

[00:00:01.450] - Speaker 1

Welcome to the More Life podcast, where creatives problem solvers and entrepreneurs talk about squeezing more out and finding leaning in this crazy thing we call life. Let's dive in. What's going on, guys? Welcome back to another episode of the More Life podcast. I'm your host, Bart Anderson. Today we are here with Gigi from One Six Creative. In just a few minutes, we're going to meet her and she'll be introduced and we're going to talk a little bit about her upcoming her current situation and what she has planned for the future. And I'm really excited about all of these special things that are happening and what she's doing in the community for creatives and marketers all over the world. But first, if you are new around here, again, my name is Bart. I'd love for you to subscribe. If you like what you're listening to, if you've never heard any of our content, if you subscribe, you get to not miss any one of these episodes and all the great information that we're learning from digital marketers and creatives and entrepreneurs and people that are trying to go further, faster and broaden their Horizons with new ways of learning.

[00:01:02.840] - Speaker 1

So do all the things like subscribe, share all those great things. But first things first. Gigi, welcome to the podcast.

[00:01:11.170] - Speaker 2

Thank you so much for having me. I'm excited about this.

[00:01:14.330] - Speaker 1

I'm really happy that you're here. I stumbled across your Instagram feed. I can't remember when maybe like once I didn't follow, but then somehow you came up again and I don't know if it was a real or something. I'm like, oh, this is the account that I was thinking of finally followed. And then I can't lie. I don't want to lie to you. I do have a standard thing that I say to a lot of people, which is like if they're cool and I like what they're doing, I always say, I love your vibe. I'm like, wow, you're doing something that's really unique, or at least it's something that stands out because there are so many templates and people look all the same online. It's very easy to look the same. So we kind of first met by saying, okay, let me press the follow button, let me see what happens. And I was just so impressed with the content that you were producing. Sounds like, okay, I have to invite her on the show. So welcome.

[00:02:12.290] - Speaker 2

Thank you.

[00:02:13.490] - Speaker 1

We're going to jump right in with maybe some of your background because even I don't know by looking on your social media where you kind of got your chops in terms of design and style and what that looked like for you when you were coming up.

[00:02:27.890] - Speaker 2

So I am completely self taught designer. My background is not in design. My background is actually in sociology and neural marketing. So I'm very obsessed with neuromarketing. It's basically the science of your brain under marketing influence. So all of those cool tricks on. For example, in the casino, you don't have any windows, so you don't know what time of day it is or in a supermarket, they put fresh produce first in the back. No. So you put it first. At least in Europe, that's how they do. So you feel good about yourself and you will actually spend more money on junk stuff. So stuff like this in my background is marketing and business, and I worked as a marketing director for a consulting agency in London and just realized that the corporate world was not my thing. I spent about two years working in corporate, and I think a year in I was like, this can be it. This is not what I studied for, what I've lived for. There has to be more to it. And I was always quite a creative person, but not specifically in design. It was art and poems and just like being creative as a person.

[00:03:47.610] - Speaker 2

And when I quit my job, I remember I decided to quit my job and told my now husband and boyfriend I was like, you know what? I think I'm going to quit. It's like, okay, what are you going to do? I have no idea. Literally no idea. But I'll figure it out. I want to help people. I don't know how, but I'll figure it out.

And I quit my job. I remember I did so many different things. I had a YouTube channel at some point as a productivity coach that didn't go well. There is still some viral not viral at all. Some wild video on YouTube of me doing some coaching on productivity. Please don't go and search for that. That's going to be embarrassing. And you take that down. And I was just trying out different things, and I landed basically my past manager. She asked me to design a branded entity for her new business. And I basically went down the rabbit hole of YouTube trying to learn about brand identity and web design. I was like, this is really cool. I can express myself and help people at the same time. So that's kind of how I got into design.

[00:04:57.510] - Speaker 2

I can say that I had like a crazy passion for it straight away, but it was definitely something I really enjoy doing. And it was a way for me to express myself and help people at the same time. And very quickly I realized that design is definitely a skill that you can learn.

[00:05:13.540]

Yes.

