

EPISODE 61

[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]

[00:00:35.4] CS: Welcome back for another episode of the Creative Empire Podcast. I'm Christina Scalera and I'm here with Reina Pomeroy.

[00:00:40.6] RP: Hey there.

[00:00:41.4] CS: Today our guest is Dannie Fountain of LE Consulting, Side Hustle Gal and I will let her tell you everything else and we're doing a special episode today. It's more of a mentoring focus and so we will be mentoring Dannie on some of the things she is struggling with in her business, some of the things she is doing well with and we'll be wrapping back up with her in a couple of months here and seeing how things are going. So I'm really excited to talk to you today Dannie, how are you?

[00:01:08.2] DF: I am great. Thank you guys so much for having me on today.

[00:01:11.2] CS: Awesome and if you guys don't know, if I haven't blasted it out on Instagram or anything, Dannie is actually a member of my team and I love her dearly. She is my strategist for all of my content and helps me plan everything months and months in advance. So if you wonder how I do it, this girl is part of helping me do it. But today we're going to be talking a little bit about you have so many different companies and so many different "hustles", if you will.

So what are some of the things that you would like to maybe explore today with both of us here to be a sounding board for you?

[00:01:41.7] DF: So the biggest thing, just looking at, you're right, I have my fingers in a few different pies. And I've niched down in each of those pies but the thing that I wanted to explore is how to make all of these things work well together and not look like separate entities because then it makes me look scatter-brained.

[00:01:59.1] RP: Yes so give us a little bit of content, and let's give the audience a little bit more information about what those pies are so that we can talk more coherently about each of the projects and how they might connect?

[00:02:10.8] DF: Of course, yeah. So LE Consulting is my oldest "pie", if you will. It's been around four or five years last month and it is a marketing and PR strategy firm that I actually started as a resume design company in college. The Side Hustle Gal started as a book, which was published a little bit ago and now has a second book coming out. But it's all about creating a community for those women who aren't in their business full-time for whatever reason and just giving them a space to be vulnerable and feel like that's okay.

And then the Styled Marketing Course is a partnership with two really awesome style stock photographers, Jana TwiggyPosts and Rosemary of Rosemary Watson Productions as well as a branding consultant of Kyrsten of Copper Kettle Co. and we've come together to talk about how using Style Stock Photography in your business for marketing purposes can be done well even with bundles purchased like under \$50.

[00:03:05.9] RP: That's so cool. Lots of things going on and I think that what unifies all of them is strategy, right? And for you, it always comes back to that and I think that listeners who might feel like strategy isn't their thing, it doesn't matter. There's something that's going to unify all of their various.

[00:03:23.6] CS: If you want clients, strategy as your thing.

[00:03:26.8] RP: Yes. So Dannie, tell us a little bit more about your original question, which was how to make this all play nicely together?

[00:03:36.2] CS: Yeah, where do you feel like the divide is coming here, on your end?

[00:03:39.2] DF: It comes both physically and individually. So physically, they're all separate LLC's. They're not like under a master brand. They don't outwardly look like they go together and then visually, I market them separately. So Side Hustle Gal has a separate website from LE Consulting. The Styled Marketing Course has a separate landing page all together. And I don't really let them intersect with one another but really, they could all come together in some way to showcase that I have this overarching strategy skill.

[00:04:09.4] RP: The LLC stuff is all Christina.

[00:04:13.6] CS: Yeah, that is something that I am not as concerned with. The more you can have from an LLC standpoint, not just you but anybody, obviously the more diversified your portfolio is and the less liability you're facing in any single one. I use the example there all the time. That's a good example of someone or who has a company that has a lot of different LLC's. So they have a different LLC for their books division and their electronics and all that. That is basically so that if someone sues them for the book stuff, then their electronics business isn't going to go under or whatever.

