Laylee: Hello friends. Welcome back to the Lely Maori podcast. Today we are being joined by a new friend of mine who I am so excited for you guys to learn from. Her name is Dylan Jarris, and she is an e-commerce expert. She's got over 13 years of experience and her story is so cool. I actually got a chance to meet Dylan in Nashville at, a really cool, like one day mastermind experience.

And her story really stuck with me, and I'm so excited to share it with you guys and also share some really good advice around how she became so successful and how she can help us do the same. So, Dylan, I would love if you would introduce yourself and tell our people and me like a little bit about your journey in entrepreneurship and, where you started and where you are now.

Dylan: Yes. Yes. Well, first of all, Laylee, thank you so much for having me. Really excited. You had the best energy, I think, winning energy in that room at that mastermind. So excited. We get to connect again. But my background, I had no intention of getting into this. Space of online education. I was in the corporate world climbing the corporate ladder in e-commerce, and then ended up marrying someone in the military and you move a lot.

So we moved to from Seattle to San Diego. I had a really hard time finding a job and I was 25 and I thought. Oh no, I've peaked and like my career's over. So I was doing all these side hustles and Etsy was one of those side hustles. I was just listing something that I had made for my wedding on Etsy.

It sold, I quickly started applying my corporate e-commerce background to Etsy. Made a million dollars in profit in the first six. Years, and then, at about 1.7 million, then I started teaching Etsy online. So I started on YouTube. My, my goal with this was to replace my Etsy income, which was about 40 KA month with teaching, teaching Etsy a course or coaching.

I didn't know what it would look like. Um, we did that within the first couple weeks and then. Scaled to is like half a million a month by month five. A million a month by month 14, and now we do about 1.3. So that's kind of the story. It's been mostly organic and it's high ticket courses and coaching, and now we have a pretty big team, like 43 people.

And that's what we, that's what we do.

Laylee: Oh my gosh. Well, I have so many questions. Obviously, like this is not your standard story, right? Like I feel like. You are the exception to the rule

when it comes to like online education growth and how quickly it took off. But I think from even just like your nutshell of a story, I feel like something that I talk about a lot on this show really applies here, and that's that the experience that you brought in prior to the experience you built in the industry is what I think would you say that catapulted you into that faster success than most people would see.

Dylan: Yeah, I, I would say. My background, like working in larger corporations definitely helped 'cause I saw how to make something scalable and I saw, I started with a scalable model essentially, working for huge companies. And then I distilled that down and kind of reverse engineered it with my own Etsy shop.

And then with education, that's a completely different business model, but. The same business principles apply, and it's that customer first product second approach. And so deciding who do I wanna sell to Who? Who do I want to rely on for my income for this? And then what do they need? And then reverse engineer the product.

Laylee: I love that and I wanna like, I wanna dig into that for sure. But I'd love to know like. Before we dive into the actual like tactical, tangible advice that you have for people, I just, I'm so curious what sparked like your passion for teaching? What, what made you go from, I mean obviously you saw you were having success, but what made it something you wanted to shift and, and add into a business that was already thriving?

Dylan: Yes. So with Etsy, I was hand making stuff. So these were floral letters. I started with this letter J for my last name with fake flowers glued to it, and I was hustling. I was. On my feet, like 16 hours a day. And I have two kids, and, and I got to the point where I was on my feet so much standing at this table, making these letters up until like 11:00 PM that I actually got vascular disease in my legs.

So I know it's like I pushed it beyond the limit a little bit. So. I ended up having to get surgery and they said, you cannot have a job where you're standing all the time. You're 32, and this will just keep happening. So, surprise, surprise. I kept doing the job, I kept standing. It came back and I realized this is not sustainable.

I'm like. In my early thirties, I can't keep doing this, so I outsourced the production of the Etsy stuff, and then I'm not one to like sit around. So, um, I thought, what else can I do? And all these military spouses, they're like, Dylan, how are you making more money than your husband? You know, we're all like.

Trying to get jobs at Starbucks. They, and they won't even hire us. So I was like, you guys, Etsy, you can make so much money here. And no one, this is what I saw. I saw a gap in the market for teaching. 'cause people who were teaching on YouTube, they're like, yeah, I was a nurse and then I tried this and it worked and here's my tips and tricks.