[00:05:14.060] - Speaker 2

But I had business skills that I can apply to my design career that will help me grow further, that will help me connect with my audience better. And I think that this is really when I start connecting the two. So the business skills and the design skills that I'm still learning. I've been doing this for six years, and I still think that I have a long way to go when it comes to design skills. But that's when I realized that I have something special and different. And I think that once I start really applying this, that's when I started connecting with my audience and putting out all of this content that I knew resonated with my audience as well. Very well, because I started really understanding them better. So that's in a nutshell, how I got to where I am.

[00:05:58.770] - Speaker 1

I love what you said there where you said you didn't have the natural skills, but you were able to learn them. And here's the thing. Discipline is more important than talent, so you can have natural talent. And if you rest on those laurels, if you don't actually develop anything further than that, somebody who is disciplined and continually learning and going through that evolutionary process of self discovery and refinement will overtake you. And actually pretty fast. It'll happen pretty quick. And I think people think of creative and artistic type roles or position as finite, as talent driven. The most talented and creative person will always be the one who is most successful and is able to land the most amount of jobs. It's not true. The person who spends the most time developing the craft and working in that craft space is going to be the one who is the most successful.

[00:07:02.640]

Absolutely.

[00:07:03.590] - Speaker 1

Yeah. That's how the world rewards success. It's by the person who shows up. And I saw this once on like an Instagram post, you know, how they have reels and somebody just writing into a notebook that said 90% of success is just showing up every single day. Right. You just need to be so determined, not even that I'm going to outwork every person to my left and to my right, but almost like committing to yourself. These are the steps or the intentions that I'm looking to make. And here's how I'm going to behave moving forward, no matter what. This is how I'm going to live my life, because this is what I want for my career, for my life, my business, whatever it is. So you've been doing this for six years, which is really amazing.

[00:07:53.610] - Speaker 2

Yes. Well, I would say I quit my job six years ago. I've been running once this creative properly, I would say maybe three and a half because honestly, everything before it was just finding myself and figuring out what I wanted to do. So once it's creative, maybe three and a half, four years old, I don't know exactly when it was born. I don't know if you have this, but recently I stumbled upon my old branding, like all six different variations of my old branding. And I was like, what the heck were you thinking, girl?

[00:08:27.930] - Speaker 1

I do know that very well. We just refined our brand very much. What's that called? Like the beginning of this year. And I've been so busy working on other people's branding that you don't work on your own. And brands. There's a reason why we have something called brand guidelines. Because if you don't have them. They're like on a road, a roadway or a highway. They're guardrails to keep you in case an accident happens to keep you on the road. And my brand was slipping and there were no guardrails to hold it in place. So I think it took us like five or six months to really refine. Nothing drastically changed. But at the same time, I can feel that I was losing control of this thing and things that should not be happening were happening. So we just took our time and we're like, okay, let's set the proper parameters. So this never happens again because this brand has been with me since 2015 or 16. So it wasn't built to sustain all this type of work back then. It's an old brand. So it's like we didn't build the framework into the secondary and tertiary styling of this brand.

[00:09:48.650] - Speaker 1

We just have here's a logo and I can make logos for you. That was the whole idea. Okay. I need something to represent the company so that I can then sell this to other people as well. I love on your feed how clean it looks, how great it looks, especially with the content that you're providing. So the question I want to talk about is what made you want to help creative agencies and designers and stuff like that? Rather trying to be the creative yourself.

[00:10:25.170] - Speaker 2

So this shift happened during the pandemic, actually. Okay, so up to the pandemic, I already had a six figure design agency where I was helping clients. And I got to the point where it was a choice of either I grow, so I always try to push myself. What's the next thing? How can we improve this? So at this point, I was like, either I have to grow, as in grow a team because I was getting too much demand for I'm a one person agency. That's the thing. I don't have project managers personally. I have one VA helping me on the technical side with all of my digital products. But I'm a one person and I never really had this idea of having a multi people agency. I don't know if you read the book Company of One. It's a really great book. And I really resonated with that because I wanted to remain as a company of one. And then for me, the question was, okay. So obviously I cannot take on more clients. I could raise my rates, but my rates are already quite high. So for me to raise my rates further would be working with bigger kind of multinational companies, which is also not something that I want.

