures, on the columns you had all these great quotes from famous people, some entrepreneurs, some Dolly Parton, Mark Twain and really thematically was just about, “just start,” just get going on something and you can fix it as you go. But you've got to just begin. That's really what the theme was.

Pat: It absolutely was. And all of our guest speakers and all of our community features. Our community features were guest speakers but they were members of our community. Like Shane and Jocelyn Sams from Episode 122. They came on as guest speakers and they were funny and amazing and they had a great just get started story. And then Walid, who you mentioned earlier, who he was our most popular AskPat episode. He was in Episode 1022 and he'd told us . . . AskPat is a coaching call with me. And he was just like, "I want to start this thing, but I'm not good enough. How do I do it? Just I'm not qualified. Please help me Pat." And then twenty-two episodes later, 1044, he came on which was six months later. It was like talking to a different person. He had taken action and he had sold his course. And he started making thousands of dollars because he is qualified to do it. And it was just a really great story.

So I brought him on because I wanted to talk about the sort of getting started story after wanting to create something but not feeling qualified, which is a common theme of people who get their own way. And then I don't know how it happened, but he ended up telling this crazy story about how he became a photographer from dumpster diving and having nothing to then becoming Usher's follow-me-everywhere-around-the-world photographer. And it was just—I didn't even know he had that story.

Michael: It was awesome. Spontaneous.

Pat: It was a spontaneous story. I'd never heard of it before and I just let him go and by far in the Facebook community for FlynnCon that was one of the top moments for people which is really cool.

Michael: What would you have changed about FlynnCon1?

Pat: I would have changed the way I talked about it leading up to it. I really wanted to make it almost a full-on surprise for everybody who was there.

Michael: You did a lot of surprises.

Pat: It was a lot of surprises and not just surprises like here's our surprise guests. I didn't have headliners, or I didn't use people's names to sell tickets. It was just, "Come be a part of the community. I have special guests, you won't know who they are until right before." I also gave away *Superfans*. We had a little fun AskPat Live and we gave away t-shirts and all these were fun surprises, which will likely remain, those kinds of things. But surprises as in, people were coming up to registration—I heard this later—and they were going, "I don't even know what we're going to talk about. I don't even know what the content's about. I'm just here because I trust Pat. And I trust you guys. And we'll see how it goes." There was a lot of trust happening between the audience members and that was because there was literally no descriptions of what was going on. It was like, here's the theme, Press Start. And we're going to help you as you start something new. That was it. And a lot of people didn't come because they weren't sure exactly what it was about. So already, when the team debriefed a couple days ago, we talked about what's the theme for next year, which I'm not going to share yet. That's a surprise.

Michael: Oh, damn. I was waiting for that exclusive.

Pat: And then we've already been more defined and what that means and what the content would look like. And it's going to be a lot more helpful for people I think. People liked the surprises, but they didn't like not knowing what they were getting into. It's also going to help that we're going to have testimonials. We have a ton of testimonials and video footage and pictures of what it would look like and that it's really about the community. But still, people want to know a little bit more than what we didn't give them.

Michael: What did you have to cut because of time or space?

Pat: Or money.

Michael: Or money.

