

EPISODE 26

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:04.1] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to the Creative Empire Podcast. Each week, Reina Pomeroy, the life and biz success coach and Christina Scalera, the attorney for creatives are taking you up close and personal with successful influencers in the creative community and tackling your biggest business hurdles. Their mission is to help you, creative entrepreneurs, think beyond your daily biz so you can make the brave decisions that build your Creative Empire.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:35.2] CS: Hi everybody, this is Christina, we're back for another episode of the Creative Empire Podcast. I'm here with Reina. Hey Reina.

[0:00:41.2] RP: Hello there.

[0:00:43.0] CS: We have a guest today. Ashlyn Carter. Hey Ashlyn.

[0:00:46.1] AC: Hi, how are you all?

[0:00:47.0] CS: Good, good. We're so excited to be talking to Ashlyn today. Ashlyn is a copywriter, a former PR guru and a sometimes calligrapher as well. She's very talented in a lot of different creative aspects. We're really excited today to be talking to her about, how do you tell a story through your website, through our copy, through your Instagram, whatever it may be, how do you tell a story to sell more services, products, things like that? So Ashlyn, would you mind giving us a little bit of a background like how did you get to be such a good storyteller?

[0:01:22.8] AC: That's a really good question. First of all, thanks so much for having me on. I'm so excited to get to share a little bit. It's always been words for me. I grew up as a classical ballerina and so telling stories on stage with expression was always something was a part of me and then when I went to college, I guess if you grow up filing InStyle Magazine under your bed

chronologically next to the teen vogues, there's something to that. So I decided, journalism was such a natural fit and never wavered once from that.

After college, I went off and traveled as a leadership consultant so it was marketing and are recruiting consulting for Alpha Delta Pi Sorority. 28 days on, two days off, went to 29 schools just really loved — I always say it's the best job that I would never do again but it truly whipped me into shape as far as thinking like a consultant.

So after that, going into PR agency was a natural fit and that has been my jam ever since. As far as telling stories, it's really just always been a part of me and I think it's really important. I also feel like I'm all about busting perfection and telling the real honest, authentic stories and being raw and so whatever I can do with my love of words and my love of writing to help that is really important to me.

[0:02:44.0] RP: Oh my gosh, I'm so excited that we're talking about this because I think a lot of people struggle with, first of all, with words but second of all, with why they should even use storytelling in their business and how to do that. So can you tell us a little bit about what's possible with storytelling?

[0:03:00.6] AC: Absolutely. So I feel like we, in our generation, we sit here, we have watched media completely change in the past decade. While simply being unique used to work, it just doesn't really have the same currency that it used to. So now, there's power and there's investment that happens with a story. I think, I know we live in an Instagram world too right now but I think words still matter because stories still matter.

You look at these big brands, Nike, Apple, Made Well, Anthropology, they do an incredible job sharing their world view alongside imagery but at the same time their copy is so strong. I think that as a consumer when there's something to it. When your story aligns with my world view, I think there's a conversation to be had. I think that as a consumer, I look at the brands that I really like and I align with their world view in a sense, but I wouldn't know their world view if they didn't communicate it authentically through story.

I hope that makes a good sell, I also think that it's wound up in who we are as humans. If you think about it, we were telling stories before we were agricultural societies. We spend 30% of our whole day daydreaming and that doesn't include the time when you're asleep at night. We just constantly are telling ourselves stories. I don't know, I think it's wound and it's innate in us.

[0:04:25.4] RP: Yeah, I think that's absolutely true and I think it's more powerful to interact with brands that do have a really strong story or very strong message and so I love the examples that you brought up. But I wonder, when I started in this business and when I started I was a wedding planner formerly, and I didn't really know what copyrighting really was. It seemed like a very foreign and scary thing. If somebody is looking to write website copy or copy in any kind of marketing or social media, what would you recommend they check out or what tips do you have for them?

[0:05:03.7] AC: That's great. First of all, let's just nix all the pretensions, copyrighting is such a scary word, and it is not. I feel like, I'll be honest. As a PR practitioner, I didn't even know that word existed until a few years of working in the industry when I realized whenever we talked about copy, we actually just meant words. So that's really all that it is and copywriting in and of itself is the art of persuasive writing. It is writing as intended to make an action happen.