[00:11:44.550] - Speaker 2

So with the other option is like, okay, how can I increase my revenue without increasing too much the effort that I'm putting into the work? So the answer was passive income. And one note that I do want to say about passive income is that it's never passive. It's so not passive. It's so much more. If you're considering adding digital products and passive income into your business, yes, go for it. If that's really what you want. And you think that this is what's going to take you to the next stage. But do think about it, that it's definitely not as easy as people make it look. It's not that you create a product and it starts selling itself. If it does, it's awesome, but it's always the case. And then during the time when I was kind of going through this, the pandemic hit. And obviously a lot of projects started pulling out. Clients started pulling out because they were afraid of what's going to happen. So that was really a wake up call for me. Okay, let's actually rethink this because, yes, clients are pulling out. But during the pandemic, it was also an opportunity where a lot of people went freelance.

[00:12:51.650] - Speaker 2

A lot of people started working for themselves. I knew that there was more creative on the market, and that's how I started going into the education side. I had so much to teach because my approach to the business of design is very different because of my background and how I approach this and how openly I talk about money prices, selling strategies, and all of that. So I had a lot to give that I was kind of holding on to myself. And, you know, it's like this kind of mentality at the beginning when you're starting out, that I don't want to say too much because I don't want people to know my secrets.

[00:13:26.140] - Speaker 1

No secret.

[00:13:27.210] - Speaker 2

Secret. Yes, exactly. But in my case, it was always about being very open and sharing a lot of value. So that's when I made the switch. And that switch was transformational for my business. Not something that I expected, but we launched an Academy with digital courses for creatives. My first launch was I had 72 students in the cohort, and I was planning for ten because it was my first course. I was like, I'm not going to set too big on my goals. I'm going to say ten to 15 students and end up having 72. So that was huge and definitely a big challenge. And after that, I started launching my digital templates for designers to help them with their entire client process because I know that this is something that I struggled with, and I know how much time I spent creating those templates. So I released that. And from there, we continued growing slowly and surely.

[00:14:22.610] - Speaker 1

That's really inspirational. And you know, what the figure that I love the most and what you said you talked about company of one. I read that a while back on Audible. I listened to a lot of books, so this is where I've had this conversation multiple times with different people who I ended up coaching or mentoring or talking to, even on the podcast, wherever is that you have to know what you want, because what works for you, doesn't necessarily work for somebody else. So you made a distinctive choice. I read this book. I like this idea. I don't want to grow something super big. I don't need this to be like a 30 person team now. It feels a lot like a job and there's so much more risk involved. And you made a choice. Okay, I'm going to keep it small. So what does that mean for me? Right. Time is finite. There's only a certain amount of it every single day. So I can raise my prices, but they're already at a pretty good threshold. Or you can start to do different type of work, but that doesn't necessarily vibe with what you want to do, what you are passionate about.

[00:15:43.230] - Speaker 1

I always call corporate work or international. They call that paint by number. There's so many restrictions on what you can and can't do. So you have to make a decision and say, okay, so I'm going to go a separate Avenue and pivot what my business is to try and make this work in a new and better way. So this is where I'm like, okay, it's so suggestive, right? Like, which way do you want to take your own business? I know some people who do the same thing that I do, and they want it to be ten and twelve and 15 people as big an agency. I don't want to be an agency. I'm talking about our agency. I don't want it to be a one person agency. But I also am not interested in hiring employees. I'd rather work with contractors. Still keep it small where it doesn't feel like it's so much bigger than me. And again, some of the stuff that you're doing is very inspirational because I've always looked at, okay, so how do I go about because I've made a lot of I'm sure you've gone through this, too. I've made a lot of mistakes.

[00:16:54.690] - Speaker 1

I've been also very fortunate to have people around me, whether business coach or mentors, other creative agency people, to show me how to learn from those mistakes and what I should be doing. Instead, I have a lot of written notes and resources and things that I've had to really wrestle with because I was operating at a loss when you're doing these projects and you didn't know how to have conversations with clients and I'm losing money. So it's like, okay, here's how we work this, or how do I build an email sequence when I've never done that before? And it's really important now because I told the client that we can do this. And I don't know the amount of errors that I've made in the last three to four years. That's where it's like, okay, you can leverage what you know rather than what you can do. And I don't know, even if we are there yet, like myself, where it's like, I don't know if we're ready to do that. I feel like it's a big undertaking. I would love to know more about your process. How did developing. I think you said you started with a course first.

[00:18:03.750] - Speaker 1

Yes, I'm there. So I'm going to be selfish. I want to hear about it.