- Pat: Yeah, I mean, when we were coming up with ideas it was—this is very usual in my team and how we work. It's: “Okay, Pat, you tell us everything that you could ever hope this could be. And then we'll tell you what we can't do. Because Matt calls me “the Rainmaker.” I make it rain and they go, “Okay, let's take this part of the rain and then we'll use that.” And so what was happening was I was, for example, with the AV. The AV was great, big shout out to Carson and PPS.
- Michael: Yeah, really good. And they nailed it.
- Pat: It was awesome. What I initially wanted was the entire back wall to be a complete LED screen, left to right, wall the wall. Like a eighty-foot LED screen.
- Michael: Yeah, right, like for U2.
- Pat: Right, exactly, because then you can do some really cool things on the computer to digitalize it and to interact with it. You can even—Carson was telling me that you could do that—and they did this before—wall to wall. And then the way you enter the stage, is there's a little door-shaped hole where the stage is in the LED screen. But then backstage, there's another LED screen that fills in the hole behind it. So when you're looking from the audience, it just looks like one giant wall and you can actually look like you're coming out of the wall. So I wanted like a Mario pipe situation with a game where the guests and myself would come out of the wall where the pipe was, and you could do some fun things and even have the audience interact with the LED screen during the show and that would have cost a hundred seventy-five thousand dollars alone. And so we're like okay, we'll probably—maybe we'll wait till next year for that.
- Michael: Psh, next year. Yeah, a hundred seventy-five new VIP tickets available, everybody.
- Pat: And then when we revealed *Superfans*, I wanted a box, a real box with the books inside. But it was a mystery box. It was that Mario mystery box that I used in the slides, but a physical one where I could push a

button or pull a latch or pull a rope or something, and then it would just kind of collapse open with all the books inside and they would shine a light in there. But that would have cost three thousand dollars and it probably wasn't necessary. So that's another thing. All these little wish things you eventually—and this is very common in architecture, too. You go to the client and you go, “Okay, what do you want?” And then

we go as architects and engineers and go, “Okay, well here's what you can have at this price.” You know what I mean? It was a back and forth, pass back, pass forward kind of situation the entire time.

Michael: It would be interesting for next year to connect with somebody who has experienced doing Vegas stage shows. Like Cirque du Soleil or something like that. Because they probably know capability more than the rest of us. They go, “Yeah, we used to do blank and then you can just integrate it with the LED screen and do this. And it looks like this is happening.” You're like, “Whoa, I totally need that.” And then kind of write around that, you know?

Pat: That's a great idea. I mean, at least for inspiration for, oh, I could do that and I could take that and use it in the business world or at FlynnCon in this way.

Michael: Yeah, you could legit just go—the next time you're in Vegas—go catch a few shows and just go, “Oh, yeah, that's interesting. We could totally do something like that.” I love to watch it. What reminded me of that is there's a few stand ups that do an interactive thing with the screen behind them, where they'll be like, yeah, and then they'll walk off stage around the screen, and then they show up on the screen. And they're doing a bunch of crazy stuff on the screen, and then they walk back off the screen again.

Pat: Yeah, that's cool.

Michael: And it's just this cool orchestrated kind of deal.

Pat: That is cool. I also wanted the name tags . . . I mean, the name tags were a disappointment. And these are little nitpicky things, they could

have been better. But initially, when we were doing the whole rainstorm, I wanted the name tags to be electronic there in the shape of a Game Boy and they were of the shape of a Game Boy but they were just plastic. But I wanted them to actually work to have people click A or B to vote for something that could be right on the spot shown in terms of stats on a screen. So like, hey guys, which cover of *Superfans* do you like better?

Michael: Oh, that's cool, like from the audience to that screens.

Pat: Right, like polling. But with their name tag and buttons because I was like, that's interactive. Games are interactive, let's interact during the show together like that. It'll keep people engaged, it'll keep people wondering, it'll keep people excited. And it was again, one of those things. I even found somebody who is a big maker on YouTube—he makes things—Bob from I Like To Make Stuff.

Michael: I like Bob.

Pat: He just makes random things. And I was like, “Dude, there's all these old Nintendo 64 controllers and old Nintendo controllers that are broken, nobody uses them. Let's recycle them, and use them for the voting poll purposes.” And he was like, “Okay, we could do that but then you would need forty miles of cord, and all this other stuff to go along with it.” And I was like, “Okay, maybe next year.”

Michael: I wonder if there's some kind of cool little remote that just had two buttons on it. That could be just a yes or no, that everybody could just get. Something you could just hand out and they could be just like a—but it would work. There won't be a unique identifier. I bet you there's something like that.