Whether that is purchasing or signing up or whatever it is. As a writer, I really like copyrighting as opposed to journalism, editorial writing, poetry, whatever other forms of writing are out there because copyrighting is art and it's science. It has to be beautiful, swift writing but at the same time melded with a knowledge of what you want to make happen and what that target is going to be looking for. So that's kind of the basic 101 copyrighting. To get started, you're writing copy and if you're a small business owner, you're writing copy all the time.

Anytime you write social media, inceptions, anytime you write your pricing guide, any time you're putting together your website, that's all copyrighting. So I think if we can just erase anything that makes it feel scary or pretentious and just get down to realizing that really, at the end of the day, it is selling your story. As far as some quick tips, I like to really coach my clients to think about their website as you guiding your target or your reader through the journey of what it might be like to become a client of yours.

So I like to think about it this way too, “Sweetheart, you are not a hero,” and I have to think that all the time. Like on my website, it is not about me, it’s about the person that coming to you that at the end of the day. All the great stories and our culture, I’m going to go ahead and say star wars is a great story. We have Luke who is guided along by Yoda if we think about Harry Potter, we have Harry who is guided along by Dumbledore.

So when you think about writing your website, think about you being the helper and the other person being the hero. So that’s your example Reina, if that bride is looking for a wedding planner, you want to position her as the hero to her own story and you’re just coming in to bolster her up and give her a boost to get through the process. If you can write in that sense and take yourself out of it even on your about page which is hard for a lot of people, you’re making some steps to telling your story well.

[0:07:46.3] RP: So good.

[0:07:48.3] CS: Yeah. Steven Pressfield just released a new book and I think it’s called *Nobody Wants to Read Your S!@#*. We’ll blip out those words.

[0:08:01.5] RP: So true.

[0:08:01.5] CS: It’s true. Nobody wants to read your s!@#, they want to read about themselves. So I mean, how do you make it, aside from making it the hero’s journey that you’re kind of talking about, this Joseph Campbell-esc of your writing, how can people do that? Because I work with — I coach some attorneys and it’s always hilarious to me. They have the hardest time writing their about pages because they don’t understand why. I’m like, “Take that junk off. Nobody cares what articles you wrote about what boring topics.”

They are so offended. They’re like, “But I went to this thing and I did this thing and it’s prestigious and my peers recognize me.” And I’m like, “But your clients have no idea what that means. So unless you want to spend the next five paragraphs that you could be selling your clients on your services on telling them whatever this award was that you won, get it out of there. It’s not about you,” and they have the hardest time with this and I think a lot of — I mean ultimately, they’re business owners.

[0:09:03.0] RP: Your about page is not your resume.

[0:09:04.4] CS: Right.

[0:09:06.7] AC: Precisely.

[0:09:07.4] CS: Yeah, so how do you write a decent about page? That's a big question that we can't answer in this time but what are some things that people can do to get that?

[0:09:17.7] AC: Oh, but it's one of my favorite questions. I feel like there's probably some really great, witty, quippy comparison to be made between online dating and like going on a first date and you did everything and it's like TMI. I feel like sometimes about pages are like that. Don't just like regurgitate everything on your resume. I think a lot of people tend to have a website view as like, "it's everything but the kitchen sink," or "it's your junk drawer and just put it all on here."

You need to have a copy dock on Google Drive somewhere that has all your copy to pull from. Your website needs to be clean and edited on that about page. So back to what we were saying about putting yourself, like putting the reader first, your about page is a letter to them. I always start off with an attention getter. Write to that person. There's a lot of talk in marketing right now about only having one target audience, going for one niche and that's important on your about page because you really need to address that first.

Then I think the next step, if that would be step one, the next thing is to come in and offer some kind of reassurance. Like, "Hey, does XYZ happen? That's what I'm here for. Or that's my specialty." Whatever it is that gives them a little nudge. Like, "Okay, I might be on the right track." Then the third step, you can start bringing in your accountability and like showing all that. There is a podcast that Amy Porterfield did one time and I loved it because the interviewee that she had on had mentioned showing your brush strokes.

