

The Pros and Cons of Going Viral on Social Media with Laura Jane

Frances: [00:00:00] Whenever I speak to a prospective client, they always say to me, I just want my posts to be seen by somebody, anybody. But what happens when your post gets picked up and it gets shown around the world loads and loads and loads and loads of times.

Hi, I'm Frances, the Head Brain from The Social Brain, and today I'm really, really excited to welcome. Hey, it's Laura Jane, formally known as Whoa Dude Designs. And we are gonna be talking about the pros and cons of going viral.

Hello. Hello, Laura. How are you doing?

Laura: Hello. I'm very well. How are you?

Frances: Oh, you can never plan lives, can you? If I could kill my dog right now.

Laura: Oh, mine's in the kitchen. There's two doors between, and you'll hear them at some point, so.

Frances: Brilliant. Okay.

Thank you so, so much for joining me today. I know this is such a topic that is really, really well discussed. It's what people want their goals to be. It's kind of, you know, being viral is the biggest, best [00:01:00] thing in terms of social media or as it seems anyway.

So first of all, usually I'd get people to introduce themselves and, and obviously you've had a change in your business as well.

So if you wouldn't mind just giving us an overview of what you were doing before mm-hmm. and what you're doing now as well, just so that everybody knows exactly who you are.

Laura: Yeah. I've been a creative business owner for almost 12 years. I started out primarily as a crochet artist and a crochet designer, worked for Simply Crochet Magazine for a while doing video content for them and I ended up injured my elbow, to the point where I can't actually do it anymore.

Oh gosh. That explains the pivot, but I'm also an illustrator graphic designer. Just lots and lots of arty, crafty things. It's always kind of been my, my happy place.

But now, I'm going more into helping other people with their creative businesses because it's something I've done for such a long time. And when I was doing it myself, I think I realized probably about six [00:02:00] or seven years ago what I preferred over doing my own business was, was talking to other people about theirs.

I'd get so invested in other people's businesses and what they were doing that I sit there and talk for hours and we'd be, I'd be like sort of, oh, why don't you try this, do this. Yeah. And it kind of became, that became much more enjoyable for me than, than the actual creative side of things myself and I'm currently working on a sort of support and education based community for artists and crafters, and that's gonna be launching in early October.

Oh, amazing.

and I'm really looking forward to it. And I, something I've been working on for months now, everyone, and I can't, cause it's not quite,

Frances: I can't wait to see it, see it.

I said in the warm up to, to this live, like, people would know your voice more than they know your face.

Yeah because I think you've been around the world or your voice has been around the world around about 900 times, give or take.

Laura: Gone to the moon and [00:03:00] back on some madness.

Frances: Yeah. How do you feel looking back of the success of your, your audio? So, for those of you who don't know, Laura, she is the creator of 'it costs so much cause it takes me fucking hours', which is probably the most well known one I think.

Laura: I think so. Yeah.

Frances: Yeah. And then there's the other one, which is we don't owe you affordability, which is the other one, and then you do another one, which is also pinned to your profile, which is welcome to Small Business World. Right.

Laura: Quite a few. Yeah. The first two, they were the ones that blew.

Frances: Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. So how do you feel like looking at them now and thinking about, and hearing about like knowing that they're so successful, and they are still successful to this day, how does that make you feel internally?

Laura: It's, it's a, you know, there's, there's sort of like, it's a weird kind of duality cuz there's one half of it where I'm like, this is just madness.

And it's like, there's like famous people have used it, shared it in their stories. [00:04:00] Like Jamila Jamil shared something in her story with a video of, Honey Davenport from Drag Race used it. For a reel to get into drag last week. Wow. Made it, made it like this sort of, there's a few celebrities following me now, like people that are kind of actors and, and singers and stuff, and it's bizarre.

It's really strange. Especially because they're not really my target audience No. Following my content. So there's that weird kind of disconnect where it doesn't really feel like it's me. Yeah. But at the same time, it's just so incredible to have seen how many people, and not just, not just artists, but actually like brickies people that, people that put up scaffolding for a, living this, this song.

It's like, yeah, I kind of expected the target audience of it to be people that are very much like me. You know, like sort of quirky millennials who run their own art artistic businesses, but it's like, you know, nail techs and party [00:05:00] planners and, and hair stylists and brickies and, and painter and decorators.

And it's just the fact that it's reached, yeah, that many different corners of society just makes me. So happy.

Frances: It's crazy, isn't it? So it's such a versatile, like, all of them are really versatile audios anyway, but what was, like, if I take you back to that day where you were recording it, because you were so, so creative.

If I got in front of a microphone, I'd have no idea what I was doing. Yeah. But if, like, if I take you back to like that time where you were recording it and, and, and, and kind of, you know, even writing it, what was like your, and you've already said target market here, which is quite, you know, very, very important when it comes to social media marketing.

So what was like your intention behind writing it? Was it just, because I feel like you've, you've given people a voice. You don't necessarily feel like people say it.

Laura: When I closed my old TikTok account, and I'll get to that, we'll get to that bit from, but when I closed my old TikTok account, the, the associated hashtag with it cost that much [00:06:00] had been used almost 700 million times.

Oh my God. And I know that a good chunk of those are gonna be people just like adding it into a video of their lunch or whatever to be like, okay, this is trending, so I'm gonna add it in. Yeah, yeah. But that to me was insane. And that was not the, the, when I wrote it in the shower. Here's a little bit of what happened in the shower, because I had spent so long just watching so many talented people, most of them, friends of mine, charging less than minimum wage for something that they've been, that they're incredibly skilled at, talented.

