

**EPISODE 34**

[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.

[ANNOUNCEMENT]

**[00:00:35.4] RP:** Hey guys, Reina here. So the Creative Empire Podcast is having its first ever live meet up and Christina and I are going to be in the same city. So we want you to save the date for Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, we'll be in Atlanta and you'll find all the details in our Facebook Group, which is [facebook.com/groups/creativeempirepodcast](https://facebook.com/groups/creativeempirepodcast) or you can join us on our newsletter. So jump on over to [creativeempire.co](https://creativeempire.co) and find us there so you can find all the exclusive information and we can't wait to see you there.

[EPISODE]

**[00:01:07.6] CS:** Hello, welcome back for another episode of the Creative Empire Podcast. I am Christina Scalera. I am joined by Reina Pomeroy.

**[00:01:13.4] RP:** Hi everyone.

**[00:01:15.1] CS:** And we'd have a lot of feedback asking us for another jam session so that's what we're doing today. We don't have a guest, we're just talking to each other about the importance of these supporting roles in our business and how you could actually learn a lot without spending \$2,000 on a course without becoming an expert in your industry, without putting in all the heavy legwork that it takes to become known as an authority figure while still building an amazing business in the process and getting the skills that you want and need to move ahead to where you want to be eventually.

So, Reina, this is something we have talked about extensively in private so I'm really excited to talk about it here on the podcast because there's just not enough people out there that are willing to take a step back and humbly say, "I'm going to be the supporter, the supporting staff or supporting employee or supporting whatever you want to call it, of someone else who maybe as more like a brand, someone else that's out there as an authority figure."

It seems like all of us want to be the authority figure and while it may seem really fun and glamorous to get to speak at conferences or "be the authority" or "influencer", whatever you want to call it, at the same time it's also a very expensive hard stressful process to be that person. So what are some supporting roles that you see in the up and coming future of the creative industry that people can be taking on and learning in the process of growing their skill set and just really becoming someone that is incredibly valuable not only to the team but eventually as an influencer themselves, if they'd like that?

**[00:02:51.9] RP:** Yeah, so this is such a fun topic and Christina like you said, we have talked extensively about this and I think you've built a couple of your roles around just some of our conversations but there's a lot of needs that entrepreneurs have whether it be copywriting or graphic design or VA services. But sometimes, the title doesn't necessarily fit the role or there's maybe other things that we need as business owners and there isn't one person to fill some of those roles.

We have to look and search high and low for them and what I have found is that if you are struggling in your business, it's okay to not be in business for yourself full-time immediately. If you are a photographer, if you want to go out and find some photo gigs that are brand building for somebody else in kind of a support role. Actually, two of my team members right now are graphic design. Normal people would call them "freelancers" but they are on my team.

So they are a part of my Reina and Co. team, I pay them and they don't get all the recognition and credit as their own brand but it really does tie back to their portfolio. They are allowed to use that on their portfolio and I allow them to see the inside and the backwardness of my business sometimes because sometimes it's not pretty and you get privy to that information of somebody who might have made their own mistakes and by paying you, you get to see that and just how

you work with other people, maybe that there are certain client types that you want to search out more of or less of, does that make sense for you?

**[00:04:29.3] CS:** Yeah, definitely. Just some roles that I can think of are people that edit photos. Everybody wants to do the photographer and have their name out there and be the Erich McVey's of the world but unfortunately, it's not a sustainable path for a lot of us. It's actually, I feel like, a really self-defeating path. So yes, you can go out there and you can do everything.

But at the same time, how much more effective would you be at being whatever, the Erich McVey of photography one day if you could learn all the hard lessons being on somebody else's team, watching their mistakes as a photographer and you're just there editing their photos in the background? And you are doing an incredibly supportive essential role. You are fulfilling a great role in their business. I am not belittling the position.

But at the same time, you have someone like my brand director, Sarah, who basically is the COO, the operating director of my company and she just watched me go through a really hard launch and she got paid for it and I had to be the one that took the financial hit of an advertising campaign that I probably should have re-evaluated and she was the one who got to sit back and look at all the lessons that I was learning in the process without any of the financial repercussions that I was experiencing.

So I think taking on a support role is not only a financially savvy decision to make but it's also one that takes a lot of humility. Because I feel like it's going to start to shift and change where we don't necessarily have a whole generation of creatives trying to be the next Marie Forleo or the next...