[00:18:08.910] - Speaker 2

The thing is, I myself invested in myself very soon when I realized what I wanted to do. So we talked about the beginning of our chat, right. That you have to commit to yourself. You have to have the

discipline. And I knew for a fact that YouTube Academy is awesome. The problem with free content is that you're not committed to it. It's kind of like you sign up for this webinar for this training, and you end up not watching it. They send your replay. You promise yourself you're going to watch it one day and you never do. And that's the problem with free content. So that's why as soon as I figured out that once it's creative was the Avenue for me, this is what I wanted to commit to. I invested in three courses that really helped me understand the basics of being a designer. Because I had no idea how to be a designer and how to work with design clients. It was all self taught, I think, because I opened myself to the opportunity to invest in myself, I said, okay, I am going to invest in myself. I am going to do that.

[00:19:10.690] - Speaker 2

When I started to think about how can I help other creatives and other designers. That's why I thought, okay, well, I can create a course on the business of design and how to run your design business. And it was an interesting experience because I launched it as a beta. So the course didn't exist when I launched it. And I was very open, I told my audience, I'm launching this course. It does not exist. But I'm looking for people who are interested to learn this from me. And as you go through the course, I will be creating the contents for you.

[00:19:45.950] - Speaker 1

Really?

[00:19:47.250] - Speaker 2

And that's why I thought, well, people are not going to sign up for that Gigi.

[00:19:52.540] - Speaker 1

You started a course without a course.

[00:19:54.640] - Speaker 2

No, it didn't exist. I love it. And my approach to sales is very open. I do not like sleepy sales strategies or anything like this. I'm very open. I see exactly what's happening. So to my audience, I said, this course doesn't exist. But I promise to teach you everything I know on this, this and that. I did have a sales page. It was at a beta price, so the beta price was quite low. And obviously a lot of people could afford it. Okay. But as soon as we opened the card, the anxiety that I started feeling when every stripe notification was like, every couple of minutes there's a kid. And I remember looking at my husband and I was like, what have I done? I've never done this before. I don't know how to deliver a course.

[00:20:47.250] - Speaker 1

Okay. Just so that I want to break it down really good. How many around approximate followers did you have on Instagram or whatever? LinkedIn, Facebook, whatever your best social media was. How many people did you have following you?

[00:21:01.530] - Speaker 2

At the time, I had about four and a half thousand people following me.

[00:21:07.450] - Speaker 1

Yeah.

[00:21:07.910] - Speaker 2

And that was also when I was invited to be a speaker on the Simply Profitable Designer Summit, which is one of the biggest summits for designers of the year. And since then, I've been a speaker every year. But that was my very first speaking opportunity directly to designers as well. Before that, I was on podcast talking to potential clients rather than designers. And after that summit, I started having so many people subscribing to my email list and Instagram account. And I was like, what am I going to do with these people? I don't have a product for them. I have nothing. So that's actually how the course was born, because well, before the course, I had a free challenge that I basically launched in one day. And it was the same thing. I didn't have a free challenge. I quickly put a sales page up, and every day I was sitting there and writing an email. So it wasn't something I planned for.

[00:22:00.420] - Speaker 1

It wasn't like an automated email sequence. It was you writing on that day to go out that day.

[00:22:06.460] - Speaker 2

And I think this is an important thing to learn is that you have to adapt in your business. If you have an opportunity, you have to adapt to it, and you have to take those risks and chances. I didn't know what will happen. It could have been a complete flop. But I promised myself that I'm going to try. I see an opportunity here. I'm going to try, and I'm going to take that risk. So for the challenge, I signed up about 350 people to the challenge, and that was a free five day email challenge with a Facebook group. They were receiving one email per day, and I was also in the Facebook group daily. And then on the last day of the challenge, I pitched to the challengers about the course and also sent an email. And I did some stories, I think, on Instagram, I didn't even have this whole cart open and this super ramp up period and all of that because it was a beta and I wanted to test the waters and understand if I was even a good teacher. I didn't know that because I was always behind the scenes talking with my clients.

[00:23:15.110] - Speaker 2

I was never really in front of in the stories all the time like I am today. So anyway, that course went really well. As I said, it was 72 students signed up and best experience ever. Tons of testimonials from that. And obviously a lot of validation. That what I'm teaching, and the way I'm teaching it as well. Was the right way.

[00:23:38.020] - Speaker 1

So how did you do the course? Was it live or was it pre recorded?