And it was just, it was just pissing me off. Yeah, you've got to stop doing this because I think there's this kind of tendency with, with the creative world to think, okay, well they enjoy their job so they shouldn't be charging for it. Or this person's got a gift, a talent, they shouldn't be charging for that cuz they love doing art and that's not.[00:07:00]

So I just kind of reached the point where I got a bit frustrated and I was like, come on guys. And it was something that I would tell people all the time anyway. And I was in the shower and I was just like singing nonsense. And I came up with the song and I was like, I'm gonna record that. And I recorded the original version of it that that went viral on.

Yeah. On my phone. Just, and then I just layered it up in, I can't even, was it, I think it was Garage band just made it up. And I was like, this'll be funny, I'll just put this up. And I thought like amongst my kind of little circle of friends, it would be like, oh this is funny, ha ha ha, and then about a week in it just went bananas.

And I'm like, oh, okay. I mean, I knew it would resonate with people because I, I'd already spoken to so many people that were like, oh, just, I wish I could charge more. And yeah, I certainly did not expect 700 million people . And that was just TikTok. I, it, it then crept over to Instagram a couple months and it blew up [00:08:00] on Instagram.

And then the other song did the same thing. Yeah. Yeah. And I get my notifications nowadays are mostly 'such and such has used your sound and they're reel'. Or has created a reel with your audio. It's just that, that, that, that, that over it's still going and that baffling to me because it's been a year and a half at this point.

I was kind of thinking, it'll die off.

Frances: Fingers crossed it will die off a little bit. But I mean, well, yeah, fingers,

Laura: I mean, fingers crossed it'll never die off. Will keep putting their prices up.

Frances: But what I love is that your con and I, I've obviously, I've followed you, I've followed you since it came out, I think, and we've started chatting in the dms back then quite a while ago.

Yeah. And I think, like what's nice now is you've, you've done content about, is it a little octopus that you bought the other day and the Oh, it was an elephant. An elephant. Sorry, the elephant, yeah. Yeah. A craft fair and you were asking people to guess how much they, they, like you, you bought it [00:09:00] for, and, and everybody was guessing in the comments and then you were like, no, actually, It was this much, I think it was like eight pounds or something.

Eight pounds, yeah.

Laura: That most certainly taken that person at least 30 hours and about 15 quids worth of materials.

Frances: It's crazy, isn't it? It it, these, these creative people who, who are really like, I can't do things like that. I'm bloody useless. I can create graphics of social media, but you know, anything to do with my hands, I'm, I'm absolutely awful at.

So people are paying for skills and people do need to charge their worth and be paid their worth as well. Okay, so let's go to the meat of this whole live. Shall we do the pros, first to start with something good?

What were your biggest pros that you found from these, these songs going viral.

What, what were your biggest gains?

Laura: I mean, the, the sort of most obvious ones are things like an increased following. And the, my sort of engagement going up and all of that kind of stuff, which is [00:10:00] good and bad. I mean, I think it depends on, who, who those followers are and why you've decided to follow you because of that piece of content, and whether that's translating into them ending up actually being clients or customers or whatever.

Mm-hmm. . But, yeah, an increased following was, was a huge thing because it was, you know, that's, it's one of those things that if people don't see themselves growing, that's when people are starting to get kind of disheartened and like, I'm not growing, I'm rubbish at this. I'm blah, blah, blah. So when you get this kind of like boom of extra people, like, oh, it's, it feels good.

As much as it is effectively a bit of a vanity metric, it's still nice.

Frances: Yeah, cool. So it gives you that confidence boost, doesn't it? You're doing something right.

Laura: Definitely. Yeah. So, so that and just the sort of engagement going up, because obviously I was getting a lot of comments from a lot of artists that like, oh my God, thank you so much for saying this, this is something that's bothered me for ages and things like that.

Frances: Would you say that that reflected into your sales as well? Did you, how did your sales go [00:11:00] alongside it?

Laura: It did and it didn't. I think, what I did do was I created products that sort of were like a companion to that song. Mm-hmm. So I created ,stickers and t-shirts and things, and those sold really well.

Another stuff did to a degree, but there's a bit of a misconception with this increase of followers that you are, that that is gonna translate to sales when you are somebody that's a, a physical product creator, and that's not always the case. Mm-hmm. I think that's why they're sort of striving for, for virality is not, not necessarily really that, that important because, you know, I follow a lot of creative business owners and, you know, there are people that have got a hundred thousand followers and, and aren't making regular sales.

Yeah. So it doesn't always translate. And I think why that kind of bearing that that vanity metric thing in mind is so, so important. But it's good, good that you've got this increased following and you've got this bigger audience, but at

the same time it isn't always necessarily gonna [00:12:00] translate. No, no, it would agree.

My sales definitely went up because there was that, that higher sort of visibility for me, but not to the degree that people would expect, I don't think from how big that song got. Yeah. It probably didn't help that people stole the audio off of the platform and then re-uploaded it and then they became the original creative.

Yeah, and it just, I, I saw people that were, that were getting 30 million views on these videos with this song and mine, I think when I closed my TikTok down, it was stuck at like 600 k, which is still amazing, but considering how many some people were getting, I was like, but it's mine. It was awesome because I saw so, so I had so many people message me and be like, I've sold out of my stuff, or I've got all of these extra followers because of you or because of this song.

And it was just, yeah, amazing to kind of have that, that level of impact for people was really nice. It didn't, [00:13:00] it just didn't translate to me.

Frances: The merch and the fact that you are so business mind to be like, okay, well I need stickers and I need this and I need that. And that to, to coincide with that I think is being switched on.