Pat: That would be cool. I want that in my mine. I think we have time to plan for something like that next year. Maybe it's not on your name tag. Maybe it's just a separate thing on the chair in front of you.

Michael: Yeah, you just give it to him. And then it's a deal. It'd be kind of fun.

Pat: That would be fun.

Michael: So in terms of roadblocks, were there anything between the time you said I'm going to do this and then literally walking on stage the other day that you said, "Wow, this could kill this. This could be a real issue?"

Pat: I mean, there's always those things that pop into my mind. (*Sound of crickets.*) Yeah, crickets. So no, everything was planned perfectly.

Michael: Everything's perfect all the time.

Pat: No, my talks were a really big deal to me. I knew that the glue that kind of made the whole weekend come together was the talks, and I had never done any of these talks before. That was the crazy thing.

Michael: Right. These weren't keynotes you've done a million times.

Pat: No, no. And I heard a number of people ask, "Hey, are you just taking the best keynotes you did while you were out traveling the world and bringing them to us here?" And I'm like, "No, this is all original content." There's stories that I've told before, but nothing like what I've done here. All brand new slides, all brand new presentations. And I plan to do the same thing for next year as well. But I felt a ton of pressure as a result of that. And because it's a very Pat-on-stage-centric event. I mean, I did have guest speakers, community features, but it wasn't like a conference with multiple tracks where one of those talks was bad or didn't fit—well, the rest of the conference was great. I really felt like every one had to make sense because the entire agenda and the programming was kind of A to Z, start to finish. One built on the next which built on the next versus just, oh, here's a podcasting presentation. And then next room, there's like, oh, here's a YouTube presentation. So they all kind of fit together and I was like, I hope this makes sense to people because a lot of things make sense in my head but not always for everybody else. April will vouch for that for sure. So yeah, I mean that was a big worry for me. The SmartBar was a complete out of—

Michael: It was a gamble.

- Pat: Right, it was a gamble and it actually worked out really well. I was very thankful we had these kind of high counter tables versus lower tables, which was really a cool walk up to the bar and get help kind of situation, which worked out.
- Michael: Weirdly, I'm more productive working at a table like that. I don't know why that is.
- Pat: Because you're standing up, right?
- Michael: But I like the higher. I don't know what it is.
- Pat: I don't know either. And then the other thing that I was worried about was food.
- Michael: Oh, yeah, you paid a lot of attention to that.
- Pat: Because at this event, the event space, I mean, there was hotel food, right? And you can only get so used to it before it starts to become boring. But there were restaurants across the way but every one of those restaurants I don't know if you saw him, but there was The Melting Pot, Truluck's and this—I can't remember, Donovan's which are like super high-end state places.
- Michael: They were fancy. Yeah. I did go to Melting Pot once, it was great.
- Pat: Oh, cool. But the nearest strip mall area with normal price food was an Uber drive away. And apparently the Uber drivers, because of the location of the hotel, took ten to fifteen minutes versus if it were downtown, it would just be a minute and then you're where you need to be. So that was something I was worried about. And then at the end, I was like, did anybody have any trouble getting food? No, everybody got fed. They said that they had a lot of hotel food. And I was like, okay, well, that's at least they ate. I made the mistake—couple months before the event of watching the Fyre Festival documentaries. And I was like, oh my gosh.
- Michael: That had to introduce a little angst.

