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How A Guy With A Full Time Job Built A \$2,000 A Month AdSense Income Niche Site And Then Sold It For \$200,000 – Patrick Meninga Tells His Story

YARO: Hello, this is Yaro Starak and welcome to an Entrepreneurs Journey podcast. Today, I have Patrick Meninga, is that right, Patrick?

PATRICK: Yes.

YARO: From... Where are you from?

PATRICK: Kalamazoo, Michigan.

YARO: Kalamazoo, Michigan, okay, in the United States and I've invited Patrick on to tell what I hope will be a very interesting story of how he sold his website for \$200,000. So, obviously, it's a case of starting your own site, growing it and then, selling it.

I've read a little bit about this, Patrick and it sounds like you weren't really expecting this to happen. So, I'm really looking forward to hearing the whole process. Thank you for joining me today.





PATRICK: Oh, thank you, Yaro. I'm glad to be here.

YARO: So, start at the beginning then. I assume you've been on the Internet since you were born?

PATRICK: Well, actually, I guess, I probably started about maybe five years ago and I didn't have a website. I didn't have anything. I just had an idea that I wanted to make money online and what I did is I started doing some research and I found Clickbank products.

And so, real quick and dirty I made, this really lousy awful product and I just threw together a page, a landing page and I started buying some pay-per-click traffic. I didn't know what I was doing. I was just sort of scrambling in the dark and it was a complete disaster. I didn't make any money. That was sort of my first foray into Internet Marketing.

YARO: Before you keep going, I'm curious, were you a working man before this? Did you have a day job?

PATRICK: Oh yes, definitely. I've been working my whole life and at that time, I was actually working in an addiction treatment center. So, I was working in a drug rehab. That was what I was doing and I wanted, I knew there was a way that people were making money online and I didn't know anything about it so, that's how I got in to it.

YARO: So, this was a career you had. How many years have you been working as an addiction counselor?

PATRICK: Yes, basically I've only been doing it about four years or so, not too long.

YARO: Okay, so were you an entrepreneur ever in the previous history or is this the first time you started your own thing?

PATRICK: That was my leap into entrepreneurship.



YARO: So, you went to school. Did you go into University and then, went straight into your job, is that the typical career path or you had a different story?

PATRICK: Yes, I actually did complete a bachelor's degree at a business school. So, I had a marketing degree and I don't know... I was just kind of in transition and this wasn't a great job. It was a decent job that I had at the treatment center but, I wanted more. I wanted something better.

YARO: So, were you thinking, "make enough money to quit my job, travel the world, live that '4-hour workweek lifestyle,'" or where did the motivation come from?

PATRICK: That is where it came from. Actually, that was before the whole 4-Hour Workweek came out. It had already sort of sparked my mind that that was what I wanted. I wanted that lifestyle. That was definitely in the background there.

YARO: All right, well let's date this. When did you first have the inclination to start your own thing?

PATRICK: I think it was about 2006 maybe, right around in there. I would have to look at the...

YARO: Let's go with 2006. So, you're working a full time job from nine to five and you're thinking, I want to start some kind of Internet business. Did you get some sort of initial exposure from anywhere, a newspaper, or you're meeting the Internet already for ideas...?

PATRICK: Basically the Internet. I was already online quite a bit. I was very quick at doing Internet research, very quick at reading. So, yes. I would say my exposure was all online.

YARO: What were you reading about?

PATRICK: To be honest, I was reading a lot of A-list blogs. I was reading your blog back when you were talking about pillar content and stuff like that so, that's really after the Clickbank thing failed on me. That's what inspired



me as I was reading a lot of different blogs about blogging and that's really what got me started.

YARO: Okay, did you consider yourself a writer?

PATRICK: Yes, I guess I do. As far as like school, I've always been really strong at writing and I write very quickly. I compose articles very fast. I've always been a very strong writer.

YARO: Tell us what you did. What was the first step?