I wouldn't have thought something like that. I've been like

Laura: next!

There was a part of my brain that was like, people are gonna think I'm a sellout . But I think at the same time with these kind social media, you'll know this is very up and down, some engagement, it's amazing and you've got all this kind of interaction and other times it's just, so, I think when those, those boosts happen, you have to take advantage of them as much as you possibly can.

And I was just kind of, it was actually my mom , she was like, you need to make, make some stickers or something or like do something with it cuz you're getting all this traction and like, I feel weird about it, so I'm like preaching to people to sort of like charge more money for their stuff, but I'm like, I don't want to.

So as much as I've got this big message, I'm [00:14:00] a massive hypocrite. Honestly.

Frances: No, not at all. Then you also, did you do any digital products as well?

Laura: At the time I wasn't doing it. And this is, this is the problem. If I think if you are a product based business, virality is good. If you've got a huge amount of stock or you are a digital product creator, because obviously that unlimited, you know, people, many of that as they want.

If you're somebody with my audience being so many kind of creative business owners have got a lot of people that, that sell digital patterns and like printable or of posters and printable artwork and stuff. So for that kind of business, it's brilliant because there's, there's no ceiling to it. Somebody that makes things by hand, there's only so much, so much

Frances: and it costs so much

Laura: and it costs so much because...

yeah, that's, that was, I think that was the problem that a lot of people found. It was great because they sold out of what they did have. Yeah. But once that buzz was there, they were like, I haven't got [00:15:00] anything. Exactly. So that's kind of the difficult thing. And when, when you don't have those digital products, you know, you, you've got a definite ceiling on how far that that buzz can take you really.

Frances: And, and, and this is like a side note before we go onto the, down the downers, but has that changed the way that you've offered out your services then? Do you now have digital products for when it goes around the world again?

Laura: Well, I'm working on it. I am working on it obviously because of my injury and because my business has pivoted in the last kind of six months, it's kind of one of those things where I wasn't really thinking about it in terms of how the song might potentially impact it, but I just know that because so much of my audience and probably about 95% of my audience, are creative business owners and artists or people who want to become a creative business and are just trying to get, get that confidence up to do that.

I think because [00:16:00] of that, the, the pivot felt quite natural for me and moving towards sort of more digital stuff. And especially now, you know, because it's so much more accessible for us to just create something that's really, really helpful. And it's like, you can have this right now, this minute.

So that's, yeah, that's one thing that I'm working on. And obviously with the, with the sort of membership program that I'm setting up the, community that's

gonna be sort of very support based, but it's also gonna be about, sort of educational stuff. It's, there's gonna be monthly topics and guest speakers and mm-hmm.

There's also gonna be, lots of group working sessions because certainly in the, in when, and again, this is something you'll know well because you work at home and work for yourself. Yeah, yeah. Very lonely. Yeah, absolutely. Community online, but sometimes you just kind of wanna. You're not necessarily gonna miss the water cooler chat about, like, Dan has a veruca, but sometimes it's nice to just have other people to work alongside and, [00:17:00] and yeah, planning all these sort of like nice group working sessions and stuff.

So I'm not having that. So everything for me is moving very much more to the digital side. Yeah, it's nice and it's, I feel terribly modern. But yeah, so, so digital things are on the way and I'm working on a lot of courses and things because social media is my, my joy.

Frances: Yeah, it should be worth noting as well.

Like obviously the song is, it costs so much cause it takes me fucking hours. Like the con that song must have taken you some time and then it's free.

Laura: Yes. I mean, yeah. The irony is not lost on me.

Frances: It's layered on quite thick.

Laura: The most ironic thing about this whole journey I think was the fact that when people started to steal it and pretend some people legitimately pretended that it was theirs and people would be like, oh my God, you've got such a good voice.

And they're like, thank you so much, and I'm [00:18:00] the cheek of like, yeah. You know, I'm trying to champion creative business owners and they're like, let's just rip her off. It's fine, rip her off. It's okay. But you know, I just stopped chasing it in the end and I just let it go. And I know that there's like tons of people out there that have used it and not credited me and I've just like, it's just, it's gone out and it's helped people. I don't really care, to be honest. Yeah.

Frances: But I, I still wish that like these platforms would do something more for that. I really wish that they would make it easier to copyright your sound. You do need that credit. You absolutely do.

Laura: It's easier now because it happens less now because I put it on Spotify and iTunes and Apple Music and all that kinda stuff. So because of that, it started to actually pluck other peoples out if they haven't used Wow. Yeah. Started to pluck them out, which it's taken my own videos down as well because I uploaded them before they were on Spotify. It was like this song, we've taken it down like no I wrote it. [00:19:00] Give me my video back. So yeah, that it's, there was a bit of chasing going on, which again is something, that's something that happens to a lot of people when they've created a viral video that then people have used the sound for. It's, it happens all the time.

Frances: Well, fake Instagram and TikTok sort it out. But let, let's talk about like the, the downside. Cause obviously we've talked about the loveliness all the great engagement, the sales, the helping other people, which is insane. This inspired you to create digital products, but what about the, the downside?

Tell us about that.

Laura: There are several, which is why I will always caution people not to necessarily aim for that. There are several. I, I would say on the less sort of dark side of things, some of the things that can kind of go wrong with, with creating something that goes viral and getting a lot of followers and a lot of that engagement is that you're not necessarily getting the right people.

Yeah. Obviously it's, it's lovely to have lots of [00:20:00] followers, but if you are somebody that's the service provider or a product, you know, somebody that makes physical products or digital products, you kind of want the vast majority of your audience to be people that are gonna benefit from that stuff and that are gonna benefit from your content.