[00:23:44.850] - Speaker 2

It was the most intense six weeks of my life. I am so grateful for my husband, who was just supporting me because I was basically not available for six weeks, because, again, it was delivered every week, basically.

[00:24:06.430] - Speaker 1

So you were recording it and then sending it out right away.

[00:24:10.150] - Speaker 2

Exactly. So I recorded module one, and after a while, the students were going through module one. I was recording module two, and the next week the same, and the next week the same. It was very stressful.

[00:24:25.430] - Speaker 1

Yeah, I can imagine.

[00:24:28.990] - Speaker 2

But I really connected with the students, and I was very available to my students as well. And that was another selling point. I was very open that this doesn't exist, but I want you to be open about what are the things you want to learn. So they were almost giving me the kind of questions and content they want to learn from me next week, basically. So it was interesting. And obviously, it helped me create a product that didn't exist that I can repackage and improve and then sell at a much well, now the price is three times higher than what it was back then also, because at the end of the course, I asked my students, how much would you pay for this? And they said, well, definitely around 1500 to two kwh. I would pay that for that course. So, yeah, that was a great experience.

[00:25:20.110] - Speaker 1

Wow. I'm so impressed by how you adapted. Like you said, the business. And now it became you are now a content course writer. You're in the education space all of a sudden. So I'm just, like, impressed with how that even comes to pass. Like, how do you make a transition like that? So it's almost like a gut feeling. You have to have that conviction saying, I know this is what I want to do. And like we said

at the beginning, being true to yourself and understanding what you want and then being disciplined to show up and do it, because I could feel the stress of having to write something every week and develop a course, especially even though people are giving you a little bit of money, you still feel a responsibility that they gave you some money. I want to make sure they leave with something. And this is also, I'm sure, as you did, use this as a fact finding experience where, okay, I can now understand what these students need, what are the things that best can support them and how you can develop the course. And I'm sure you've gone through a lot of different yes.

[00:26:37.690] - Speaker 1

I feel like you've gone through a lot of different iterations of the course, but you've developed and grown it to a place where you feel most comfortable about it. Yeah.

[00:26:47.950] - Speaker 2

I think when it comes to especially content, I talk a lot about it with my audience because I think creatives naturally attract other creatives on Instagram, for example. And that's where a lot of creatives, they struggle like, oh, I'm not attracting my clients, I'm only attracting other creatives. And that's where a lot of creatives make that transition into education, because they're like, oh, well, my audience is already creative, so I might just convert them into something. But when it comes to actually that transition, I don't think every creative needs to go into education. If you don't like it or if you're doing this purely to get more money, I don't think that this is the way to go. As I said, it has to be a natural calling. You have to be passionate about what you're teaching. You can't go into just for money or just because you already have an audience for that. If you're passionate about actually delivering projects, your clients working with clients, but you struggle with attracting clients, then the problem isn't that you need to go into education. The problem is in your marketing is in what you're doing in your business.

[00:27:56.670] - Speaker 2

That's what you need to figure out instead of looking for other direction. You need to actually look around you and figure out what is it that I'm doing wrong right now and what do I need to figure out?

[00:28:05.780] - Speaker 1

So true. I think a lot of people because it's becoming more popular. It's already popular. Doing education for creative, doing education for marketing for agencies. There's a huge business for that. You see a lot of people who specialize in it on YouTube. You see a lot of people who offer courses and guides. Like, personally, I love to talk about business, about developing ideas, and about growing some things that's sustainable and healthy. That's why I started this podcast. This podcast was kind of like me giving back to the community that supports my life, right? Like, we do creative agency work because the podcast does not make me money. It should. But for the amount of information and the caliber of guests that we have on here, it should give me money. It costs me money. But I do feel like it's something that I get to help and educate and teach people in a way that is still minimum effort on my part having conversations. And then I'm lucky enough to have a team who will chop up and market this to showcase some of the highlights and for people to then pull information out of. If you're looking for a way just to give back, you can do that.