So showing, as an artist, kind of the messy parts. You have an opportunity to do that in your about page. Show a little bit of why you're not perfect. Like be a little silly, be human and I don't

know, you have an opportunity to make them fall for you and not be this — no one likes the cool girl in the lunch room that nobody can touch. You want to be relatable.

So after that, the biggest thing you got to give them a call to action. I see so many about pages that don't have a CTA at the end and that's like, I feel like that is comparable that having somebody in your house for a dinner party and then you just like don't show them where to go once they come in. Show them the next step to take, it's a very hospitable move on your part.

[0:11:36.9] RP: So good.

[0:11:37.9] CS: That's a great piece of advice. I have a question because this is probably the number one thing that I encounter. Why should anybody hire a copywriter because after all, I'm playing devil's advocate because I do believe in hiring copywriters? Full disclosure. Why should somebody do that? They write on everything, you have to write your own blog post, you write your own this, you write your own that, that's how you start out. Most people don't start out hiring copywriter. Why should they and when is the time to do that?

[0:12:07.9] AC: Absolutely. To be honest, right off the bat, I don't think is the time because I think you need to get in the groove of writing for your website and understand the different copy buckets that you're going to have to fill, then I think that makes its own case to tell you like, "Oh gee, this is why copywriting takes so much time and maybe I should hire an expert." I will say though, when looking for a copywriter, I would only recommend that you go with one that has a mindset of giving you the tools to continue to write in your brand voice because you cannot hire a copywriter — I mean maybe you can? I sure couldn't — to write every single copy bucket that you have to fill.

You need to be trained on your brand voice and your tone and just anything that would have to, you know, when I work with my clients, I make sure that I put them with a word bank and a mission statement and values and just all these words that sound so much like them that they can come back to you time and time again. So I think that is something that's very important but I will say, there is something to kind of getting fresh eyes on your copy docs and having somebody to look at it and nail it down for clarity and consistency.

[0:13:13.4] RP: Ashlyn, I'm super intrigued by this thing that you're saying about, "does it actually sound like your tone?" I think that that's where there's a big disconnect because we've been trained in education to write like a researcher or write like we're writing pros or something like that. That's not how we speak, that's not how we show up in the world and I think the brands that are so attractive, the ones that captivate you emotionally are people who or brands that really speak like people. Can you speak a little bit to that and like my meter for if it goes on my website or if I write it is, "Would that actually come out of my mouth?"

[0:13:51.6] AC: Yes Reina, that's it.

[0:13:53.3] RP: Okay, so talk about that.

[0:13:54.8] AC: Okay, you're absolutely right. I think we all have this, well not all. Because some people really like writing, but there's that fear of the blinking cursor and like having this high school English teacher sitting over your shoulder and thinking like you've got to nail it, you've got to pull out the thesaurus, use contractions. You've got double space and get the whole two page limit mastered.

That is like — nix all of those rules out of your head. You said it Reina, you want to type like you normally talk. I recommend always reading out loud anything that you write and I also recommend, this is something that Nikki Elledge Brown, she's a great copywriting resource, recommends. Yeah, isn't she's so great. I have like the biggest girl crush on her.

[0:14:37.6] RP: Nikki we love you.

[0:14:38.4] AC: Yeah. She calls it, I think this is brilliant, the BFF test and like, if you are not comfortable with something, call in your spouse, call in a best friend and read it out loud and if that doesn't sound like something that, like you said, would come out of your mouth then maybe rethink it. Always aim to write copy that sounds like you because it will sound contrived and people will very quickly realize that it's not you.

[0:15:03.5] RP: My next question is kind of piggy backing off of that. You've talked about it a couple of different times, but showing the messy parts, being a little bit more vulnerable, I think

a lot of people who are newer in an industry, who are trying to establish the credibility and their expertise have a hard time — I went through this too, and I'm still by myself going through it that if I'm vulnerable, I can't be seen as a professional and I can't show people my messy parts of life. How can you incorporate that and show people that you're human? Because I think vulnerability ultimately means that you look courageous.