**[00:06:09.0] RP:** Jasmin Star.

**[00:06:09.6] CS:** Right, yeah and I mean right now, I feel like there's a trend towards that and maybe this is just purely anecdotal but I do feel like there's a trend in the last year and up until this point of trying to be that person, trying to be the authority figure and it's just honestly exhausting for a lot of people and it's not the role that they need. We need to look at what our goal is. If our goal is just to support our family and spend more time with our kids, maybe the

role that we need to take on is not the next Jasmine Star photographer or travel the world and never see your kids role.

It is the position where like Katelyn James has an editor that she's very fond of, maybe that's more of a role that we need to take on is to step back a little bit and be in the background, watch what's going on, learn from these people that have been doing this for longer than us and then when we're ready or if we're never ready then we just fulfill that role but if we're ever ready then we can step up and we've learned those lessons in business and hopefully not the hard way because it's been someone else's money, someone else's time that you've watched and developed these skills.

**[00:07:12.5] RP:** I have a different perspective because I think what you're saying is that it would be like a humble role for those people to be in those roles and for me, I think people can build entire businesses around these supporting roles and I think that there's nothing wrong with that and I think it is actually really cool for people to see the behind the scenes shows off what's happening, to be able to support somebody through a really incredible launch maybe or to say that I am part of a team because entrepreneurship is lonely.

To feel like you are actually a part of something and you're a part of a team that is like, "Ra-ra, we got this and we're all in this together" kind of thing, that's like High School Musical style right? You feel that you are actually a part of something rather than being on this freaking island of loneliness and you have to do it on your own. So I think whatever perspective you're coming at this with, I would say build a business on, if this is something that is interesting to you, freelance has been something that's been on your mind, think about it in terms of like, "How can I join somebody's team? How can I accentuate what they're already doing and give them my skills to be able to further their mission, further their message in a way that they haven't been able to do this far?"

And I think that here's the thing, is that entrepreneurs don't even see that this is a need for them. That if you are a freelancer or somebody who's looking to do this kind of work, I am thinking about graphic designers and there's a huge need for somebody to take somebody's branding board that they spent a ton of money on and actually implementing that brand.

**[00:08:43.6] CS:** Week after week.

**[00:08:45.2] RP:** Week after week after week in blog posts, in Instagram posts, the continuing newsletters. All of those things are so necessary and the entrepreneur probably doesn't have time to do it nor does she have the Canva, Photoshop skills, Illustrator skills to actually get those things done and so if you can come alongside of her and really support her in that role, she probably doesn't even know that it exist, that you exist, that you're not going to cost thousands and thousands of dollars every single month because that's what the branding experts position themselves as being. And so I think there's a huge way that you can create this niche for yourself it that's what you're seeking.

**[00:09:24.0] CS:** Yeah, you've mentioned an important distinction. I guess you're right, there's really two different kinds where I have freelancers on my team and they are, they're creating a business for themselves. They're hiring people to do some of their work underneath them. So, bookkeepers, copywriters are all good examples of that and so they've kind of organically come into their own as a brand and as an authority figure.

But then I guess what I was talking about is stepping back and having a behind the scenes role like Sarah has, I mean Sarah, one day, I would love to hire her full-time but at the same time, if she has bigger ambitions and goals and dreams to do whatever she wants, I'm fully supportive of that and in the meantime, she knows how to launch a product and how not to at this point hopefully. And so there's not any limit to the amount of roles that you could take on and there's really not a limit to what you could do or to what you could even call yourself.

I know you and I have struggled on end to find people that would be willing to manage things like social accounts or graphic design or even just day to day operations of the business and there isn't necessarily a good set job out there. Like a virtual assistant, okay, they help you with administrative tasks. A photographer, they take your pictures and you can use them on your website. But I am not aware of anybody, and if you're out there and you're screaming in your car, you're like, "That's me, that's me."

**[00:10:48.6] RP:** E-mail us.

**[00:10:49.9] CS:** Yeah, you need to get out there. You need to create a position title for yourself and then team up with the people that are there and need you on their team like that. I mean there's a lot mid-sized, six to 12 months into the game entrepreneurs who could really benefit from your services whether that's creating and managing Facebook ads for someone on a very low volume because that's impossible to find someone to do that right now from personal experience.

**[00:11:15.2] RP:** Do you want to talk about your team and maybe shout out some of your people and I'll do the same?

**[00:11:19.4] CS:** Sure, that would be a great idea. So right now I have seven members on my team, which sounds like a lot but they are all independent contractors and so some of them are working really hard during launch months and then some of them I don't hear from for two months and that's just the nature of the game. So I have Sarah who manages all my operations. We share Lauren Carnes as a graphic designer so Lauren is my graphic designer on retainer now which has been such a blessing. She's great to work with and I'm not spending 12 hours a week doing my own graphic design anymore.