PATRICK: Well, after the Clickbank thing failed, I was trying to set up that machine to create a passive business, that's what I was doing and it just didn't work out. And so, I'll be honest, I was working at the drug rehab and I had experience in the field of addiction, personal experience so, I decided to set a website on that.

I got the idea from blogs similar to yours and yours that I could start a content website and build out a large information site. So, I started writing articles about addiction.

YARO: Did you set up the website yourself? Were you using Wordpress for example?

PATRICK: Yes, I went ahead and started a Wordpress blog. I just bought a URL and just started writing articles.

YARO: All right. The URL you used, was it spiritualriver.com?

PATRICK: Yes, I just pulled it out of the hat. I said, I'm going to go with something that's got some branding potential and I said, "Spiritual River." It's got a nice ring to it. I'll use that.

I did not know what I was doing and in retrospect, it actually worked out pretty good that I didn't try to go with addiction-treatment-best.com, or, you know. I didn't pick something spammy. I wanted something "brandable." So, that was a bonus.



YARO: I have to admit, when I first read it, I thought you must have some sort of personal development or spirituality website not an addiction treatment site with the name like "Spiritual River."

PATRICK: Yes, it is a little weird, it is a little strange but, there is a heavy slant towards spirituality in the whole recovery community so, it actually works pretty well.

YARO: So, you started writing content. Now, I assume you were drawing upon both your own experiences and as an addiction counselor. How often could you write and how much could you write? Was it all you?

PATRICK: Yes, it was all me. I never outsourced any content or anything like that. I just wrote my own stuff. I started very slowly because I didn't necessarily know how the scale of the web worked at that time. I didn't say, "Oh, I got to have 100 articles," or, "Oh, I got to have 1000 articles."

I didn't do that at first. I just started creating articles and seeing... I started so slowly and I didn't really know anything about building links or building authority to the site and so, it just started very slowly and I just started putting up different articles, didn't really know much about keyword research. I was just sort of shooting from the hip, just brainstorming different titles per post.

YARO: And, how much were you writing because this is kind of an after work kind of job, I assume.

PATRICK: Oh right! I was definitely working full time and so, I would just... At first, I wasn't real serious about it. I was just putting up maybe one to three articles a week, just kind of getting the ball rolling.

So, for the first, I would say for the first year to eighteen months, I didn't really push to create a business with it. I was just sort of dabbling, I was just sort of getting a couple of articles up and letting it age basically.

YARO: Okay, so that get us to the timeline and this is 2006, you're doing this very much part time. You're writing three articles a week so, it's not going to be an overnight success story at that sort of pace. Did you have a



change of mind set along the way and started thinking of it like a business? Take us to the next few months or years whatever it took.

PATRICK: I think what happened is that I sort of started digging in to the stats a little bit and I probably got lucky on a post. I'll even tell you what post it was. It was for the keyword, "How to Help an Addict."

People were typing that in to Google and I just got lucky. I had been building links. I still didn't know what I was doing yet and so, I started noticing, "Hey, all my traffic is coming from this one keyword about how to help an addict."

So that, combined with the fact that I put up some AdSense ads along the way there and it started showing a dollar or two a day and so, the light bulb kind of went off at that point.

Up until this point, I didn't necessarily have a clear picture of what I wanted my business to be. I had started with the whole Clickbank idea. So, it was still evolving and so, the light bulb went off and I said, "Wait a minute, I'm getting all these traffic for this keyword, I should be able to do this more. I should be able to find more keywords. I should be able to rank this even higher."

That's where it sort of all clicked and fell into place.

YARO: Can you maybe explain what exactly you mean. It sounds like it felt like you figured out the secret to this. How did you get the clarity in your head?

PATRICK: I guess it was a numbers game that I said, okay, I'm getting, maybe I was getting about 100 visits a day almost all from the search engines and I noticed that most of it was coming from this one keyword and I was getting it all to the same page.

And so, I put up the AdSense ads and it started doing, it started generating some income. I said, well, this is just a matter of scale. If I had a 100 articles like this, instead of making a \$1 a day, I would be making \$100 a day or whatever.