[00:29:25.950] - Speaker 1

You don't have to jump into a full fledged marketing business. And I know it's also, you know this too. It's very trendy right now to kind of talk about how many streams of income do you have? How many other businesses have you started now that you have this one business? I'm guilty of it too, in the sense that now that we are way more stable now than we were when we first started in terms of our income, in terms of what we can generate, revenue wise, we're looking to expand to say, okay, what is the most profitable way I can share the knowledge that I have rather than the time that I'm spending to still afford a life. And there are two kinds of people in the world. There are people who are looking to get rich, and there are people that are looking to just live comfortably. A lot of people I just want to be able to afford my bills, not have to worry about money. I'm not looking to make like half a million dollars a month. That's not what they're looking. There are some people who are like, I'm trying to maximize.

[00:30:29.690] - Speaker 1

And by two types of people, I mean two types of entrepreneur or business types. The second type is I'm trying to maximize every opportunity to leverage how much money I can make. And you have to also, again, like we've said multiple times, you have to decide, what type of person are you? And we had somebody on our podcast a couple of seasons ago talking about what is that victory or success or freedom number? What is the number that you require that's going to help you live the life that you want to live? Because for some people, depending where you live, maybe \$80,000 a year is enough. And for some people, \$50,000 a year, some people it could be even less. And some people it could be I need to make \$500,000 a year, and I'm trying to grow that \$500,000 into \$2.5 million a year. And that's what they feel that they want. So when you're going into a Pivot or a realignment in your business, it always goes back to what exactly are you looking for and what is going to make you the most happy? Because you can have lots of money and not be satisfied and not be happy.

[00:31:40.950] - Speaker 1

I'm sure you've seen this before, too.

[00:31:43.000] - Speaker 2

Yeah. And I think especially now, you know how it's so popular to say, buy this course and you'll be able to have six figure business or you'll be able to close a ten K product. All those vanity numbers, that pretty much like what they're saying is that if you do not have a six figure business, then you're a failure. You're not there yet, boo. And that's why I think it's so important to understand, well, what does success mean to you? And that's why when I'm trying to promote something, I always talk about scaling and growing. Whatever success means to you, that's what you should be aiming for. You can compare yourself with another designer and thinking, oh, well, they're just shared that they're earning 60K a month. There must be the deal. And I suck because I made ten K month. Tenk is amazing. What are you talking about? So I think you have to be really careful when it comes to numbers. And as you said, you have to also take into duration every single person's personal situation. I live in Switzerland, where the cost of living is the highest probably in the world.

[00:32:49.610] - Speaker 1

You're out there.

[00:32:50.990] - Speaker 2

Exactly. So my goal, what success looks like for me now, what growth looks like for me now is very different than when I lived in London without a child two years ago. My goals are very different now. So I think all of these things, you have to take them into perspective and think about your personal situation. And also remember that your situation right now is not your final destination. There is so much growth until there you cannot compare where you are at now to where you will be in a year if you continue showing up as we discussed at the beginning of this podcast.

[00:33:28.260] - Speaker 1

Yup. Somewhere in the future you look much better than you look right now. That's what I tell myself sometimes you're like, oh man, I don't feel successful. Sometimes on paper you are successful, but you don't feel successful. Try to remind yourself, okay, you know what? This is a moment where maybe there are other circumstances as to why I don't feel as successful as I actually am. And like you said, you just have to know where you're at and that every moment or season is temporary because a new moment and a new season is, God willing, is going to be the next thing that's going to be happening to you. Right? So even though this month could be a bad month, or maybe this quarter is a bad quarter, but next quarter is a new chapter and you don't know what can actually happen in that. You mentioned even having kids. Kids are expensive, they cost a lot of money and they will empty your pocket. But I have two of them and my pockets are both empty. What I mean to say about that is the priority is different. I will gladly do with less to make sure that they are safe and comfortable.

[00:34:41.730] - Speaker 1

So as long as you understand, again, your priorities about okay, this is important for me. I love it. Gigi, I feel like I can talk to you forever. So I want to make sure that we're respectful of time because I feel

like we have a lot of similar traits. And being in the creative and marketing space, it's kind of like an insider club or an entrepreneur club where you feel like, oh, you're like me, you're like me. We can talk about business and work all day long because we have a lot of similar experiences. And this is the part where I'm really excited. Again, I'm being very selfish. This interview, guys, I'm talking about the things that are most important to me. These are the things that I'm challenged with and that I'm thinking about all the time. And I have this idea for a SAS project and that's how I also found Lola Labs. And I want you to talk a little bit about it because I'm so excited to see Lola Labs. And that was one of the first things where I saw it could have been a post or something. I don't know how I found this link where I was like, wait, this is a kindred spirit.