But no one had, you know? Yeah. And no one had like actual business strategy. So that's where I came in.

Laylee: Oh, I love that. That's so helpful. And I love that. Here's my tips and tricks. Every time. Every time kills me

Dylan: Yeah. Yeah.

Laylee: Um, okay. Well, I would love to dive into like what are some of those business strategies that you would say? Helped you scale so quickly and, and for people who are listening. You know, we, most of our people who listen to our podcast, they are educators.

They are trying to scale their education. You and I, before I hit record, I was telling you like I have struggled to create kind of a scalable offer aside from courses. And of course, like I love, I love doing that. And I have a course that's coming out, um, probably by the time this airs, it's already been out.

But I, I just would love to hear kind of like your perspective on that. People first product, second scalable, business advice.

Dylan: Yeah, so I think there's a couple ways to go. And I, I almost took a complete completely different path in the first month of this course business. And, when I started this, I actually joined a course and it was Haley and Doug Johnson. They have a course called Digital Income Family and it teaches you how to monetize your knowledge in some way.

And, um, Sonny Leonard, what's her, do you know her name? I can't pronounce her name, so Leonard Dozi or something. Um, she has a similar course too, but it's basically taking your knowledge and monetizing it and you can go high ticket or low ticket and there were two different forks you could kind of go down on this path.

And I didn't know which one to do and I, so I started high ticket 'cause I knew I wanted to do some coaching and my price point was like $2,500. Now this required sales calls.

Laylee: Yeah.

Dylan: Basically the whole way I got these, this demand for this program was going onto YouTube building trust with long form content. I committed.

I launched a channel and I said, I'm gonna do one video a day where I just spill everything. So it's. It's the what, but it's not the direct application. 'cause everyone's situation is different. And I knew they would have questions after learning all this overload of information. So a video a day, I lasted three weeks before I got sick.

I burned myself out on that. Um, and I had people asking. How can I get your coaching? So that's when I set up Calendly Link book a call. I created one module, started pre-selling the program, but out of my first 13 sales calls to join the program, no one signed up. I almost thought, oh my gosh, I'm gonna have to take this from $2,500 to like $200.

Thank God I didn't do that. I had one person evaluate a sales call and they said, this is why you're not converting them. Make these changes and then boom, 80% close rate. And that changed everything. So going high ticket oversharing with long form content, giving away information that other people would charge for, that really was the key to fast growth in the beginning.

Laylee: I love that. I, it's so interesting. I know that you are now really cognizant of not burning out and being really, you know, aware of not doing the whole hustle thing. But I do think you, it sounds like you've had seasons of hustle, like how are you balancing that now? And if you could go back, would you have done the same thing?

Would you have hustled as hard or would you have changed something?

Dylan: this may be controversial. Um.

Laylee: that. We love that here.

Dylan: Let's go for it. Yes, I would and, and I didn't just get sick making those YouTube videos. I actually, got to the point where I was building the course. I was 80% of the way through and I got walking pneumonia. A cold turned into pneumonia, now got the antibiotics. I was fine.

But you know what, it was that drive to make it happen and like having no quit, it's short term. It's a few months of like. Pressing and, and all gas, no breaks, but

it was still worth it. Otherwise, if I had let, like, oh, I don't, I'm feeling extra tired. I'm gonna go to bed early, we wouldn't have had made it happen.

So, yeah, no regrets on that. I, I've gotten hate on that before, but it, it is what it is.

Laylee: I mean, I actually, I, I agree with you and I, I'm pretty open about that too. I think people get really worked up about it, but I also think it's easy for people who are already in their season of success to tell other people like, don't do this. You're gonna burn out. I burnt out. And it's like, but isn't that what, what got you to this spot?

So I actually appreciate, you know, the lack of hypocrisy in saying like, yeah, I would do it again. 'cause that's what got me from point A to point B.