So I am not so concerned about that. I mean in my opinion, it's always better to have more than less as long as they are all functioning and operating like LLC's. So they have their own bank accounts, you're not drawing from your personal account. From a liability standpoint, that's what I'm looking at but again, that really to me I think the bigger issue here. I think the bigger issue to me here is the fact that you are the common denominator of all of these businesses and it's not exactly obvious.

[00:05:09.1] DF: I agree 100%. Like you say, LE Consulting and a lot of people don't even know that that's me. So that's not cool.

[00:05:16.2] CS: I think what I see, and we've had this talk privately, but just to bring it out in the open, one of the things that a lot of business owners not just you struggle with is the fact that when you are creating, and this is what I have done in the past as well. When you're creating a brand that is not your name, it can be very difficult because you are basically trying to build two brands at once.

So most of us already know how hard it is to just build the one brand, much less to build the one brand and then have people associate that brand with your name or to also in conjunction build up a brand that that is with your name. And so, one of the things that we have talked about was in private and now just bringing this to light, is how are you planning on becoming Dannie Fountain in the creative communities that you're in?

[00:05:56.6] DF: Yeah, that's a really good question. Because even when we were at Savvy a couple of weeks ago, it's not like I walk around with three separate business cards. I walk around with one business card that lists all three. So what is the way to ladder them all together and make it known that Dannie is the one that does these?

[00:06:14.2] RP: So Dannie, I have a quick question that dips deeper into Christina's original question, which is what do you want to be known for? What's the impact that you want to leave on this creative industry?

[00:06:25.2] DF: It's hands down, in a single word, the strategy. But more than that, helping creatives feel like they have a direction and they have goals. So when I was learning how to fly a plane almost 10 years ago now, the one thing I kept being told over and over in those lessons was, "Flying is great but you have to learn how to land," and that's true an entrepreneurial business too.

If you don't have a target as creative entrepreneurs, we have no idea how we're going to grow our business. So just equipping creatives with the strategy and the end goal so that they can grow instead of not really being sure what their direction is.

[00:07:09.2] RP: That's so interesting. When I was a wedding planner, my goal was to be a wedding planner, to be absolutely transparent. I saw other people who weren't profitable, who

weren't doing a good job, who didn't really have a lot of ideas and looking back, I didn't have a lot of strategies. I just knew how to be profitable.

So it's really interesting to hear you say that and to know that people need that service and you want to be known for that. Not LE Consulting to be known for that, but for you to be known as a strategist that can look beyond people's business and say, "This is what landing actually looks like."

[00:07:48.2] DF: Exactly, yeah.

[00:07:49.7] RP: I love that so in my mind, this is a crazy sort of suggestion, but I think it might be that you're building a brand that's more you that houses these different LLC's. It's like the umbrella where there's little prongs coming off of it and those little prongs are the various projects that you're working on and the majority of your work under this umbrella might be at the consulting, but you have different projects that are coming off of it. What would you think about creating that more namesake brand for yourself?

[00:08:22.7] DF: I think that honestly is period the next step, because I can't have a house divided if I am trying to teach others to have a house united. So it just makes sense.

[00:08:34.2] RP: Yeah, Christina what do you think about that?

[00:08:35.8] CS: I'm completely onboard. I mean I actually love that she has the Side Hustle Gal and these other collaborations. But again, it's really important to understand that you can go off in different directions and have a home base. So one thing that I see that you're doing really well is you have your home base, it's just maybe not as recognizable as I would be comfortable with if this were a long term coaching mentoring whatever you want to call it relationship.

Even I hiring you as a client, I can speak from personal experience, I had trouble figuring out who it is that I was interacting with at first and what it was that I was going to be getting from the relationship because I just wasn't clear on everything that I offered. And to be fair, everybody listening, she has a niche down quite a bit on her offerings and that I think has helped. But I tell

her this all the time, I didn't even know that you did PR because I think it wasn't on your website or I just didn't see it.

And so having that be really clear and watching what your main offerings are going to be or what they're going to become. Whether that's the three that you have now on your website or the two that you have now on your website and something about the Side Hustle Gal. Or keeping the Side Hustle Gal totally separate since it is a really unique offering from everything else that you're doing.