[0:15:39.6] AC: True. I'm like Brené Brown, I just love her and she has a quote from *Daring Greatly* that talks about how people look to those that are vulnerable and find them very courageous and even start to model themselves after that. So I think that you have the opportunity as a writer and as a leader that kind of create a ripple effect on that.

Because my personal story, I'm open about it, within the past year I was partially hospitalized for generalized anxiety, depression, and an eating disorder. That kind of led to me quitting my job as a publicist and going to work for myself. The more open I was about that story and just got up the courage to share it because I felt compelled to. I mean, the work came and people loved to hear that. I don't say that anything on me, I just feel that I don't know? I feel that I got to see first hand how it works.

I will say as a barometer, if you're not comfortable with something being plastered on the Internet, don't share it. Not to say that you can never share it but maybe you need some time away from it. I think that you definitely need to be healed from anything that you've walked through before you start talking about it so openly. But I would encourage you to share, but just in the right time.

[0:17:02.6] RP: Thank you so much for sharing that. I mean I think a lot of people would resonate with that just because of their experience, whatever scary things that they're going through at the time and I think the more we talk about those kind of taboo topics, it makes it easier for others to connect with us and relate to the things that we're going through. So thank you.

And another thing that you said that was interesting kind of goes along the same lines as what my friends says. It's about like sharing your scars, not your wounds. You have to always have

healed from them before you can share with the world what you've learned from them. You don't want it to be like a gaping wound while you're talking about it.

[0:17:43.5] AC: I love that. That quote is beautiful. I'll write that down.

[0:17:50.1] RP: It changed my life when she told me that and I was like, "Oh that's killer. I'm going to remember that forever."

[BREAK]

[00:17:55.3] ANNOUNCER: Are you enjoying the show? It would mean so much to Reina and Christina if you take two minutes and head to our iTunes and leave a review. It doesn't take much time but it helps them bring you more value packed content.

Back to the convo ladies.

[BACK TO INTERVIEW]

[0:18:11.3] CS: What are the baby steps that people can take to start being more vulnerable, if this is something they're interested in doing? Because I know for me, for a long time, my Instagram is a good example of the way that this has morphed but when I first started writing, more authentic, what I would consider authentic Instagram posts. I started out and I was like, "Wow, look at this pretty piece of paper that I got and it's so beautiful," and that was my Instagram post.

Now it's morphed into really many blog post but on a very personal level. Or they're very personal compared to my regular blog. For me, I mean, that was a process but what would you say to somebody like how would you hold that person's hand and how would you show them how to take the baby steps if they're interested in opening themselves up and to being more vulnerable, either on their blog or their social media accounts? What are some of the things that they can do to help themselves?

[0:19:05.1] AC: Good question. I love tactical, actionable things. So I appreciate that you asked that. This is when I'm going to play at the PowerSheets card. I feel like Lara Casey if you're not familiar, has a tool called PowerSheets and those really helped me because in doing them at the first of this year, I realized that my story, it was a goal of mine to have it seep out. The thing about setting big goals or having ideas like you're saying Christina, being more vulnerable, is you're going to actually have to do some maintenance on it and some day to day things to let it seep out.

They can seem really scary at the time but the thing that PowerSheets do is, or at least for me, have helped me to recognize it without daily tending I probably wouldn't have been vulnerable about my story. For me, it started out, I was like, "You know what? I'm going to put it online, I want to write a blog post about it." So that little bit. Then, I think you'll find, when you're vulnerable, you're going to get some sweet reactions that are really lovely.

I had a younger girl that I mentor, she struggled with a few things and we read her blog post a few times and she's like, "I'm going to do what I'm going to do it." And I also advised, I was like, having a mama, having your mom read something before you post it is usually a pretty good — or a mother figure, pretty good gauge on whether or not you should post something, put it on the internet.

But once Hannah wrote that article and published it, she I think, it's just released her to kind of go under the next steps and talk about it some more and have some conversations face to face not online, which can be even scarier sometimes. So I would recommend yeah, making that one little step and then seeing what the feedback is, and going from there.

[0:20:52.7] CS: Yeah, I think that's the key is you just have to rub the band aid off and try it because, I mean, from my understanding, this is how the Rising Tide Society got started. Natalie Frank put out the blog post that was not really a rant but very vulnerable and very, "Hey, this is a state of the creative world right now and I don't understand it and look at how it could be different." From there, this entire movement was born.