- Pat: A little bit. It was probably a mistake. Although I knew that I was doing this for the right reasons, number one. Number two, we weren't all traveling to a remote island and potentially be away from electricity and water and food. So I knew we were going to take care of people better than that. But still, I mean, you get in your own way. You see these things and you're like what if this becomes an absolute train wreck.
- Michael: Like a spectacular fail. Have you had one of those? Have you ever had a spectacular fail?
- Pat: I've had spectacular fails in terms of little projects here and there, but I've never done something yet (knock on wood) that has completely one-eighty'd my career.
- Michael: I don't think that would happen. You got enough insulation against that, but screw the pooch sometimes with something and go man, that did not go off the way I thought it was going to go at all.
- Pat: Which is why we have checks and balances on our team with projects and scope and energy levels to make sure things don't get to that point.
- Michael: You've done something which I think is unique in this entrepreneurial space, which is you sort of sit back for a while and then you launch something and it's so well thought out by the time people even hear about it, the wheels are already in motion. It's like this is happening on this date. You can tell there's so much planning behind it, which is the opposite of what I do. But you're very quiet about, you don't. . . Like hey, this thing's coming up, blah, blah, blah. You just kind of do it and it's typically a real jump, I think for a lot of the industry. I feel like you take these inspirations from all kinds of different sources, whether it's Hollywood or video gaming or whatever. And all of a sudden, you're like, "Yeah, I'm going to go into this space now," and we're like what are you talking about, you know?
- Pat: Yeah, some people thought I was crazy.

Michael: Mr. SwitchPod.

Pat: SwitchPod, too.

Michael: It's like all of a sudden, you do a thing where you're like, "Wait he's making a tripod, what are you talking about?" But then it was one of the most successful Kickstarter campaigns ever, and it's going to be great. And we talked a bit about the process, but you really do

innovate in this space. And I think these last few years, to me, for you, have been you have a real confidence about the areas that you're going in.

Pat: I think it's I have the confidence to take that risk. I don't have the confidence that it's always going to work out. I didn't know the SwitchPod was going to work out the way it did. Although me and Caleb, who is sitting here in this office with us, making sure everything's looking, sounding great. Thanks Caleb. He and I put a lot of work into the SwitchPod. I mean, this physical product, this thing that we're creating, I mean Caleb's going to China very soon to make sure they're coming off the line well. We're about to ship them to the backers, which is really exciting. And who knows where it will go.

Michael: So cool. You're working with a Proudct team on that?

Pat: Yeah, Richie and Jase and Thiefaine and all those amazing people their at prouduct.com. Big shout out to those guys.

Michael: Yeah, they kill it.

Pat: This was a fun side experiment. And this FlynnCon thing was a fun side thing to see what would happen if I did this. And everything that I do, I want to do it well. And we go to people who've done it before, so that we can kind of fast forward through all the mess, right? And so with this event, for example, I went to so many people who have put on events to ask them questions and interview them and these things aren't published and they're not even recorded, but it's just for me to

know so that I can make sure I can take that step in the right direction when I go do that thing.

With the physical products, obviously with Proudct and talking to Tom and Dan from Studio Neat and many other people who have created physical products, it helps us fast forward through that, which is really cool. I talked about this on stage at FlynnCon, I've sort of created this thing called the “twenty percent itch” rule, which means as much as I try to only allow myself to do what I'm supposed to be doing, to only allow myself to learn about the things I know I'm supposed to be

learning—just in time learning, which I've talked about in the show before—I still have that itch to do and try new things. That's the nature of an entrepreneur, usually, especially a visionary type. And so I give myself that freedom. I allow myself to have twenty percent of time to just mess around. Kind of purposefully, but I mess around. I take risks, right?

Gary Vee does the same thing when it comes to social media. He knows the main platforms he needs to be on, but he's also experimenting with a little bit of his time on those other ones. Many times those things fail, but it just takes that one or two to really be, “Okay now I'm one of the first on this platform,” right? And Google is known to apparently do this, where they let their employees have twenty percent of time to just work on random projects within Google so that they can innovate and have freedom, and I've allowed that for myself. So if you want to consider twenty percent, if you think of a five day week, every Friday, that's your day to try something new, to experiment. Knowing that it could completely fail and being okay with that, because it just could take one or two hits to really make it worth that time. And also is allowing me to scratch that itch like I said.