[00:35:49.410] - Speaker 1

So I'm going to introduce it real quick. I use something called Dubsoto. I currently am trying to use HubSpot. I tried Pipeline. I just learned yesterday about close IO. I've been looking for something that's been made for agencies in terms of a CRM or a pipeline or sales solution. For a while, I have not been happy. I've been very close multiple times to say, fine, I'll go the route of HubSpot because they're really the only one in the space that can do all the things at a somewhat reasonable price. The reasonable price is like around \$1,000 a month, which is unreasonable. But a few times I've actually thought of to myself, am I really going to keep having 30 different accounts on different softwares to make my life, my pipeline and my sales and my projects, all that type of stuff work? And then sometimes it's like, can I afford \$1,000 a month to just give to us? That's like having another kid. And the joke is, every time, the thing that deters me every single time is that not only is it \$1,000 us, I live in Canada, so that's like a million dollars.

[00:37:13.030] - Speaker 1

The dollar difference, not only is it \$1,000 a month is that it costs around \$5,000 for somebody to set it up for you because it's an empty box. There's nothing. No workflows, no automations, no templates. There is nothing for this software. When you get the software, it's empty. So you have to build everything, all your forecasts, your dashboards, everything. And that's where I'm like, okay, you know what? I'm going to walk away. I'm going to walk away. I'm not going to look at this anymore. I'm just going to keep using my lackluster almost good at some things, really bad at other things softwares. And then somehow I thought to myself, I'm like, what if I made a software? And then maybe a few months later I'm scrolling on Instagram and I see your profile. I'm like, oh, she has a great course. I think I've downloaded one of your resources and then I find your profile and I see you have something called Lola Labs on there. And I'm like, interesting, I'm very interested. I want to know everything. And it's not out yet, I guess under beta or under development 22,022. So I'm going to let you now, this is my backstory.

[00:38:27.130] - Speaker 1

I'm going to let you now speak and talk a little bit about what does that look like? What is the project, how that came to be? Were you similar to me? I want to know everything.

[00:38:41.590] - Speaker 2

I use a lot of tools in my business. I'm very about streamlining your business and making it as simple as possible. But the tool that I use currently is also diplado along with some otherwise other ones. The thing is, I signed up to Depsado when they were at their lowest price ever. I pay something very low right now and I don't want to cancel the subscription because, well, it's very cheap for now exactly. But I've had my frustrations with. I tried, I think all of the CRM out there and I always had frustration that it wasn't doing the things that I wanted it to do during lockdown at the very beginning of the lockdown in 2020 actually, Lucia, who is one of the co founders, were three people behind the Lola project. She approached me online when I was, I think I was running an online workshop for London community and she basically messaged me afterwards and said, I really love how you talked about processes and workflows and we have this idea. And I always had an idea in my back end that I wish I could just create a tool that will work for me.

[00:39:56.000] - Speaker 2

But I have no idea how to create a tool, I have no idea how to create a SAS. It's definitely not my area of expertise and I just didn't even know who to approach. So she said, hey, can we jump on a call and

discuss? And we instantly connected. And Luca and Lucia, they have a background in development, they have their own agency as well. And we started just brainstorming ideas. And the thing is, our original idea with Lola was to create a project management platform that will actually work for creatives, help them manage their projects better, have them manage also the communication and approval process with the client in a better way as well. And to be honest, that was our original idea. But what happened to Lola now is it's so much bigger than that. We are designing really a business management rather than just a project management platform. So Besides just focusing on the projects or your project workflow, having a clear timeline of a project approval processes, your client can get the deliverables until they actually pay because everything is behind a pay wall. This kind of stuff, the things that you need as a creative.

[00:41:16.150] - Speaker 2

So there is that. But there is also the business management part where you can check all of your analytics and KPIs. And basically our goal is to help small businesses start positioning themselves and operating their business from a growth mindset instead of just being in the now. And I think a lot of especially freelancer small businesses, when they start their focus on the now and on the next sale, they finish a project and they're like, what's next? What's next? The next lead, the next sale, the next project, the next client. This is very exhausting when you run a business like this, and my advice for all those who are listening, you need to start thinking of your business from a growth mindset. Instead of thinking of what's next, think about what you already have, for example, all your past clients already and start thinking, how can you actually nurture those relationships to grow your business? Because that was my secret to growing my design agency is to focus on client referrals and past clients. So we're also incorporating that aspect. We're helping you learn and teach you how to nurture those relationships with your past clients, which is something that never really happened in the CRM platform to actually help you think about your business that way.