I guess, that's just sort of the process I went through is that I saw that it was scalable and I saw that I could grow it.

YARO: And, that led to what next? A whole lot of writing?

PATRICK: Yes. At some point, I got serious.

I guess, the next step, it wasn't volume yet. Later down the road, I really took off and went crazy with volume but, at this point, I still wasn't there. At this point, I said, "You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to go and find some keywords, the best ones I can find and I'm going to write (I think it was) 40 articles."

To me, at that time, this was a big deal to write 40 articles. I think it took me two weeks. And so, I put up 40 articles and I believe at that time, this was quite a waste back. I was using like Go articles and maybe Ezine articles to build some basic links.

And so, I threw links at this 40 new articles and overnight almost, within a month or two, the income shut up to, I'm going to say about \$300 a month in AdSense.

YARO: And, I'm assuming the traffic must have grown to get that result.

PATRICK: Yes. Traffic went up, the income went up, it had been \$50 to \$100 a month and I did these 40 posts. I made this conscious effort, okay, I'm going to put up 40 posts, I'm going to target 40 new keywords for this 40 new articles and so, I did that and then, another light bulb went up. I said, "Okay, this actually works."

YARO: Can you maybe tell us a bit more... I know, I can hear the person listening to this thinking, I have looked at keywords and I have gone and written articles to try and get that traffic but, I just never get a first page ranking or, even if I do, it turns out there's just not much traffic going to it or it doesn't end up making me any money.



Could you maybe explain if you have on the inside to your technique there? Why did it work for you? Did all 40 articles work or was it more of a hit and miss process or ...?

PATRICK: Oh, it was definitely hit and miss and so, that's part of the light bulb moment for me, too is that, okay, I did 40 articles. My income went up but, of those 40 articles, maybe 25 of them never make a penny. And so, that was part of the light bulb moment for me, too and I think with the keywords, when I first started, I might go in to like the Google Adwords Keyword tool and I'd come up with the list and I would just start targeting them without really, I was going after keywords that were way too competitive and I was also going after some keywords that probably showed no promise of ever getting traffic.

And so, part of it was trying to find that happy medium and I'm sure people struggle with that. One of the ways that I did that was I started, I guess you'd call it data mining my stat logs? So, I would just look at what I was getting traffic for already, search traffic, and I would go through that each night, and I would say, "Okay, somebody typed in how to help an alcoholic."

Well, do I rank for that? And so, I would look in Google and say, "Oh well, I'm on the second page. I should write an article with that title and I might be able to get on the first page."

So, I started doing some basic things like that and just really pushing to get keywords that I knew I had a chance to rank for and that I knew I had some traffic potential.

YARO: Just to clarify, the data mining, that sounds like a good technique. Were you just going into your Google Analytics Traffic data and finding the phrases people were using to find your website and then, checking to see where your rankings?

So, like you said, an example you ranked on page 2 but, you were getting a little bit of traffic from that. If you could get to maybe one or in one of those first three results, you could probably get a lot more traffic. Was that the process?



PATRICK: Absolutely, that's exactly what I did. And, I think at that time, I wasn't even on Google Analytics yet. I think at that time, I was still using [StatCounter](#) which works just as well for that. That was the exact process.

YARO: Okay, so you're making \$300 a month. You've written 40 articles which may be 10 to 15, actually bringing in some traffic and some money. What kind of traffic are we talking about this day? You said 100 a day in visitors last time, right? So, what do you have by this point?

PATRICK: I think I was around 300 uniques per day, probably 85% from Google Search.

YARO: What happened next? Just write more articles and work the ones that keep getting it? Is that how you thought?

PATRICK: Yes, a little bit. I think I tended to sway a little bit. I actually leaned towards doing some guest posting and so, I said, you know, I have been writing all these articles and it never happens fast enough as we want it to. And so, I said, well, I should go and try to get some better links for my site and so, I actually, I took time off from writing articles for a while and I chased down, I'm going to say, I ended up with about six guest posts for that site.