So that's an extreme example but it's really not that extreme because I mean I've seen it in my own business, I've seen other people do it. It's a process that where when you become

vulnerable, you find the people that truly resonate with you. So yes, you're going to lose people. There's going to be people that jump off your email list or that stop reading your blog or whatever because it's not a message that resonates with them anymore, or something — it triggers something in them that they're not ready to deal with possibly.

Then you find the people like this is partially how I found you Ashlyn. I just wrote this post about Allume and it just was very heartfelt and vulnerable in the way that I approached it. I wrote a "review" if you're not familiar but basically it was an inside look at what it felt like in my body to go to this retreat that I was really scared and anxious to go to because I was afraid of how I would be seen or treated or whatever.

[0:22:14.2] RP: That's so brave.

[0:22:15.4] CS: Well, it's been one of the most popular and I didn't mean this. Sometimes you just have to write — I think it's going to happen, if you're scared to do this, for me, this is what this post was. It was just so scary to put it out there, write that post but at the same time, I couldn't not write it. I had to write it, it had to get out of my body somehow and from that, Ashlyn, I don't know if that was related but you ended up going to Allume.

[0:22:39.1] AC: Oh yeah.

[0:22:40.5] CS: I had the same, two other girls wrote to me and they said they had the same reaction and they ended up going and attending because they were at a similar spot as I was. The post resonated with where they were and who they were. So many other people didn't end up going to Allume but they were in a similar situation and if you read the post, you'll understand the insecurities and the fears and things like that that I'm alluding to.

Yeah, I think just ripping that band aid off is kind of crucial but I love your tip about the mother figure because that's so true. There are certain things — being vulnerable does not mean sharing everything. So drawing that line between something that could get you in trouble, possibly with the law or with your spouse or someone that you care about versus being vulnerable and sharing, there's a huge line there. For example, why don't you give us some

examples? For me, the line is somewhere around — I wouldn't share what I ate for breakfast but I could share how it made me feel, if that makes any sense?

[0:23:38.7] AC: Yeah, I can keep your sharing in a way to edify others then it has value. Here is an example of something that mom was like, "You might want to back space that." I was just to a point where in early business days, I was learning very quickly that I was going to have to say no to a lot of things and at the same time, I had so many requests for like coffee and lunch with other small business owners in the area and it was like, I had to make a choice.

Did I want to jump into that or spend the time that I needed to on this baby fledgling business? And I was talking to mom and had written something to the tune of, "I don't need new friends right now, I can't handle that," and mom was like, "Okay, nope, don't say that." I think there's definitely times when I need an editor to come in and say — even for my own writing. It just didn't come out right or like I was saying earlier, it's not the right timing having it fully healed or flushed itself out. I hope that's a good tactile example for you.

[0:24:45.6] CS: Yeah, and if people are interested in working with a copywriter, this is something I'm struggling with quite honestly right now, where do you find a good copywriter? Because Reina and I have talked about this at length? It's really easy to find the people that want to be the brands themselves. Like the whatever's of the world. The best wedding photographer, the best brand director, the best brand designer, whatever it is. It's easier to find those kinds of people.

It's much harder to find people that are willing to support you from the foundation up. For example, the virtual assistants of the world, the editors if you're a photographer. So finding an editor is difficult and copywriters can be difficult because ultimately, what some copywriters do is just ghost posting. So ghost writing for someone else. How do you find someone that's a really great copywriter and how do you know if you've found someone good?

[0:25:37.4] AC: Yeah, it's funny you say that because I do feel like I like speaking and I'm learning to love it more about my medium from calligraphy to copyrighting in words. So I'm not as comfortable if I can't hit backspace or erase. For people like me and VA's, yeah, we tend to be a little bit more just behind the scenes in nature any way.

I do feel like as a Rising Tide Society member, I've seen some great posts in the Facebook group and I know there's a few there also Savvy Business Owners. Reina, is that the current name of the Facebook group?

[0:26:09.0] RP: Yup.