Everything else that you're doing is service based or some kind of product. Whereas the *Side Hustle Gal*, you've just indicated that you only have plans for books. And so when you're publishing the *Side Hustle Gal* and you have the strategies in mind, I guess let's go back to the beginning. What was it that prompted you to write the Side Hustle Gal as a book about having a side hustle but not as a book about your experience as a side hustler?

[00:10:20.2] DF: So I think the Side Hustle community is a unique one not just like the Side Hustle Gal, but part time entrepreneurs in general, in that there is no one voice that can tell the story because I was a Side Hustle Gal because I had a corporate job that I loved. So and so might be a side hustle gal because she's a mom and she can only work so many hours. Someone else might be a Side Hustle Gal because they are caring for an older parent.

It's not like full-time entrepreneurship where you can root it back to a love of serving others. Everyone has a different story. So by writing the *Side Hustle Gal* in a way where it takes all of those stories from all of those different entrepreneurs and put some together, it creates a better sense of community in a more unified voice because more people are represented.

[00:11:06.3] CS: Then how does *Side Hustle Gal*, the book and the community, how does that affect your main consulting business?

[00:11:12.4] DF: I don't know that I've seen that it has an impact. It started just as this passion project because I was passionate about the fact that I was a side hustle gal myself like I couldn't own that. So I don't know that it's had an impact on LE Consulting and so much as like gaining

clients or anything like that but it's given me a more authentic voice I feel like any entrepreneurial space.

[BREAK]

[00:11:38.6] CS: If you think you have a really special product or service that nobody else is offering, we would love to talk to you and find out if a sponsorship is the right opportunity for your business to take it to the next level. Because we know how hard it is when you're starting out to find those ideal clients, to find those great customers that are willing to buy from you, day after day, month after month.

So don't do the hard work yourself. We've already done that for you. We've already built up an audience and we are super excited to put your product, your service in front of our audience for a very low monthly cost. If you would be interested, head on over to creativeempire.co/apply. That's creativeempire.co/apply. See you there.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[00:12:22.3] RP: Yeah, I can hear that *Side Hustle Gal* is such a passion project. It's so important to you and it's an incredible part of your story and I don't want to mitigate that. I don't want to take that away from your main story just because that's something that you're really proud of and that you're really starting to own, it sounds like.

I am thinking about your business in like maybe website architecture. This might not be the right terminology or whatever, but I am thinking about what the tabs are going to be at the top of whatever the next rendition of danniefountain.com is going to be, right? And for me right now, consulting is obviously one of them and then the side hustle community encouragement *Side Hustle Gal* thing is one of them. That's really succinct. Obviously, that's not what you should call it.

Then having a little bit of hard time in figuring out kind of the other collaboration that you have and where that fits into the whole puzzle. It doesn't necessarily need to have its own pretty little

thing. Maybe it goes into a shop or something like that but thinking about it in that way might open up some doors for you, what do you think?

[00:13:23.9] DF: Oh yeah, I've had similar thoughts and at the end of the day, the collaboration, the Styled Marketing Course is just that. It's an eCourse and it wasn't my first eCourse. So I see it laddering up into this, you don't have the time to dedicate working one on one with someone on strategy for the next three months, you need a more quick and dirty answer. So you dive into the course, get specific advice and then that is across all five of the courses I have right now.

[00:13:50.6] CS: Is it an evergreen course or is it launching and cycling?

[00:13:54.3] DF: So the plan is to launch and cycle it. But if we come across someone who needs it, we're obviously not going to be like, "Well you have to wait six months." So it's somewhere in between. We have a different strategy I guess than most. Because usually it is, either evergreen or repetitive launch.