Michael:

Well, when you're working with people that are new to this game, and I think that was the majority of what a lot of people at FlynnCon were on the earlier side of entrepreneurship or online business or things like that. And I also deal with a lot of those people. You get that question that's like, what if it doesn't work? Or what if it fails? And I'm like, no, no, it's mostly not going to work. It is a huge majority not going to

work. This podcast you launched or the YouTube channel or the thing, but then it will. Like it eventually does. But you've got to get almost steeled against—you can't let a little derailment or a little rejection derail the dream.

Pat: Right. I mean, it's the difference between “I hope this works,” meaning you put in time and then you kind of let it go and see what happens versus, “I know I'm going to make it work,” right?

Michael: Right.

Pat: There's a big difference there. The difference is—and this is something I've only learned after doing this for a long time now—is you can make anything work. You just have to keep making it work. It's not a one and done and then see if it works or not. And then it's over. It's a process. You learn from these failures. Failure—

Michael: Which is what angle are you taking to it? That's really what changes.

Pat: Exactly. It's how much you are willing to learn about those failures, and how much you're willing to do research to avoid those failures or to talk to people or to get coaching or mentorship to work your way around those potential failures, or to learn from those failures as they happen. So for those of you who are just starting out, I mean, we all have just started out, right? It's the one—

Michael: We keep just starting out. That's the whole thing. We keep finding a new space to start out again. Your most recent of that, prior to the live event, was YouTube. You didn't have a YouTube channel.

Pat: Technically I had a YouTube channel but—

Michael: But you weren't using it.

Pat: No, no.

Michael: Neither was I. I'm like meh.

- Pat: And now we're—I'm looking at the counter—193,000 subs in.
- Michael: It's crazy.
- Pat: Because connected with the right people in that space to learn how to do it. I went to events to learn how to do it. VidSummit—which is by the way where SwitchPod was born.
- Michael: Yeah. I love that event. I'm going to go there this year.
- Pat: Oh, awesome. Excited to see you there and everybody else who's listening to this who wants to go to that. Great industry event for YouTube and video. VidCon, have you ever been to VidCon?
- Michael: No, I heard that's a little more like with the rock stars.
- Pat: Oh my gosh, I got so overwhelmed. It's twenty-five thousand people and ninety percent of them are teenagers there to see their favorite YouTubers, you know?
- Michael: Right. Jase said that they couldn't walk through the building there.
- Pat: Jase is huge to that demographic. Anyway, I look forward to VidSummit and I just continue to want to learn and I figured with the short time that we have on this planet, why not fast forward our way when we tried to learn something new?
- Michael: Well, you talked about it earlier with your speaking, which is ultimately, if you're at the base of a mountain and you're about to take a hike and you're looking at whatever the peak is, whatever version of the peak is, the first iteration of you would have made sure he had an exact map to that peak. And maybe wouldn't have even started without the map. So most of the energy would have been spent on the map, which is like, I'm going to plan and plan and plan and plan.
- Pat: Right. That's the kind of person I am. Some people go up that mountain without any help knowing—

Michael: That's me.

Pat: That's you. Okay.

Michael: But the hybrid of that is—alright, a lot of people told me which way to go on this. So I'm going to start in that direction. Or maybe even smarter—there's a local guide that will show me how to get up there and I'll pay a few bucks and they'll show me but the point is, there may be many trails that end in dead ends, but as long as you keep going, “I'm getting to that peak right there,” and then you just keep taking different trails.

Pat: Right. And it's not even just about getting to the peak—the peak is the end. It is checkpoint one, base camp one, right? Where you can get that yak butter that's going to get you that energy to keep going and then base camp—checkpoint two. And then maybe you get off course, but hey, you got a compass you can get back on the right direction because you know where that is. You know where checkpoint two is and that's the key. Always taking these iterative approaches. I mean that's what *Will It Fly?* is about. Taking these big goals like starting a business and then going okay, where's checkpoint one? Let's assess, do we want to keep going? Or should we go back down and start on a new mountain? And you get to checkpoint two and green light, green light, green light, keep going, keep going, keep going. And then you're at the peak. But then it's funny because you realize when you're up there at that peak, there's a bigger mountain to climb and there's another series of the same kind of choices you have to make.