Dylan: Totally. Totally. And then, you know, there's a point where making decisions along the way to bring in people, that's kind of how you start to get your bandwidth back, where you're not the constraint of the business. So yeah, I mean, I would, I would tell everyone. Push yourself as hard as you can in the beginning, to the point that other people wouldn't push themselves to, and that is what will make you more successful than them in the beginning.

Yeah.

Laylee: Yeah. How did you decide to bring people in and like at what point? Because I think a lot of educators struggle with, I am the educator. Like I am the person with the knowledge. Right? People want to learn from me. So the concept of bringing in additional educators or coaches or people under me, I think makes them really nervous because then they're, they feel like.

The, their clients aren't going to be getting direct access to them. Like how did you make that decision?

Dylan: That was such a hard decision, and that was about six months in. We were doing about 600,000 a month at that point, and I, all I had was a video editor and I thought, now I have, you know, hundreds of students. It's daily. Private coaching, how can I keep doing this? I can't scale it anymore, so I paid $20,000 to go to an event with, it was two days with Alex and Layla Hermo.

This was like, they had 20 business owners. They were bringing into a room. I, my husband, like, convinced me to pay the money and I just, I couldn't believe

it. They actually, it was, I think it was like 15 k and then we were both on the call with the salesperson and they're like, well, for him it'll be 5,000 extra.

And I looked at him like, I don't know if you're coming now. But we had a second. He came, we paid the 20 k. And my, my question for Alex was. I am so worried I'm gonna make all my clients mad if I bring in another coach. Like they'll say, I'm not getting what I paid for. And he said. The way you do this is like very incremental.

You go from like your multiple coaching calls per week. Okay? Now replace yourself with one and maybe be on the call with that person. Or hire coaches who resemble you. This is actually what they're saying. Like who look like you, who talk like you, who resemble you in many ways. And that would be familiar for the person and signal the clients.

Okay? They're on the same page. And then. It was slowly elevating the coaches and saying, if someone asks this question, that's a great question. I think the best person to answer that would be Sam. Sam's really the expert in this, and it's not discounting yourself, but it's really elevating someone else's expertise and giving them credibility.

That helped.

Laylee: I love that I, I've been a part of a program where when I signed up, it was with one coach and then she started bringing in other coaches and it was so abr actually, now that you're saying that I was like. We kind of all were very surprised with the fact that it was such an abrupt change and a lot of the coaches we felt as the clients were like unqualified to have been put into that position.

So I love the thought process of really intentionally and like incrementally changing things. I think that makes so much sense to me as a consumer,

Dylan: Yeah,

Laylee: and as an educator. So that's awesome. And would you say it went well?

Dylan: It did. You know, we didn't really get many upset people. I think the only people who were upset were people who watched my like very first YouTube videos where I'm like, you're only working with me. And those videos still lived out there, even if they're like two years old. But in the contract, super important.

In the contracts say you'll have, multiple coaches that you're working with. It's not only Dylan. I don't, I say it's now, it's only, we never me and I don't even have a profile within the platform. I coach under the coach profile in our platform too. Yeah.

Laylee: That makes sense. I love that. So it's definitely like more of a collective, would you say, like how has, how has it been shifting from being the educator to now being on the role of like managing all these people and making sure all the like. Do you think it was an organic kind of growth journey, or have there been like growing pains in that?

Mm-hmm.

Dylan: Huge growing pains. Um, I would say anytime there's fulfillment, like coaching now, you know you're gonna have a coaching team. So we have about 18 coaches on the team. We have a coaching lead. Who keeps us all like going in unison in a weekly coaching meeting. But then we have, you know, the operations, the client success team, the marketing team, and it's now turned into a business of like.

Leading a team versus only teaching people. So it it, you wanna be like aware and self-aware of, Hey, is this the direction I want to take things? Do I wanna lead a team? If not, getting a really strong operator or integrator in so that you can focus on the things you really enjoyed would be important.

The thing is, when you do that, it does dilute, it can dilute the, the brand and your efforts a little bit. I've noticed.

Laylee: Yeah, I could see that. I think that's like, that's always, I feel like that's in a very, you know, minute way. Like the big struggle is between how much do I wanna make sure that this is exactly what I want it to be, and like exactly living up to the brand that I've already developed and built, versus being able to grow it beyond what it is and what's worth the growth versus the work that it takes to get there.