[0:26:09.8] AC: Okay, there's a lot of copywriters that bubble up in that. I'd recommend those as resources and then when you vet them on your own...

[0:26:17.6] RP: Please vet them on your own.

[0:26:19.4] AC: Yes, please vet them and don't — mainly to match to see if, I think if their voice fits yours that I don't know, Christina and I were having a conversation with one of my clients last night and she was like, "It's amazing to me how what you've written Ashlyn doesn't sound like you, it sounds like me."

I think that that is a mark of a good copywriter. Maybe when you're vetting him or her, look to see if their client portfolio shows that they can speak in different voices because you should be able to do that as a copywriter.

[0:26:51.9] CS: So good.

[0:26:52.7] RP: Yeah, and I think that the vibe has to be right, like you said. The word bank has to be appropriate to the client that you're serving and that totally makes sense to me.

[0:27:03.4] AC: Yeah.

[0:27:05.0] CS: What was I going to ask you about? I think there was a question for me about something you said in the one to five step process about, I think it was step number two, you called "reassurance".

[0:27:15.8] AC: Yeah.

[0:27:16.2] CS: I call them pain points that you solve or the results that you get. Can you speak a little bit to what that looks like maybe if it was like a photographer or a graphic designer who needed your services?

[0:27:30.5] AC: Sure. Okay, so I feel like the reassurance that is on an about page, for me as a writer, is different from what's on a sales page. So I'll go at this from an about page purpose. It looks different and I always, while there's a formula or a recipe for each about page, I change that line up as far as maybe it introduced yourself. Maybe it says, "Hey, there's a better way." It's going to look different.

For an example, for a photographer — okay, here's a bonus tip. So if you think about people coming to you as say a photographer and they're looking to meet a need, their basic need is fill in the blank for photographer for their wedding. Their underlying psychological need is that they want someone that they feel so comfortable with, it makes the whole wedding party feel comfortable, that captures them, let's be honest, looking their most beautiful and best for forever.

The same way, here's a silly example. My husband and I are having people over for a cookout and I need somebody to cut the grass, let's pretend he couldn't cut grass. I need somebody to cut the grass. Yes, I need that need filled but really it's a pride thing. I want my yard to look good for when I have people come over. So there's this underlying want or need that people, when they purchase things, are looking to fill when they buy.

So as a wedding planner or a florist or a photographer, you really need to think about why they're coming to you and ask why five times, that little motto, and see if you can get to that deep seeded, why did I really need you? That, when you reassure them, you're speaking to that need that they have.

[0:29:19.6] CS: I know. So many people don't go that deep. They think, "Okay, well this is just good enough. I just needed words on a page, fine." And that might be great for a week, but come back to that step, don't just let it sit there and your about page is not something that just

stay stagnant and it's something that you need to change frequently in my opinion. At least ever quarter.

[0:29:42.7] AC: I think so too. I also would say, on your about page, it's really important if we bring it back to being about that person, for them to be able to insert themselves in your process, whether you show that through visual storytelling and you have hands on different collateral that you might have or working with you or a step by step process, "This is what it's like to work with me." They need to be able to envision themselves alongside you. I think that's a really important part of an about page as well.

[0:30:13.2] RP: Yeah, and I think the envisioning part, that can be done through storytelling or visual means, right?

[0:30:18.8] AC: Absolutely. I would say, I always think that story telling is equally in tandem, 50% and 50% imagery and copy. Personally, I think copy is the scaffolding that the imagery supports but I would say that, I'm a copywriter. But yeah, I think that's the layout.

[0:30:38.1] RP: That's very cool. I think I need to go and check out my website, I don't think I've rewritten my about page since I started my business last year. So that's on my to do list.

[0:30:48.8] CS: Yeah, so much has changed.

[0:30:50.8] RP: Yeah, so much has changed and my sales page needs to be updated too.

[0:30:55.1] AC: Kat Schmoyer gave me the idea, she's behind the Creative at Heart and Dear Sweetheart Events. Check her out, but she had this great idea, she's a Trello fanatic and taught me about Trello and also has a duty day. So once a month, she knocks out a lot of business admin stuff but also those, "schedule dentist, schedule hair appointments, schedule the vet". All those kinds of to do list.