[00:14:09.6] CS: Yeah, I actually see your two, not necessarily smaller or lesser projects, but I see your two less time intensive projects, the *Side Hustle Gal* and this other course, which clearly you're passionate about both of them a lot. I can see it, I can feel it in your voice but I see them as being more like Reina said, like shop listings where your main source of income and where you'll be driving most people towards is your service based business, which is the consulting and then that's obviously where you're driving a lot of authority and your expertise to have these other passion projects.

So I think it's kind of like Jenna Kutcher where she is a photographer/marketer. I think her website now, she just re-launched her website and it's geared mostly towards marketing for photographers and then you know her photography is something that she keeps up because that's a passion of hers and then on top of that, she also has her print shop and calligraphy shop, which are also passion projects of hers or not necessarily for me in business.

And so I think she's done a great job of having all three like you. She's done a great job of having these three businesses. One is really artistic which I see being your side hustle gal passion project, books, I see that being akin to Janice, watercolors and designs and then on the

flip side, you want to keep up what you're known for and maybe it's not as analogous as Jenna's in this case, but your courses and collaborations, your joint ventures with other companies, with other creatives, that's more akin to what she has going with her photography where that's a smaller offering that she's able to provide that keeps building here expertise in her main field, which is for her, that marketing to photographers.

So for you, you're not a marketer for photographers per se. But you are a strategist in a digital consultant and PR specialist for creatives and so I kind of see it working like that where as a client or as a potential client, it would make a lot more sense to me if I went to your website and I was like, "Wow she is the expert at strategy or PR," whatever it is that you want to be known for. Rather than going to your website as I did the first time, and just being a little bit confused as to what, I knew I wanted to work with you. I've seen you speak, I've seen you really be active but I wasn't really sure in what capacity I'd end up working with you.

And so I feel like one of the things that we need to meld down today is what is your core offering and it doesn't have to be what you have now? It could be but it doesn't have to be. It could be something radically different and then how do we incorporate your more passion projects into the side? So for me, I love to do artistic stuff. I love to do calligraphy, I love to paint but I don't have a calligraphy website anymore. I don't have this, that, or the other thing. But I do incorporate it still into my Instagram feed and into my client experience and the way that I interact with my clients.

So what would out of the three things that you've talked about today, what is the main source of income over the next year or two years long term and then what is something that you would like to incorporate as more of an artistic pursuit? Maybe in a shop or on your Instagram, something like that. Let's lay that out.

[00:17:15.8] DF: So obviously, LE Consulting is the main source of income hands down not even any competition. However, Side Hustle Gal, even though it's an artistic project because it produces revenue, it's only been out there in the world months and it's already chasing on the tails of LE Consulting. So that's a hard line to draw...

[00:17:34.0] CS: Bravo.

[00:17:34.9] DF: ...is which one should take priority because I...

[00:17:38.8] RP: Yes, that's awesome. I think that you shouldn't necessarily have to choose if that's the case and for me, I am hearing that you struck a chord with that book. You've struck it in terms of building a movement around it and I think if that's the case, you're listening to your audience and bravo for that. To build on what Christina said though, I'm wondering what the story is. What your story is around your expertise and I don't think it's about products. I think it's about how you package all the things that you already do, right?

And what I am hearing you say is that, "Strategy is the most important thing. That's what I do, that's what I'm an expert in," all of these other things, right? The courses that you have created, the Side Hustle Gal, LA Consulting, that's all evidence of the fact that you are an expert. So I think that maybe it's just around educating people about your expertise in that way that I have created all of these things. They have been successful and now, I am able to leverage that to position yourself as that expert who owns a strategy media consulting company.

[00:18:36.3] DF: I know, I totally like where your head is at there. I could almost see the Side Hustle Gal becoming some kind of "living" about me like why do I need an about me page, the side hustle gal is my story.

[00:18:49.2] RP: Ooh.

[00:18:48.8] CS: I really like that. I actually really, really like that and like Seth Godin, every single one of his books is like that. It's an about me. It's not a business card book per se, but they are about him and they are about certain aspects of his experience as an entrepreneur that are helpful for other people. Just like *Side Hustle Gal* is all about your experience and the experiences of others like you and how that's helped you or how you furthered your journey.