**[00:11:50.1] RP:** Amen to that.

**[00:11:51.2] CS:** Which was really difficult and so then I have Julia Painter. Yeah, I am not telling you guys Sarah's last name. No, I am just kidding, it's Sarah O'Malley.

**[00:11:59.3] RP:** You cannot steal her.

**[00:12:00.3] CS:** Yeah, seriously but Sarah O'Malley, she's also a graphic designer and she just took the initiative to take on this role in my business and I just have been so proud of her and how she's so developed. So they are actually both graphic designers but only Lauren is working as a graphic designer in my company. Then I have Julie Painter and Julie is my VA. So she handles all the administrative scheduling, all that fun stuff, tasks in the business.

I have Dannie Fountain of LE Consulting and she is my content manager and digital strategist. So what that means is, and I didn't even know when I hired her, I was like, "I just need someone

to do this,” and she’s like, “Yep, that’s what I do.” So what she does is she goes in and I have an SEO company and she looks at the search reports and things like that and we strategize about how to make my blog posts or my business show up higher in the search engine listings with certain keywords that we’re targeting or certain content and then she also strategizes what kind of content is coming out on my social blog, everything around the launch. So I am usually launching about one thing a month, maybe two. So she’s figuring out what needs to come out and working backwards from there. I don’t want to leave anybody out.

So I’ve gone through one, two, three, four, Kristen Leigh Green does my PR. So she’s the one that’s reaching out to other outlets and she is basically pitching some blog posts and stories. I used to do all of these on my own not just Kristen’s work but everybody that I am naming and it was so exhausting. So Kristen is pitching for me so I am not spending — I used to spend literary three hours every day pitching to other places and I’d never hear back. So she’s so helpful on that and then I have two copywriters, sorry to break it to you guys. I have stopped writing for the majority of my blog, I have stopped writing my own blog posts, which I feel really kind of shady admitting.

**[00:13:42.8] RP:** That’s the reality.

**[00:13:43.9] CS:** I mean I still approve the topics that Dannie comes up with but I still read and add my own touch to it but for the most part, I have basically outsourced my blog post and so Abby Herman has taken over my legal blog post and so she’s...

**[00:13:59.7] RP:** I didn’t know that that’s awesome.

**[00:14:01.0] CS:** Yeah, it’s a very recent thing and so I am really excited to start working with her. It was hard to find somebody to take over my legal blog post but she’s worked with lawyers before. So she’s going to be helping me with that and then Nicole Boucher, I hope I am saying that right Nicole? I don’t think I’ve ever asked her how to pronounce her last name, who I found on the Heart Center Biz Bosses Group is actually my business copywriter. So she takes either my or Dannie’s ideas and she outlines them and turns them into my business blog post.

So I think that's it. I hope I haven't left anybody out but those are all the contractors that I have working for me right now and it's taken me a long time. Relatively, it's actually been a short amount of time but it's taken me a long time to find these wonderful women and to teach them and to work together as a team and really, I mean I would be amiss if I didn't say this or I did a lot of that work for me.

So just really quickly, I'll say the number one mistake that I made when I was looking to hire and outsource a lot of the stuff what I kept looking for positions. I kept searching for VA's by "VA's" or I kept searching for brand directors by "brand directors" and that's the completely wrong way to go about it, in my opinion. I will only ever hire people based on their aptitude and ambition going forward. I don't care if they're an engineer or if they're a dog walker or whatever they are. I just don't care what their background is because if they can show the aptitude for the skill set I am looking for, they're hired.

[BREAK]

**[00:15:31.8] CS:** Oh My Designs by Steph left us this review on iTunes. She said, "I really love the honest conversation happening here. I have been catching up on episodes while I am assembling product and I sincerely appreciate the genuine feeling the show provides. I am feeling really motivated and inspired. Keep up the great work :)."

So thank you so much Oh My Designs by Steph and if you want your review, your business featured on our podcast, go over to iTunes, leave us a rating, leave us a review and we actually do read them. You just might find we read your review out loud on air. So thank you so much.

[EPISODE CONTINUED]

**[00:16:07.6] CS:** So what about you, what does your team look like?

**[00:16:09.4] RP:** Yeah, so I have a core team and an auxiliary team.

**[00:16:13.5] CS:** Oh fancy.



**[00:16:14.9] RP:** So my core team, they're just like the people that I talk to every day versus the people that I talk to, like you said, once every month or once every couple of months. So my core team is Rachel, my brand manager. Sarah who is my social coordinator, Lauren Carnes who you mentioned who is one of the graphic designers and Caitlin who owns her own business called Happytines.