And you know, as much as I love the fact that there are people that, that follow me that are brick layers and things like that, I love that and I've got made some really, really good friends with that. But the rest of my content isn't necessarily gonna resonate with them.

No.

These followers that aren't necessarily gonna interact with that content because they can't relate to it, or it doesn't, it doesn't relate to, to what they do. So that's, that's one issue is that you're gonna end up perhaps with a following that's not, not as targeted as you'd like it to be.

Frances: Yeah, absolutely. Like that following is not always going to convert into the dream client unless you really, really pivot your own services, and try and be a, an everything fits all. I think it's quite nice that you are, you are nice and niche down [00:21:00] into the creative side cause you know that, that is your expertise.

So nice to see you builders if you watching but you're not needed.

Laura: No, it's lovely. It's really, really nice. It's lots of people that, that are in a huge variety of industries and it's been amazing to connect with them and it's been amazing to hear their stories and hear how that song's impacted them or how it's grown their account and things like that have been awesome.

I think if you are somebody that is, it's a business platform. If it's a personal account, it doesn't matter.

Yeah. Different. Yeah.

More followers you've got is great. But if you are somebody that is specifically trying to sell something, whatever that is, or provide just impactful content that you want to reach a very specific audience, you are sometimes gonna end up with an audience that doesn't really align with that message, which isn't the end of the world, but is something that can kind of come from it.

Yeah.

I would say the other thing is that as it starts to dip off, [00:22:00] there's this like, it almost feels a bit like, you know, when you are in a nightclub and all the lights come on and everyone way uglier, all of a sudden, and you are, you feel like shit. Yeah. And you just wanna go home. Yeah. And you, well that was fun, but now it's over and, or like, or you've gone to a gig that you've been looking forward to for months and months. Or it was like canceled over lockdown and now it's finally here and you enjoy it while it happens and then afterwards you're just like, huh.

Frances: It's like the hangover effect, right? Where you're like oh.

Laura: Yeah, there's that kind of lull afterwards and you, and you almost hold yourself after that point to this impossible standard forever. Cuz there's a tendency with people and especially on social media, to always be like doing a bit better and doing a bit better and doing a bit better. And so when you've had something that's been used or been shared 600 million times, I can't really top

that. What, I mean, I can't, the this second [00:23:00] song that went round the bend, I have no idea how many times that's been used cause that's still, still hovering about now. But it just, you do have this kind of hangover afterwards where you're like, I'm never, how am I gonna top that? And you strive for it, anyway, despite knowing that the chances of it happening again and very, very slim. I mean, I got like struck by lightning twice, which was quite nice.

And I have had, you know, I have had things across in, across TikTok, my newer TikTok account and my Instagram account. I've got quite a few things that have got up into six figure views but it's never gonna be on that same scale.

Frances: Isn't that so sad though. Six figure views are still

Laura: I know. It's incredible and I look at them and I, when I actually contextualize how many physical people that is, if I get 50 views, if I had 50 people in this room looking at me, I'd shit my pants.

Frances: Yeah.

Laura: But let alone six figures, you know? Yeah. Thousand people, [00:24:00] 400,000 people. That's so many people. Yeah. Yeah. That's another thing that people lose sight of with this like driving for getting viral content is they are constant, they're like, oh, I only got like 2000 views. Yeah. Lot of people.

Frances: You know what, sometimes I have to draw this back in. When I get things like that, when it gets to like thousand, 2000, whatever, I have to Google what 2000 people look like.

Laura: I do that all the time.

Frances: I have to do it because otherwise I'm just like completely, like the numbers don't mean anything anymore. It's all about like seeing all of those people and be like, okay, that's alright.

I've done a good day today.

Laura: That's all good. . There's there's 29 people watching this right now. Yeah. Imagine for a second that me and you are just in a coffee shop having a conversation? It's a circle of 29 people around us. It's like, you, you'd be terrified. You'd be like, oh my God, this is so many people.

Yeah. But social media has completely disconnected us from the fact that that's a lot [00:25:00] of people. Yeah. A lot of people. And so when I'm looking at videos of mine, I'm like, oh, you know, I'm never gonna get 600 million . Yeah. And, but it's like, oh, well this, this one did pretty well. It got like 400,000.

That's a ridiculous amount of views. Yeah. And to, to stay connected with that is super important. And I regularly Google how, how, what does a thousand people look like. Yeah. All time and. That is actually a really, really good way to stay grounded in the fact that these aren't, this, not, this is not just a number, this is tens of hundreds or thousands of individual human beings that are spending their time watching what you're doing.

And there is a big disconnect with social media and, and that like, constant kind of feeling like crap about yourself just because you only a thousand people saw something. That's madness to me. Yeah.

Frances: It really is. It, it's something that we really have to reign ourselves back into. So [00:26:00] Yeah, totally, totally get that.

But what about like, and I know I, I've got, if I'm to showing my notes, so these, these are the notes that you sent me, these are the pros, and then this is down here is . All of this is the cons. So I'm like trying to work through them. Yes. , but obviously there are people that kind of fueled that negativity and, and stuff like that.

So what was your experience with like the trolls, the online bullies, people having different opinions.

Laura: Brutal. It, brutal On Instagram, the response has been different. I think Instagram generally, especially as a creative business owner, is a lot more supportive than TikTok, and that's probably just my experience.