Dylan: Yes, and the investment in your team too, you know, it's to the, when it's all you, it's like can be much more profitable. So like my profit margins are great now if I'm taking on this overhead, these are fixed costs I have to scale to support this. So it's kind of like. Getting the infrastructure up and then scaling, getting the infrastructure up.

So you're constantly kind of toggling each one up. And things get stretched, and then it becomes less of a constraint and then they get stretched again, and it's just this cycle of expansion that's uncomfortable.

Laylee: Yeah, this reminds me of, you know, I get a question all the time from my coaching students as a speaker coach about. I wanna do X, Y, and Z, but I am really resistant to, to the things that will come from it, like to the good that will come from it or the success. I have like a fear of the success around it and I know my personal like response to this.

If somebody, if you were coaching somebody who said to you like. I have potential to scale this thing, but I would have to like grow that infrastructure and I'd have to change the whole model and then I'd have to be in charge of the people, but I don't really know that I even wanna do that. Like is this something that everybody can do or is it something that is specifically for like one type of person?

Dylan: Yeah. Um, okay. So I think anyone can do it. Like if you have the opportunity in front of you, I think anyone can do it, but I think it takes a certain type of person to sustain it. Then continue to grow. So the thing is, I think if you have the opportunity, if you see the door open to grow something and scale something, try it.

Otherwise you might regret it. Worst case scenario, what's the worst case? The worst case is okay, we pare it down, we streamlined it. So it's just you again. Like is that the worst thing that would happen? Um, but if you never do it, it's like you never know what doors could open.

Laylee: Yeah. I love that. And you can always go back and I think people kind of feel like you can't,

Dylan: Right, right.

Laylee: but what's stopping you?

Dylan: Right. And I've seen people, in this space who are really big that, you know, they go to like 20, 30 person teams and maybe this year they're back to like a five to 10 person team. And it's not a failure, it's just like a simplification and a streamlining of things. 'cause you're taking it a a direction that you wanna take it.

Laylee: Mm-hmm. Yeah. When you, when you talk about if you have the opportunity in front of you, how does somebody identify that it is. Time to like, or that there is that opportunity, like how, how can somebody identify like this is something that I can scale beyond myself?

Dylan: Yeah, I would say if you are. Getting so busy with profitable things and you're like, you're making money and you're busy with things that are helping you make money, um, and you're realizing you are the thing stopping you from 10 Xing. It's not like I don't have enough demand, I don't have enough leads.

If you like have the leads, you're growing the following and now you're the constraint. I think that's a sign that the opportunity is right there.

Laylee: I love that. Okay. That makes total sense to me. Um, quick shift 'cause I feel like. I love this. We now are able to identify our opportunity. We kind of understand the work that goes into being able to build that out and, and scale beyond yourself. Now, let's talk about like the actual conversions, the actual visibility that, that you need in order to continue to grow something.

And I feel like this is something you've done so well, after having met you and kind of like falling down the rabbit hole of like, what did you do? What do you think? Is something that people do wrong when it comes to their approach to marketing, to getting more eyes on what they do in order to actually make more sales.

Dylan: Yeah. I think they, I think people who are. Like small following, they're protective of like information and gatekeeping information. And the way to really grow quickly is to like, share it all. Make everything in like a shareable post that people wanna save and come back to. So like, educate in a clear, concise way, speaking at a fifth grade reading level, not overcomplicating things, dumbing it down, being relatable.

Storytelling, emotional selling. And for me, like we were doing half a million a month with less than 20,000 followers on Instagram, with less than 20,000 followers. We were even selling in the dms between a hundred thousand and $140,000 a month, and these were packages that were like 2000 to 9,000. So leveraging any audience you have, whether that's on TikTok or in the dms,

just looking at where are the leads that I have, what do I have to leverage and maximizing whatever that channel is.

Laylee: There are so many things that you touched on within that that I'm like, yes. Okay. I love that. The concept of not gatekeeping. I love that you shared the numbers that you were bringing in with less than 20,000 followers. I, you know, I feel like. People get very wrapped up in the numbers of their audience size.