YARO: And how did you find the other sites and actually get approvals to do a guest post?

PATRICK: I actually devised the process. Maybe I discovered it. I don't exactly remember but, what I ended up doing was I would go to Google and I would type in things like "Addiction guest post." I would just sort of sift through the results and see what was out there already and see if there were sites in my niche that were accepting guest posts. I made a list. I found maybe ten sites that had already accepted a guest post from somebody else that was on topic.

And I said, okay, these are my sites. I'm going to go and chase after. I got to come up with an idea and make a creative article and I'll email this



people and pitch the idea to them and see if they won't publish a guest post.

And so, I did that and I ended up doing it about six times, I think.

YARO: Do you have criteria for the quality of these sites? Were you looking for a certain page rank or anything like that?

PATRICK: Not necessarily. Definitely, I would look at the page rank but, for me, I guess it was really about a real website versus a fake one and I guess, that's entirely subjective but I mean, I think we all know SPAM when we see it. If there's a real person behind the site, if somebody actually cares about the website and if it's on topic.

I guess with those two criteria, it doesn't really matter as much to me what the page rank is as long as it's a real website and it's got a human behind it then, to me it's probably a good link.

YARO: Okay, so how long have you been doing this at this stage? Are we talking a year into this because you were still working a full time job, right?

PATRICK: Oh yes, definitely still working a full time job making about \$300 a month. It probably was at around a two-year mark. And, I also want to point out so that nobody gets misled is that there were times when I didn't work on the site at all. There were entire months that would go by where I just wasn't into it for a while. I just kind of gave up and let it sit.

So, it wasn't like I did this every single day for five years. It was very sporadic. So, I think that's important to--

YARO: It sounds like you got a good a return for not, I mean you worked hard but not talking hours and hours everyday.

PATRICK: Correct, yes.

YARO: Okay so, take us forward then, Patrick. What happened next?



PATRICK: Okay, I guess, I did this guest post and I continued to put up new articles. I'm not sure how fast I was doing it but, at some point, the site jumped to \$600 a month in income. It was making \$600 a month and it kind of got stuck there. A couple of months went by and I was sort of expecting it to grow and I was really pushing and hoping to hit a thousand a month.

YARO: Was that because you were putting out more content?

PATRICK: I was consistently putting up content but it wasn't anything huge. We'll still say three or so articles a week maybe. And, I think I also did another push in there where I said, "I'm going to do another 40 articles." In like a 2-week time span, I'm going to publish and write 40 new articles and I'm going to point some links, add a poll, whatever.

YARO: That sounds like it was a pretty important thing you did when you went for this whole 40 articles in 2 weeks process. That's a lot of articles for two weeks. You're basically writing like almost four a day. How many words are these articles? How did you do it given a full time job?

PATRICK: Well, like I said, I write pretty fast. So, for me to sit down and type up, let's say, 300-word articles, I can do that in certainly less than three hours, probably less than 2 hours if I actually sit down and do the work. I'm very fast at typing, very fast at writing and I knew the material. And, I had a lot of ideas. It wasn't just that I was writing about addiction. It was that I had ideas that I would say are not typically mainstream. I think that's an important point too, is that I had some ideas about my niche, about my topic that were not mainstream. People weren't talking about my ideas necessarily.

YARO: Right, so you had some knowledge from your own experiences there that you were revealing.

PATRICK: Right, yes. I had my own spin on things. I said, "This is how the society thinks everything works and this is what I experience. I think it's a little different and I think here are some things that I think would really help people if they're willing to learn, they're willing to take a look."



And so, I had a lot of ideas like that. So, I wasn't just saying, "Oh, I'm going to write about this table and this piece of furniture. This table has four legs." It wasn't just boring, dry content. I was actually talking about some personal experience in there.

YARO: So, was there any kind of a formula or a system you were following by this point? Did you take someone's course or read an ebook or it was just your collective experience reading those blogs back when you started?