So I think your homework for me at least is you go and look at other businesses that you could possible emulate. People like Jenna, people like Seth that have so many different things going on and you need to come up with a list of your own. I am just giving these two as easy examples I can think of.

Chris Guillebeau, I use them all the time but he's a great example too of someone who has an incredibly different niches that he targets and does it actually pretty well and so how can you and who can you find that has done this and married these different issues together pretty seamlessly at this point? It's going to take some time but I would love to see some kind of list of businesses that you found that have done this where they just have crazy different things going on and people still know all about their different things or maybe they don't.

Maybe you find somebody that's more streamlined and then just suddenly incorporates the books or the products or the courses that they have like even Marie Forleo is a good example of this. So we all know her for B-School but she also has a lot of philanthropic pursuits that she just very subtly hints at and so I see the Side Hustle Gal being a little bit like that too because you're helping a lot of people. It's your own kind of philanthropy. So I would love just to see a list of people that you can look forward to using as role models and mentors.

[00:20:38.7] DF: For sure. I love that idea. I love that thought of I am not the first person that's tried to do a few different things and there's a way for them to work together. It's just about finding that right solution.

[00:20:48.7] RP: I was also thinking about large corporations that do mergers, right? Things that aren't necessarily always related who come together and they become one entity. It's kind of like that, you've got a lot of different pillars in your business and now it's like time to bring it all into one little home. I'm really curious about, and I will add to the homework that Christina just gave you. Think about your story a little bit more. What is that actually sound like?

If you have five main thesis points that you have to make anytime you were pitching yourself, right? You do this for other clients, so what would you do for yourself if you were pitching for the main points of your businesses, whatever you want to say, what would those five points end up looking like? Because once you have a central message, I think it's going to be a lot easier to convey to other people what's going on in your house.

[00:21:42.9] DF: Oh yeah and it's interesting that you say that because I feel like I take the job application approach right now. Like you know what they say you're supposed to have, in my

case, the resume that highlights my HR experience with my masters and the resume that highlights on my marketing experience. But what does it look like if I was that on one and then what becomes most important than what just like a side note, a foot note?

[00:22:06.7] RP: Yeah, what has been your major take away with all of this?

[00:22:09.7] DF: I definitely, so I had niched down a lot. I mean I'm sure you remember a year ago, I was doing random design projects, I did websites too. The business came to my door and I took it and I thought that I had really niched down because I asked Christina that I have these three services but I was just looking at LE Consulting. Technically, I still have the book, the next book that's coming, the course, like I'm not as niched down as I thought I was.

[00:22:39.5] RP: Yes, so it's going to take a little bit of a patience and practice to get there.

[00:22:43.2] DF: Yeah.

[00:22:43.9] RP: Awesome, well we're excited to circle back with you. We'll see how you did on your homework and I think this is super relevant for people who are listening because there are plenty of people like you, like me, like Christina who have a lot of multi passionate ventures going on and how do we make it fit into one roof or not. We have to make that conscious decision, right?

I am no longer wedding planning, I am no longer in wedding planning because it just makes no sense. It's just part of my story now and sometimes I get to assist with weddings and that's fun but it's no longer part of my Reina and Co brand. And I think a lot of creatives feel that part of their journey that stifles them. So don't let it stifle you. I hope that the story and the homework that Christina gave you will make sense in how you build your creative empire.

Thanks for coming on Dannie.

[00:23:30.8] DF: Thank you so much.

[00:23:31.4] CS: Where can people find you in the meantime?

[00:23:32.9] DF: Oh I would say go find me on Instagram @LEConsulting. That's where I'm at most often.

[00:23:39.1] RP: Awesome and thank you so much for listening and we will circle back with Dannie in just a little bit to see how she's doing with all the homework that we assigned her today.

Go build your creative empire. See you next time.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:23:52] 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.

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