I don't know, I can't really speak to anyone else's, but my experience of TikTok has been, I feel like people are a little bit more faceless over there, or they feel like they are because they'll say some stuff that's just brutal. Yeah. And there were two kind of different elements to the negative reaction to those songs, one of [00:27:00] which was people that just disagreed with what I was saying.

We should, you know, we should be thankful for every single customer we get, even if they expect a huge discount. And yes, we are thankful for every customer, but we are not really thankful for people that are like, I'm not paying that. Yeah. So there was, there was a number of people that wanted, specifically

disagreed with what I was saying, thought that artists should be charging minimal because it's fun and you know, and the starving artist trope is still very much alive and well nowadays. And then there are also people that misunderstood who the songs were aimed at. Some people genuinely believed that the song was aimed at everybody.

That I was saying like, you all suck. You're not paying me enough. You're all terrible. When in actuality it was, it was aimed at people that creative business owners and artists in general deal with all the time. Yeah. People that will pay, you know, a grand for a [00:28:00] handbag that was made in a sweat shop, but then expect an artist to, to sell them a pair of earrings that took them four hours for 15 quid.

Or the amount that they'd pay in accessorize or something where it's been mass produced. There's that expectation to price match. Like Aldi or something. Yeah. Just not gonna happen because it's not the same. No, because art at the end of the day, is a luxury, and handmade is a luxury, not hand handmade alternatives.

We're not gate keeping. We're not like a gas company where it's like, well, you either pay us or you freeze to death. Yeah. This is not a necessity. This is a luxury thing to have something that somebody has sat and made by hand and focused all of their skill and their love and their attention on, that's a luxury thing to have and we don't owe anyone a price match on Amazon or Primark or whatever. Just is not gonna happen.

Frances: Did you feel like there was more hate [00:29:00] towards one song than another?

Laura: Yes, there was one, there was one point in the we don't owe your affordability song that people kept sticking on.

Frances: I think I know what it is.

Laura: Are you comparing yourself to Louis Vuitton?

There was that which no, I'm not. I'm saying that people who don't wanna pay artists will happily buy a, a designer handbag made in a sweat shop for thousands of pounds, and then tell us that we are being rude for charging 30 quid for something that's taken us hours. Because again, it's not aimed at every customer.

It is aimed at the, and we've all, everybody that's had a creative business for long enough will have come across these people. Yeah. Over and over and over again. So that there was that, and then it was you are comparing yourself to a luxury leather goods brand with your little crochet, blah, blah, blah.

No, I'm not. That's not what the song is about.

No.

That was the biggest thing was that misunderstanding that the song was aim to [00:30:00] everybody and that I was trying to alienate customers and I was trying to push people away and I was trying to, and frankly, if a customer is pushed away by me not wanting to be paid half of minimum wage for a skilled, then I don't really want them as a customer.

Yeah. Cause not a very nice person. If they're gonna argue with me that I should charge way less. There are people who just like, that's not in my budget. I like it, but it's not in my budget and that's totally fine. Mm. I have no issue with that whatsoever because there's, I've got a bigger budget for crystals than most people, but are very small budget for things like hair care, cause I can't be bothered and it's not a priority for me.

Whereas crystals are a priority for me. So I like, that's where I like to spend my money. For some people they like to spend their money on really good food or they like clothes or on, you know, so it's different for everybody. Yeah. Not about saying to people, you can't afford me so.

Which is what some people thought it was. Yeah. So [00:31:00] genuinely believed that I was being classist. I was called classist so many times, I can't even tell you. I'm like, it's not that you don't have to buy from us. This is thing you, there are cheaper alternatives to everything. There are. You can find a cheaper alternative to everything, but handmade items are luxury.

And I will die on this hill a luxury item, nobody owes any of it for cheap, just because they're Mm. It's like Amazon or something. So that was something that people got really stuck on. You, you are just put your alienating customers and pushing them away and telling them they're poor. Like, believe me, I have not got a lot of money.

Okay. I'm not telling anyone that they're poor. So, you know, it's, I think it's, it's that entitlement to art and that entitlement to, to things being handmade. And as

much as it would be lovely [00:32:00] for everybody to have access to that stuff and everybody to have all the money in the world, that's not how society is.

No, absolutely not.

Just because we enjoy what we do doesn't mean that we shouldn't be paid fairly for it. There are people out there who are accountants who absolutely hate their job, and it's like, oh, well they should be paid lots of money because they don't really enjoy what they're doing. But there are also accountants out there who love what they do.

They love numbers, they love helping take that burden off of people. Should they be paid less because they enjoy their job? I mean, that's Capitalism at its finest, which I won't, because we've effectively been designed to believe that the only way we should deserve to have money is by, by working ourselves to death.

That's how we prove our worth. Our value is how productive we are, how hard we work, how much we ignore our, yeah, how busy we, I used to wear that badge with Pride that, I'm so busy. Look how ill I am. Yeah. [00:33:00] Absolutely ridiculous. It's, it's ridiculous.

Frances: Yeah. And, and you know, this has blown up all the comments.

I can see you all writing all these things. Totally agree. I've had some conversations shaming me for my prices. I've got this, especially crochet, chronically underpriced, it costs cost so much cause it takes me f in hours. , this has made me go up my Etsy prices. They do take, that's make days well done.

Yes. Action. Actually. Incredible. Yeah. Honestly. @minimoonart says love the comment about crystals and then @lemonish says if you're offended by someone asking for a living wage, then you are the problem, not them. Which is absolutely, absolutely true.

Laura: Yeah. The outrage surprised me. The fact that people were so angry.