And it is important, I, I, as much as I agree or disagree, I really disagree with like, the culture around it. It, the facts are that the more eyes that get onto your thing, the easier it is to sell that thing in mass, right? And so, um, obviously it's important, but I think it's not something that should be stopping people, right?

Like they can still. Put in action, all of the things that that will hopefully still be in action with larger audience sizes. Is that right?

Dylan: Totally. And there's even, I would say you can have stronger engagement with smaller numbers. And having that balance of like educational content, entertaining content, aspirational content, you know, it, it ensures that you're going to get the right followers if you're only doing viral dances or something just to get eyes.

Is it even a high quality lead, you know?

Laylee: the worst. That's the worst. I was like just imagining like I could never. I love that. I think that, that is such a good point. Obviously, I wanna know, in your opinion, when you're watching somebody try to grow, try to grow their platform, what's something that you're seeing them do? I mean, you kind of touched on it here, like putting out the things that don't actually create that quality content, but what's something that you see them kind of making a misstep on that you're like, this is such a quick fix, such an easy thing.

I like that you said that about gatekeeping as well.

Dylan: Yeah. A couple things. Not leveraging ManyChat. Being afraid to have someone in your dms. I got someone in the DMS pretty quickly. I was like six months in to start helping me, build those relationships. I think not having some form of long form, whether it be a podcast to build trust or YouTube, I think people are intimidated by the idea of having a podcast or YouTube.

They're like, I can do social media, I can do a reel, but I'm not gonna sit down and talk to a camera, or I'm not gonna get a microphone out and like. Pretend I have something, you know, really valuable to say or they feel imposter syndrome about long form. Like, why would anyone give me 25 minutes? Like,

and, and telling yourself that that is seriously holding you back from building trust.

And if you wanna sell expensive things, like, I don't know how you would do it without long form as part of the strategy.

Laylee: Yeah. Yeah. Would you say the same principles apply to like a lower ticket offer as, 'cause I know you focused really hard on selling those high ticket. Would you say the same concepts apply?

Dylan: Yeah, so it's so interesting. We, I'll just be totally transparent. Okay. I, I, I wouldn't say this, I wouldn't say this on another, um, podcast, but I know you, so we normally, we can do a, a webinar and we can make about like $250,000 from a webinar where they book a call and they join our program. I, for the first time did a webinar Monday, Tuesday this week, driving people to just pay for our $997 program.

And we had Klarna, so it was as low as $48 a month. We literally had less than 20 people do that. So we put the same effort into this webinar. We spent like about 8,000 on ads, which is more than we've spent on any webinar. And what it showed me was direct selling a low ticket. Offer, right? Even something as low as $48 a month, people are still needing that reassurance.

So having that call, that action to book a call to learn more about what we have, it's so much more effective than sending them straight to a sales page. And that was like the biggest surprise. I thought that would be an easy a hundred signups, easy a hundred k, no sales calls. But. I think even low ticket needs sufficient warming up,

Laylee: Mm. That is so interesting. I, I honestly would've thought the exact same thing, that it would be such an easier, like quick yes. For people.

Dylan: right? Yeah. So that was eyeopening. Super eyeopening. So what we're gonna try next, and if anyone's like, well, what do you do from there, if that happens, what we're gonna try next is it kind of a challenge, like a five day challenge with either daily webinars or, or something only at the end, but where they're warmed up each day, they get questions answered each day.

They have the chance to sleep on the decision essentially every day for five days. So we're gonna try that next.

Laylee: Oh, I can't wait to see how that goes, honestly. Like, and I, I think it's really refreshing to hear somebody share what, what went well then, what didn't go well, and then what they're gonna do next. And I think a lot of us who. Maybe do a launch and it doesn't go well. It's so easy to just be like, nevermind, I'm just not gonna, I'm just not gonna do this product again.

Like, maybe it's the product, whatever. But I, I think testing is so important. And I also think it's, it's, it's still you doing all of this marketing, right? Like it's still, you face, not your, not the coaches under you.