She actually came on board as a calligrapher but she does illustrations and graphic designs. So it's a really cool mix of skill sets that she has and so they all work together really seamlessly and I love it because I don't have to manage them as much unless we're working on a bigger project together. They are really good at managing up with me and saying, "I'm late or I am in need of — they need something from me," and I think that is so essential.

I brought on Rachel and I'll really give a ton of kudos to her. I just adore the fact that she has come into my business and changed it. She changed the behind the scenes in such big ways, so Rachel and I met in the Being Boss Group and she was looking for an internship. She was a student, I think she was a junior in college when I met her and she was looking for a thing and I wanted to chat with her because I thought she was such a go-getter and she didn't have all the skills that I was looking for and I wasn't really looking to hire immediately but maybe in a couple of months kind of thing.

After I got off the call with her, I hired her pretty much immediately because I thought, "This girl doesn't have everything that I need but she has all the ambitions like you said and the wherewithal to learn the things that I don't want to learn and she was willing to do that," and she came with the marketing background. So can't leave without her now and if she leaves me, I'll be devastated kind of like you would be with Sarah.

But I didn't have a position for her. That's the thing that's really interesting, right? I want to really emphasize this to people who are listening who are like "Well, they might, they are saying that they don't need anything or they're not looking to hire right now." Ask. Figure out what need you're going to fill because I didn't even know I needed her until she basically came into my business and really took over. I also have a creative director who is Iliah of C&V Creative Studio. I have Autumn Witt Boyd who is my attorney. Gasp, Christina is not my attorney. I actually had Autumn before — what?

**[00:18:27.5] CS:** That would be kind of weird. I feel like there would be a big conflict of interest there.

**[00:18:30.9] RP:** That's funny. Well Autumn and I met a long time ago and we just hit it off pretty early on and I met Christina after that so it's just been one of those things and then Amy Northard is my bookkeeper and accountant and then Jessica Stansberry is my CTO. So we created that role for her. I was like, "I hate tech, please do all the things," and we just created that for her.

**[00:18:52.3] CS:** That's amazing.

**[00:18:53.1] RP:** Yeah.

**[00:18:53.2] CS:** I forgot my bookkeepers. It's Stephanie Thacker.

**[00:18:56.5] RP:** Oh yes, I love her. I just got to meet her at Creative.

**[00:18:59.5] CS:** Yes.

**[00:19:00.0] RP:** Yeah so we have, I mean both of us have pretty big teams right now. I didn't realize both of our teams are so large and I think it's a lot of entrepreneurs are going without. We have smaller teams typically, maybe one or two people if at all and if you are one of those people that want to support others and wants to be part of a team, you can do that and find those opportunities and go after them. I think you have to have a little bit of that initiative and to be able to say, "Hey I love your stuff, I love what you're putting out there but I think you can use some help, how can I support you?" And come up with a strategy for them.

**[00:19:33.8] CS:** Yeah and I mean, let's see, this episode is coming out in October but as we're recording this, I really only had this team for a little less than three months. Which is kind of crazy because literally three months ago, it was just Julie and I. I had another VA at the time and she has since had some life things happen and so she is not my VA anymore. Very sad about that but that happens. But anyway, that's just crazy.

It took me three months to build this and I went from being bad to worse when I started hiring people because it was so overwhelming to train and to get people up to speed and to show them how to do these things that I've been doing all by myself and was super disorganized because I was trying to do a literary everything that I just named by myself and so I didn't have time to organize things on top of it. Everything was a mess, I'm sure Stephanie Thacker just wants to kill me with all my receipts, thankfully that were digitized because I use a Shoebox but still.

I think everybody that came onto my team just was overwhelmed at first and I was overwhelmed teaching them but it's because I waited too long to outsource and I relied too heavily on Julie who's a VA and not a video editor or a graphic designer, or you know? You can't expect certain people on your team to do everything and I don't think that's an effective way to have a team either is to hire three people and give them more hours but they're doing more tasks.

I think it's a lot more effective, and I actually got this from *The E-Myth* book, Michael Gerber's book where I literally pulled out a sheet of paper one day and I created a hierarchy. It looks like a family tree but it's the family tree of my company and a lot of those positions are still left unfilled. So there's a lot of stuff that I still would like to hire people for but I just don't have the budget yet or just not the right time in my business yet. But I think that's what you need to do. Establish that hierarchy and who's reporting to who.

My eventual goal is to have a lot of the people on my team where I'm not even really talking to them. We've done that where Sarah is really the point person underneath that and everybody coordinates with her and that way nothing gets lost because when people are e-mailing me, I have the tendency to look at the e-mail and then it just sits there as a read e-mail. I am like, "Where did the e-mail go? There is nothing on my calendar," and so now that Sarah has come on, it becomes an actual event, in Asana, on my calendar.