Yeah. Asking for more money. I had some people take it to the extreme where somebody... I had a few messages to your typical, like someone blowing up and then they get like death threats and things. [00:34:00] I had people messaging me, I hope you die. You have, you have ruined the business industry was the other thing. And actually I feel quite proudly to the contrary of that fact.

Mm-hmm. Because I, I've seen so many people grow their business because of this song, because they were brave enough to be like, do you know what, actually I do deserve to have more money for what I do. I shouldn't be charging three quid for a handmade scrunchy when you can go somewhere else and buy it for three quid.

But this one I made by hand from like vintage material and I'm paying, I'm charging you three pounds for it. And there were so many people that pushed their prices up because of that. So I feel very proudly that I think I've impacted the small business community in a very positive way. There were some people that because they didn't like it, they got negative because there were people getting negative feedback on their use of the song as well.

Mm-hmm. You've killed the small business community. You've made everybody [00:35:00] hate small business. They hate small businesses for wanting to have money to pay your bills and put food in their kids mouths then there's something wrong with them. Yeah, absolutely. And you don't want them as a customer anyway.

Frances: Like we mentioned at the beginning, it is about skillset. Like what you guys, well, what the creatives can do with crochet or with any of the other creative stuff that your community do, I can't do. So, you know, and it's the same with social media management, you know, things that other people struggle with, I can do. I've got the experience in it, I've got the skill in it, so I deserve to be charged for that time as well. That's those lessons learned and, and for everything else. And I think that's a really, important thing to, to, to mention as well. You know, it, it's, it is because you've learned and you've developed and you can create these beautiful products, which all of your, all of your community do ,that you, you, you do afford to pay bills.

Laura: Someone actually commented at one point. Well, just because you can't afford your gas bill doesn't mean that I should have to [00:36:00] pay more. I'm like, you don't have to. No. That's the point. You don't have to Sharon? You could just walk away. You don't have to say anything. You could just, because when I walk past, like when I, cause I love, I love shopping in Glasgow.

It makes me, it's my like happy place. I love shopping there. And there's a whole big bit where it's like you walk past this huge big window. It's like Gucci and Louis Vuitton but I can't afford any of that. I'm not gonna march in there and go you're classist. I should be allowed to buy this as well cuz I want it.

Frances: Can I have a discount? Could you imagine that would be, well it'd be brilliant.

Laura: My most creative, trolling comment, and this was very offensive, was somebody signed up for my email newsletter with fuckyou@ihopeyougetcancer.com and in hindsight, I could go, it's quite clever, actually.

Terrible, terrible, terrible, awful human being, but I was just like, [00:37:00] that is creative. At least it's just, I actually just, I closed my account down in the end because aside from anything else, I was going through a very bad patch. We had a, that whole year we lost several of my very close family members. And it was just brutal and I was not in the place to handle it.

Whereas now I get messages like this and I just think you haven't understood the song. Leave them to it. And I don't delete them, I don't engage with it, none of that.

Frances: But I think that's a really important point to make as well. Like even, and I know that our communities are all lovely, and they wouldn't ever dream of going out and actively online bullying or trolling or anything like that.

But there is always someone at the end of that, of that comment and you now they're going through and it, you know, my, my mantra since I started my business was kill them with kindness because you just never, you just never know what someone's going through.

Laura: The same tactic with my daughter's father. Yeah. Yeah. Because honestly, I feel very much like [00:38:00] if you are just as nice as possible, obviously, like have your boundaries. Absolutely. Have your boundaries and know when to step away. But if you are just generally nice and polite to people when they disagree with you about stuff, they have to actively lie about you to make you look bad.

Yeah. So, you know, I've had people who, when I, I can't even remember what it was now. I shared, oh, I shared a reel, very recently where I was complete basically saying, stop complaining about Instagram's algorithm. Yeah. Work with it. Or find a different platform that you and I gave a number of points that people could use to try and customize their Instagram to a way that was gonna suit the way they like to view it and all this kind of stuff.

And I got a couple of people that were just livid about this and didn't care that people's businesses were failing and all of this stuff. I do what I do because I very, very much care about how people's businesses are going, and I want to let them know that by getting down on themselves and feeling bad about how their socials are [00:39:00] going, it's not gonna help them.

And by publicly complaining on their business platform about it all the time. And I mean, the odd complaint is fine. We all do it. We're all, and we want an authentic, you know, we wanna appear to be authentic. But when it's constant and when you're constantly blaming the algorithm and Mark Zuckerberg and it's summer and that's why I'm not making these sales and it's this, and that's why I'm not, it's not helping you.

No. Whether it's true or not, it's not helping you. And I got a lot of people, or not a lot of people actually was thankfully only about two or three. And the rest of the people kind of got what I was trying to say. But I was just very, you have to respond very much like. Okay. Yeah. I really appreciate your opinion on this.

And, and we had a conversation and I think there was one person in particular that seemed very angry that I wasn't biting. They would, they were just constantly pitching back into me and being, you know, really quite unreasonably rude. Mm-hmm. like, okay, well, you know, I hope you [00:40:00] find something that works for you.

Your work is bloody awesome. I hope you find like, I, I hope that you find a way to enjoy the platform again, or find something that suits you better. Yeah. Yeah. As much as that is a case of like killing with kindness, I do actually really want them to do well, despite the fact that they're disagreeing with me.

Yeah. And, and having people will talk about having a bit of a thick skin on social media, especially when things do go viral, and I think there's an element of truth to that but also it's about kind of knowing when to be like, okay, that's too much for me now. I just deleted my old TikTok in the end because it just, the comments were just constant and some of them were horrendous and really like brutal.