Michael: And you could run up the mountain the next time you do it. You would know exactly how to do it and you have the resources to get right up directly.

Pat: The second podcast was so much easier than the first. The second online course was so much easier than the first.

Michael: Right. Yeah, it's really interesting too, because it really parallels that. And I think if you've never hiked before, it's so intimidating because

you don't know what clothes to wear. And you don't know how you're going to do it. And blah, blah, blah, so it's a whole thing, dude.

Pat: Dude, we just hit one hour and one minute and eleven seconds.

Michael: It is as if I've done this before.

Pat: Yeah, you've recorded many hour-long podcasts on your show. And I'm so thankful that you took the time to come onto my show today. And also simultaneously bring me on your show. And I think this is a great behind the scenes for FlynnCon and a little bit inside my brain and I appreciate you for digging in for me.

Michael: Have you been interviewed on your show before?

Pat: I don't think so. This is the first time I've had a guest interview-er on SPI.

Michael: Yeah. Well, thank you for this. It's an honor to be here. The last time I did this, I don't know what episode it was but it was one something, 163 or something like that. [*Ed. it was Episode 164.*] Anyway, it was so fun and then I had all these people that wrote to me from your awesome audience.

Pat: Cool. Well, they love great guests like yourself. If people want to listen to your show or get access to you, where can they go?

Michael: [@solohour](#). S-O-L-O-H-O-U-R on the Instas, the podcast is the Soloprenuer Hour. I do these great deep dive—kind of like this—deep dive shows where I don't always promise the ten methods for blogging better, but all of that stuff I Trojan horse on you. And the hope is by the end of the show you go, man I learned a ton about that. And I didn't even realize I was learning it. So that's the idea.

Pat: Solo Hour, go get it. Mike, thanks so much for coming in the studio today. Let's end with our little default song here. (*Rock music.*) Yeah, there we go.

Michael: Thanks buddy.

Pat: Applause, applause, applause. (*Applause.*) Yay!

Michael: It's been a little slice of heaven.

Pat: Shout out to RØDE for the RØDECaster Pro, because this thing's awesome.

Michael: And Heil for great microphones.

Pat: Alright, I hope you enjoyed that episode. Thank you again Michael O'Neal from the Solopreneur Hour for coming on and being a guest host and guest interviewing me about this. I think this was really fun to talk about and sort of decompress after the craziness that was FlynnCon1. But first of all, big thank you to everybody who came out and trusted me and my team to take care of you. I hope you all enjoyed it. And if you're looking forward to FlynnCon2 and you haven't gotten your tickets yet, get them before they're out because they're going to go fast, flynncon2.com. You can go and get your tickets before the price goes up next month. And then finally, all the show notes and everything that was mentioned here in the show, you can find at smartpassiveincome.com/session391. One more time smartpassiveincome.com/session391.

Team Flynn you're amazing, thank you so much. I hope to see you in San Diego next year. It's the July 24, 25, 26 or July 23, 24, 25. Let me confirm that. Just so you get the dates here. So I'm doing this on the fly. So in July of 2020, it'll be Friday the 24th, Saturday the 25th, and then Sunday the 26th. Join me and five hundred other entrepreneurs or 499 other entrepreneurs, and it's a family friendly event. Would love to welcome you and your family. There'll be some fun things to do for everybody and mostly just a safe environment to be a weird entrepreneur and come together and help each other out too. So cheers. Thanks so much flynncon2.com, and I'll see a little bit later. Team Flynn for the win. Peace.

Announcer: *Thanks for listening to the Smart Passive Income Podcast at www.smartpassiveincome.com.*

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