Dylan: Exactly. Yeah. I'm still, um, doing the marketing and you know, one thing I, I told myself, uh, this spring we hired someone who worked for Natalie Ellis at Boss Babe. We brought them onto our marketing team for a couple months and I learned a lot from that. But one of the things was, you know, they have big, big launches and it's about like little less than 2K for that price point.

But what I learned was, of course, if you have like three, 4 million followers. You can have a big launch like that. Um, but if, but if you're going low ticket and you have a small number of followers, it's really hard to have those multimillion dollar launches.

Laylee: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, the math has to math

Dylan: that's right.

Laylee: as they, as they say.

Dylan: And it did not math for me this week. Yeah.

Laylee: Yeah, that is, that is a lot. Um, but I, that makes so much sense to me. And I, I also feel like one thing that I'm taking away from this, at least just on. Like a quick learning level is how important it is to take calculated risks. Like I love that you brought in a marketing person to join your marketing team from something that you've seen has gone well.

Like how do you decide what things to take risk on and what things to test versus what you're like, you know what, what we're doing is already working, like we've got this. How did those decisions get made in your business?

Dylan: Yes. So, you know, we were on track for a record month and we're having a record month this month. Now. We decided to take a risk during a time

where everything else was going well, basically. So, okay, everything is going really smoothly. I see we're gonna hit a record this month. Let's try something.

Let's, let's not try something when we're like banking on this to work. Let's try something where, hey, if this works, it's just like sprinkles or like gravy. That's what I would recommend. You know, make sure things are going well oiled. Uh, it's. You know, you're having a good month and then test something unexpected.

'cause then it's low pressure.

Laylee: That is super helpful advice. Especially, I mean, I'm thinking to myself like there are seasons where I'm like, this is just everything is going so well and that is I think, a really smart time to, to try something different. I love that.

Dylan: Yeah.

Laylee: As we wrap up, I would love to know, 'cause we've kind of touched on several different.

Topics and areas within, within your business and the way that you run your company. If you want our listeners to kind of walk away with like one key takeaway from this episode, what would it be?

Dylan: I would say. Don't look at the competition. I never look at the competition. I don't even look for to them for ideas. And the biggest piece of feedback that I get of why people choose me over someone else is you are so different. Like you are not saying any of the same things. You're contradicting actually what the mass Etsy gurus are saying, and you sound like you know what you're talking about.

So trust yourself, trust your experience and your knowledge and, and don't try, I wouldn't even look at what the competition is saying. So if, if you are truly an expert in something, if you truly have experience in something, like you don't need to watch what everyone else is saying. I think being different is a good thing and it will make you stand out.

Laylee: I think that is so refreshing and such a beautiful message to end on. I know that for myself, I can absolutely re like I can relate to needing to be more. Confident in that. When I'm saying different things about a topic that is widely spoken about, I tend to get nervous if I'm giving different advice than, than the other quote unquote experts or maybe bigger names.

So I think that's something I needed to hear, so I'm sure that our listeners needed to hear it too. Thank you so much. That's so good. So good.

Dylan: Good. Oh, good. Yeah. And if anyone, needs, tips or anything on the long form content strategy of like giving away things to build that trust, , like slip into my dms and I, I can send you a voice note or, or something too. Happy to help. Yeah.

Laylee: That is amazing. I was actually gonna ask like, where can people connect with you? So your dms is the best place. I love that.

Dylan: My, my Instagram handle is still my name, Dylan Jarris. And then we have a context form on the website if you wanna like, have a longer conversation. Yeah.

Laylee: Yeah. Amazing. Okay, y'all, we will link all of Dylan's information in our show notes for sure. And I just, I think you're such a wealth of knowledge and I so appreciate you taking the time to share with our people all of this amazing insight and perspective that I think a lot of us don't have. I mean, like I said, your story. Your journey I think are extremely unique, but I love that you shared that you think that anybody can do this as long as they're willing to kind of take the chance on seizing that opportunity in front of them. So thank you again. This was so amazing.

Dylan: Oh, thanks for having me. Laylee

Laylee: Yeah, absolutely. All right, y'all, we'll see you on the next episode.