Some of them were very personal. Some of them were about how I looked or my weight or my voice or any number of things and at the time, because I wasn't in a very good place, it was really quite difficult to, it. I was very anxious. I was bullied at school, so I've got a very thick skin for stuff like [00:41:00] that, but I was actually getting quite anxious because there were people sending me stuff that was threatening and you know when, when I've got

an email newsletter and somebody signs up with something so like scary, I'm like, what if somebody gets really angry about this and decides to try and find out where I live? Yeah. Or decide, you know? And so, and I, especially as a parent, I like to keep my life online as out there as I am.

It quite, you know, yeah. Keep, keep that stuff somewhat protected. So it became actually quite scary and I think that's a big thing for people who sort of blow up on social media. It can get quite scary. You, you get like two ends of it where some people are obsessively mad at you and some people are obsessively like, this is amazing.

And they're like messaging, messaging and messaging. So it can be a very intense experience, especially if you are somebody that is very, very [00:42:00] sensitive or neuro divergent. I mean, I'm neuro divergent and I, I struggled with so much attention all at once and such a confusing shift between one opinion and another cuz there were some people absolutely championing the song and some people who wanted me to die.

Frances: So crazy, isn't it so, so crazy. But you know, again, I wouldn't invest my time into bullying people online anyway, but I just think who's got the time?

Laura: It was madness. And I think it's when you are somebody that's like just a, just a nice person, just a nice person, it seems so farfetched to imagine that anybody would behave like that. Yeah. It's amazing what anonymity will do because there's no repercussions. So the internet's a scary place.

Frances: So like, what would be, your biggest advice if one of our followers, like randomly went around the world five times, like, just [00:43:00] like you did, what would be your, your biggest, biggest advice to, to that person?

Laura: I would say, because especially if you, if something's gone viral, that's had quite a polarizing effect in the same way that mine did, or that, that that's a bit of a, a spicy take in some way. I think it's not reading all the comments. Because there will be lots of them. Just don't read them all. I think it's very difficult cause you, there's this morbid curiosity and you're like, I want to know what people are saying and I wanna know if they're saying nice things.

I imagine if you're a celebrity, Googling yourself is a recipe for a therapy session every single time, I can't imagine how, I don't know how people do it. I think it's trying to distance yourself from the video as much as you possibly can, or distance yourself from the audio as much as you can, because a lot of the negativity that's gonna come in isn't gonna be personal.

Mm. You might feel like it because they're making a [00:44:00] comment maybe about how you look or about what your voice sounds like or about what message you're trying to put out there. But at the end of the day, this person does not know who you are. They probably haven't watched any of your other videos. They probably won't.

And it does go away and you do kind of, I think you reach a point where you're like, oh, whatever. I just carry, I genuinely don't care anymore. And there was a period of time where I really did. Yeah. And I really struggled with it. My mental health was already not in a good place, and it just got worse. And I got anxious, and I was constantly on my phone, just constantly checking to see what somebody had said, and if somebody was being threatening and if somebody had, yeah.

It becomes this like, all consuming thing. So I think if it does happen and sometimes it happens and you have no idea, you do not expect it. Just something one day or just, yeah. And it's, you know, I, I don't think anyone ever really expects it. Some people do and it doesn't happen but I don't think anybody that, that anything's gone super [00:45:00] viral for, I don't think they've sat there and gone this, or this is the one. Yeah. But usually something that you've taken an hour on or like 10 minutes and it will just.

Frances: No makeup, no hair, .

Laura: You spend hours on 12 views. Yeah. Brilliant. It just happens. So I, I would say it's about kind of distancing yourself from whatever that thing is.

And, ,and there, there being a degree of separation and you being very, very strict when it does happen about how much your phone is in your hand. Mm. Because it becomes very, all consuming for good or bad reasons, it become all consuming because you become very anxious about the things that are being said or the comments that are being made or any sort of like personal attacks that are happening.

But there's also the other side to it where you become consumed with it cause it's like, oh my God, look, the numbers are going up and the numbers are still going up and up and up. And it becomes this obsession to like check it every 10 minutes. Like, oh look, the numbers gone up [00:46:00] again and it's gone up again and up again.

And then you think, that doesn't really mean anything. You know, it all sort of consumed in this one thing and then the hangover is even worse afterwards. Never really there again.

Frances: Well, I'm, I'm sure like one of them's gonna go around again anyway because it's such a relevant topic for everybody. Like I, I know that, you know, I'm a service based business, but I have real issues with pricing mind monkeys.

And I know that they're both of my business buddies who are exactly the same. They're just like, you know, we're on a WhatsApp and we're like, what do you think we should price this at? And it's exactly the same thing.

Laura: Even worse for digital products as well, because you are handing someone a physical thing, you're handing the transformation.

Yeah, there's a but, but, but it's so difficult cause it's not a physical thing and we're so, we are so ingrained in this idea of like, good goods for, for money or whatever, but you are hand what you're handing somebody with a digital product is probably some sort of transformation or some sort [00:47:00] of enjoyable for them.

So it, I'm trying to put a value on that is it's tough. It's tough. I don't think it's something that anyone ever gets good at either. I think people expect because I'm somebody that's sitting there like, charge what you worth. And I'm still with the Creative Business Association I'm putting together right now, I'm still looking at it and changing the price every two days.

That's too much. That's too . And this is too little because I'm doing all of this, but then not too much. People are gonna be sad. And you know, it, it's so difficult to distance yourself from that desire to just be as easy as easy follow as possible.

Frances: Mm-hmm. I can totally relate. So I've worked with business coaches and sales coaches and everybody on my, on my personal business journey.