[00:42:37.990] - Speaker 2

So we are currently finalizing the development and we're going to start the Alpha testing in the next few months and beta testing in summer 2022. So definitely I don't know if you're going to have a link or something, but jump on the wait list because we're sharing a lot of exciting features and also ask people feedback in our waitlist only Facebook group. So it's a very exciting project. It's very hard. I've never thought about the complications when you start building a software. All of the logical sequences. What happens if somebody presses this and what happens if somebody presses that? But it's very fun. If you're a problem solver, it's very fun. And I can't wait for it to be released because I think it's going to really transform and change the way small businesses are running other businesses.

[00:43:33.130] - Speaker 1

I love it. Like I said, I'm even surprised, actually, that you said you are using Dubstado. And again, Debato is good for what it did at the time of where I was in my business, but where I want to go. I don't think the tool that can bring me there. And I think it's ironic that both of us on two opposite sides of the world were using the same tool. And it inspired us to be like, well, this is of recent maybe a few months ago, I was like, what if I were to do my own project and build my own thing? And Meanwhile, you have already started in doing it, both of us using the subtle saying this is not working. And then you look at what the other solutions are and you're like, this is not working. But it kind of led us to the same idea of like, how do we build something for agents? I think that space. I've looked at a lot of different competitors. It's very open. There's like eight people who do this. And of those eight, maybe three or four that are somewhat good. And out of the three or four, two of them are expensive or very expensive.

[00:44:48.850] - Speaker 1

So you really have like one and a half maybe options. This is the landscape. Unless I don't know of any other thought, I've only seen about eight different options in this space. And it's very cool because I have another friend who was also on this podcast called Brady Sheer. And he went from the service based industry into a software based company, and it allowed him to grow in a new way, like exponentially, because whereas when you're in a service based industry, you have to convince each and every individual that how you are going to solve their problem, whether I need a logo that can

represent me or whatever it may be, whereas the software you create collateral design that explains it super clear. Then you can have maybe a demo or whatever. It is so easy for somebody to insert themselves into that narrative of how, let's say, low lab is solving the problem that the agency is having. So the decision is happening at a much sooner and higher rate because before now I'm talking with so and so they need to loop in the real decision maker, and then I have to kind of convince them as well and lead them to a decision point.

[00:46:15.090] - Speaker 1

And it's so much cleaner. On the software side, I don't know if you're in the same space as me and Gigi. You're probably in the space where you have a large tech stack and you have different softwares you're using. Right. To make your business work. And when you find a software I remember the first time I ever saw the how to or the intro video for Asana, which is a project management tool. I remember just thinking, oh my God, how have I been living my life without this? This is so ingenious. You have that opportunity so much faster on the software side than you do on the individual service based side where you can show what it does and people can see themselves in the solution so much faster. And I think that's the best part is like, you're helping people, but the scale at which you get to help people is huge. And I think that's very important.

[00:47:11.590] - Speaker 2

Yeah, absolutely. And I think you have to have a very clear understanding of your audience's pain points and how you can solve it. And to be honest, that's for anything in business, you have to know your client or customer better than they know themselves. So that when you pitch to them, whether it is through a discovery call or whether it is through your landing page for your SAS, it has to be an instant connection. They have to be like, as I said, with the Sun's, like, how did I live without this before? Yeah, definitely. You have to know them better than they know themselves.

[00:47:49.990] - Speaker 1

That is true. Like you said, for so much of business, you have to preemptively understand where your client is at and how you're going to meet them to solve their problems. Gigi, thank you so much for being here. I think we had a really fun time talking together one last time. Can you let everybody know where we can find you for your creative resources for agencies and designers and where can we find any more information on the lab?

[00:48:18.870] - Speaker 2

Absolutely. So the best place is to follow me on Instagram once it's creative that's the name of my agency in the bio link. It has all the information you need about my podcast by course and also Lolab. So connect with me there. I show up daily chat with you and share value. So I'll see you there.

[00:48:39.310] - Speaker 1

Awesome. This has been the more life podcast. Peace out. Bye.