**[00:21:56.5] RP:** Love that, I think that a lot of times too, these roles don't actually have a name, right? And what might look like something to you might look completely different in my business. One of the things that I know that I need in the future will be a client experience manager person. I don't know if there's anyone by that title but that's what I need and so putting

it out there and saying, “Look if you’re a client manager person that wants to help me work with my clients’ better that would be awesome.”

So thinking about what you’re really good at, in your freelance world, in your brain maybe you’re just super organized or maybe you have a creative background, maybe you have a particular skill, you just don’t ever know what somebody needs and so write down all the skills that you have and don’t take anything for granted because sometimes somebody will hire you just for that one thing and you just have to put yourself out there.

So I would really encourage you to think about what you’re good at, what you love to do for people and how you feel like your cup will be filled by serving somebody else. I think you have to have a little bit of that servant’s heart to appreciate the jobs that we’re talking about just because it’s not necessarily all that glamorous but it’s so helpful and so if you are fulfilled by serving people, if you are fulfilled by getting that ultimate “oh my gosh thank you so much”, then you’ll be a perfect fit for this kind of thing, right?

**[00:23:20.1] CS:** Yeah and the key is there are a lot of people out there who are struggling to make ends meet right now and I know a lot of people see service positions as a quick way to make money and I think that’s the right way to approach it. I mean services are the fastest way that you can make money if you need money and this isn’t like a plug for your group but honestly, I think I’ve found that almost everybody that worked with me now, I hate saying “works for me” because we all work together.

But everybody that works with me, I think I found almost all of them through your group Reina and it’s because they were just in between things with clients or they were looking to shift careers or whatever. But they were just putting themselves out there in that group or even our podcast group even. I think I can’t remember if Sarah was in your group or the podcast group but she was in one of those and so just knowing that wherever your ideal clients, whatever your services or whatever gifts you have to provide, knowing where they hang out.

And not trying to hang out and try to find the biggest and baddest clients maybe a big Facebook group that has a lot of people in it where your post gets buried but just being really strategic about where you are and spending only 10 minutes a day if you are looking for something like

this. If you are looking to become a support role in someone else's business and to learn about how they do their business. So I think that's where if people are looking for this kind of positions, where they can hang out. Again, I love that Rachel took the initiative to go out and ask you if it was a good fit and one last thing I'll say about that is that interns are not free labor.

**[00:24:49.9] RP:** Amen, thank you.

**[00:24:51.0] CS:** That makes me so upset because if someone is coming, yes they get school credit if they truly are an intern, there's no other way around it. It's either paid or it's not that they're getting school credit or it's illegal.

**[00:25:03.4] RP:** Yep.

**[00:25:04.1] CS:** But the thing about an internship is if you are looking for cheap or free help, that is not the way to go because I fully believe that you have got to be teaching people something very actively in that internship and that is why it's a replacement for school credit. I mean I've been an intern myself, I've had interns. Actually, I haven't had to manage my own business because I purposely will not take them on. It's just too much of a time commitment.

**[00:25:31.5] RP:** Yeah because you are teaching constantly.

**[00:25:33.8] CS:** Right.

**[00:25:34.0] RP:** Constant teaching, yeah. Absolutely.

**[00:25:36.2] CS:** Yeah, so anyways.

**[00:25:37.0] RP:** So if you are in an internship and you're not getting school credit and you're not getting paid, red flag.

**[00:25:41.4] CS:** Time to talk to an employment lawyer.

**[00:25:43.2] RP:** Yeah, we're not trying to get anyone fired here but yeah, we just want to make sure that you are getting what you need and I think often, Christina and I are big connectors. So if you tag us and maybe post on Instagram or post in our Facebook community and say, "Hey, this is what I've been thinking about. Do you know anyone that needs us?" Kind of thing. Not to say that we can job match you necessarily but we're big connectors. So if we see it and we know that there's a need on somebody else's event, you'll never know who your clients might be in the future.

**[00:26:13.7] CS:** Yeah, I mean just keep putting it out there because you just don't know when the hit is going to come. I just happen to be on the Facebook group at the same time as Sarah and I could have been working with somebody else right now if I had approached it at a different time and she's not looking for any more work right now because I've got her full to the gills with work. But it's just funny what happens when and with whom and so if it hasn't happened for you yet, keep putting yourself out there until it does and until you connect with the right people because it's not going to happen on the first try.

**[00:26:45.1] RP:** Totally so go out and create your creative empire today.

[END OF EPISODE]

**[00:26:50] 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](http://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]