And , you know, I've, I've got a membership and we've tried it at the higher price and then I've gone, oh no. Oh no. And I've put back down again. Yeah. And it's, it's what you feel comfortable with but you know, with, [00:48:00] with the creatives it is, it's like putting, putting an hourly rate on that as well. I think that that's, that's for guidance. Right?

Laura: Somebody had mentioned earlier on about crochet. Crochet, for example, if it was genuinely priced fairly for the amount of time it takes, it would cost thousands probably. Yeah. People that make blankets, like my lovely friend Lynn made me this blanket and I've now had it for years and it just goes everywhere with me but it will have taken her days and days and days and days. And if she, I mean it was gifted. Well, we sort of, we did a swap. She bought something of mine and I bought something of hers. If she had sold it, cuz she does sell blankets, if she'd sold it for, for the actual hours that went into it, it would be astronomical by, by standards.

Crochet is very difficult. It's very difficult one. That's why everything I made was small. It was quicker and, and, and it was, and I'm [00:49:00] impatient and I get shiny object syndromes. So I had to make lots of, lot of small things. I bought a crochet blanket as a crocheter because there's no way I'm ever gonna have the patience to do it. People that make garments.

Frances: No, I don. No, no, no. Not for me. None have the bear, none have to learn from scratch.

Laura: There are some, some creative. Professionals whose work is just so much more labor intensive and the problem being that when somebody undervalues themselves and charges less, it's undervaluing everybody.

Yeah. And that's, again, that's the same with the service industry as well. Absolutely. So it's saying, I don't why they're charging that because it's not worth that. It's worth £4.50 . And you're like, no, that's not helpful. It really isn't. And it, and you, you're not just undervaluing yourself, you're, you are undervaluing everybody in that, in that specific sort of [00:50:00] niche of the creative world and that that's what I'm trying to fix.

Yes. A tiny little bit at a time. (inaudible), hoping that 10 years from now everybody will be charging just more. Yeah. Decent amount of money and then it will become more commonplace for, for people to see art as the luxury thing that it is people to see handmade stuff as this is a luxury thing.

You make something cheaper, but it will be made by a machine.

Frances: And what a lovely world that will be. Everyone will be earning more money surrounded by beautiful things.

Laura: It would be nice if people could just, you know, heat their homes, but apparently that's a, that's a controversial take that I have there for some reason. I don't.

Frances: You wouldn't say that to Louis Vuitton?

Laura: No. Who, who, you know, I'm apparently comparing [00:51:00] myself to.

Frances: I just have a couple of questions left to ask you before we close up. What's your favorite, what's your favorite song?

Laura: I don't know. I think, I think probably it costs that much just because of the impact that it's had on, because of the impact it's had on surprising people. You know, like the fact that it's been used by such a wide variety of professionals in like so many different industries is amazing. Mm. And that, I think that's my favorite because of that.

I'm sick to my back teeth of the song cause so many times. And because it's so repetitive, just, you know, but it's funny, like I have had a few people, like my, my nail tech for example. I remember having a conversation with her, she was the first time we met and I sort of told her, oh [00:52:00] yeah, I do like social media stuff and I did this song.

She was like, you know, there's people that I've spoken to that have recognized exactly who I am. As soon as I mention the song, I'm like, oh my god. Madness. I love that it's had that much impact on people and that there are people out there and a t-shirt with it on, you know, and I've got a sticker on their laptop that's reminding them, to charge their worth, when they're sitting there putting an Etsy listing in and then putting the money down and then the sticker is right there, they can go, I'll just put it up a little bit. Yeah. Up a little bit for people. So I think that probably my favorite just cause the impact more than anything else. The song (inaudible) but I'm thrilled, thrilled at what it's done for people as well, so.

Frances: Well, do you think you'll write any others?

Laura: Yeah, probably because it's fun and because I love producing music.

Like I've, I will sit and tinker around with that stuff all day. So probably, and there's a [00:53:00] couple of things that I've written that are just sort of sitting, I've just like recorded them as a voice note just so I can like come back to them

later if I don't forget. There's also a couple that slipped under the radar, but I might share a little draft further down about like, problem customers and stuff.

They're not as shareable because people can't be like, it's not really from their point of view, it's more about like, customers that are a pain in the backside, and, and so I might reshare those just for a bit of a giggle. But yeah, I think I'll probably, I'll probably do more when I'll have the time? No clue.

Frances: After the launch, after 1st of October you'll have loads of time.

Laura: That would, yeah, that would be nice.

Frances: And where can people find you if they've not connected with you before? Is it just Instagram, TikTok or do you have anywhere else you wanna send people?

Laura: I'm on Instagram, TikTok and Facebook. All as @heyitslaurajane. I'm also on LinkedIn. Very professional. I'm [00:54:00] never, well I do, I sort of snoop.

I mainly use it to snoop like people I went to school with. I use LinkedIn sometimes, but yeah, Instagram is my baby. Instagram is my favorite place. It's where I spend most of my time and it's where most of the meat is. Yeah. So Instagram's probably the best place, best place to find me.

Frances: Awesome. Well, thank you so, so much for spending this hour with me. It's, it's been such an amazing chat and thank you so, so much. I think it's, really important to have somebody who has been viral talk about these pros and cons of being viral. Yeah. I'm sure we'll do another one of these when your next song goes viral after the 1st of October.

Thank you so much, Laura.

On my next live I'm going to be talking with the Queen of Evergreen, Britney Long about emails and social media and the relationship between the two. Thank you so, so much Laura. I'll see you guys soon.