But on my duty day, at the start of each month, I added a quick website vet where I just like, click through each page, make sure things are up to date, make sure my processes are still the same. So that's one, because Reina, I'm like you. Before I know it I'm like, "Oh shoot."

[0:31:35.0] RP: Thank you, I start implementing that, that's a good idea tip.

[0:31:40.2] CS: Yeah, Kat's actually episode 15. So if you guys go to creativeempire.co/episode15. She'll talk more about that there.

[0:31:48.3] AC: Cool.

[0:31:48.9] CS: Yeah. If you guys want to grab any of the resources from today's show, you can head on over to creativeempire.co/episode26. Yeah, I mean it's been so informative talking to you. Some of these interviews are densely packed with information and I feel like this is definitely one of them. If you were to go out and talk to somebody that was in your shoes a year ago what would you tell that person?

[0:32:22.4] AC: A year ago, me as a small business owner or a year ago when I was working?

[0:32:27.0] CS: When you were working nine to five and you had this idea but you weren't really sure.

[0:32:31.3] AC: I would say, obviously I'm going to say, "Go for it." Let me think. I just feel like there's a lot of — I had a lot of fear in starting and I didn't even know that there was this whole creative entrepreneur ecosystem that even existed. I was completely blown away by learning about the online entrepreneur and as soon as I kind of caught wind of it, I started taking any and every class at night after work, at General Assembly, that I could.

So I don't know, I think if it's something — there's a safety net. There are people that will catch you. Christina, you hardly even knew me and like you were like, "You should go to Allume, you should invest in your business," and like, there is just such a support net out there. So I feel like, if it is really a dream, we don't have much time, we live once and like go after that. I think you really will find the creative industry world, especially, very supportive. So go for it.

[0:33:31.3] CS: Thanks Ashlyn.

[0:33:31.3] RP: Yeah. Christina and I just recorded a podcast episode that aired earlier than this episode but just about encouraging other people and I think that what you're saying is so true, that all of those, like you have to do it. Just go for it and there is people who are going to catch you and people who are going to encourage you along the way. So I think one of the things that you have to do as entrepreneurs that you have to find those people. Not just wait for them to come at you.

[0:33:58.5] CS: Good point, good point.

[0:33:59.4] AC: Very true.

[0:34:00.4] RP: Well thank you so much for coming on the who but right before we end this episode, I really want to ask you the question. How do you build your creative empire?

[0:34:11.4] AC: So when you work in PR land, if you work in an agency, you bill time. As I'm sure Christina, many lawyers attest to, fitting 15 minute increments of my time cataloging them with different clients and so, from that, I have really still in place with my own business. So I build my creative empire by being very efficient and just realizing that time isn't a commodity that I can just slop off to the side.

It was really important to me in starting my business that some days be protected and that some days be a day where I do not — I mean if I want to not get on social media that day, I have the opportunity not to. I don't want to check emails that day, just really putting firm boundaries in place and making sure that I'm hacking into my efficiency on the other days is important.

I'll recommend one more resource. I am a nut about Clare Diaz Ortiz and her book called *Design Your Day*. She is lovely and really talks about how to get down to figure out when you're most efficient and effective and hack into that and then let the rest of the time just be living your life and so that was really helpful for me as I do small business life by myself.

[0:35:26.2] CS: That's great. Thanks Ashlyn. Where can people find you?

[0:35:30.3] AC: I'm Ashlynwrites.com and then my Instagram, Twitter, all that handle is Ashlyncarter.

[0:35:40.3] CS: Great, thank you so much Ashlyn.

[0:35:43.1] AC: Thank you, I really enjoyed it.

[0:35:44.4] RP: Absolutely. Thank you for tuning in and go build your Creative Empire.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:35:50] ANNOUNCER: Are you ready to build your own empire? For more information, show notes, downloads and tips on how to do it, head to www.creativeempire.co where you can find out more about this week's episode and the two lovely ladies behind it all, encouraging you to build your own creative empire.

If you enjoyed this week's show, it would mean so much to Reina and Christina if you could take two minutes to go to iTunes and leave a review. It's a little thing that makes a big difference for the show.

[END]