PATRICK: It was mostly reading A-list blogs and for example, with the pillar content, at one point, I'm trying to think at what point this was. Certainly before I was even making \$300 a month in AdSense, I read your stuff about pillar content. I said, "This is what I need to do. I need to make some amazing articles."

Looking back at those first couple of pillar articles, I've grown so much since then. It's really amazing. But, back then, it just raised my level of quality. It made me say, "Okay, 300 word article without much substance to it. That's not what I want to be publishing. I want to dig deeper. I actually say something. I want to actually help people."

And so, at some point, I kind of got that idea of I need to make killer content.

YARO: That's a pretty strong motivation. I think a lot of people forget to mix in that motivation with also the desire to make money because you obviously cared sharing about what you knew in helping other people and that income through in your writing quite significantly.

PATRICK: Yes. That's exactly it. I didn't just push for a higher quality content but, I pushed myself to say, "Okay, what kind of content can I develop?"

And so, I did a number of videos. I started shooting videos which were just sort of talking head me explaining a concept on a YouTube video and then, pairing that with a new post. I made a number of infographics. I started playing around with Photoshop and I said, people are making these infographics and these nice charts and graphs. Why can't I do that?



And so, I created this pie, about four or five of them on Spiritual River, these infographics I made. So, I pushed myself more than just saying, "Oh, I need to make killer content. I want to make a variety of content. I want to hit different formats," just all about making the site better and more a real website, not just a bunch of 300-word articles.

YARO: Okay, well, continue the process then with us, Patrick. You're up to \$600 a month and you'd done another 40 article rush which sounds pretty important with the way you produce content, got you focused and gets a great output. What were you aiming for here? Were you hoping to make enough money to quit your job?

PATRICK: Yes, that's exactly it. I was working a day job and still working at the treatment center and I said, "If I could get over a thousand a month in income, I don't have any dependents. I live a very simple life. I could conceivably quit my job with that kind of income."

I wanted to clear \$1000 a month and so, here's what I did. I had a lot of vacation time accumulated and so, I went to my job and I said, "Hey, I need to take a month off." They let me do it. They gave me a month off and during that month, my plan was to just go nuts and really create a lot of content for the website. And so, at one point, I was publishing as many as 25 articles each day when I was on that vacation.

My goal was 600 articles during that one month vacation. I did not reach the goal but, I did produce I think around 400 to 500 articles and these were in the 600+ word range. They weren't 1000 words but, they were over 600 words. They were good content. This was stuff hours writing from personal experience. And so, I had a big keyword list that I work from that I just accumulated all these keywords and I said, "I'm going to do it."

And so, I went nuts and that's when the site basically went from around the 500-article range to the thousand-article range. So, I bumped it quite a bit there.

YARO: That sounds like you must have been writing 20 articles a day on average.



PATRICK: Yes, it was pretty insane. My back actually hurt. I was writing so much. My neck would hurt. It was just ridiculous. But, like I said--

YARO: Were you sitting on a beach doing all these?

PATRICK: [*Laughs*] Sitting on a beach, that's great. No, I was just in my apartment, typing away on the desktop.

YARO: So, eight hours a day kind of thing? Or, an hour here, an hour there?

PATRICK: Yes. A couple of those days, I did more than eight hours and I don't recommend that. Definitely, eight hours is too much for non-stop typing.

YARO: Is it safe to say that that month kind of brought your freedom from having a job?

PATRICK: Yes, it did but it didn't work out like I thought it would and it probably never does. But, anyways, what I learned is that, and I think this is an important point, is that I had this website, I had a couple of years of age to it and I think at the time, it was a page rank 3, it's almost always on a page rank 3, not that it matters a whole lot but, that's kind a level of authority that this site had. It had about 500 articles. It was about three or four years old, it was a page rank 3 and here, I take one month and I add six hundred articles to it.

Now, what would you think would happen?

YARO: You'll probably get a penalty from Google for [*laughs*] putting too much out there too quickly or something like that.

PATRICK: That's possible. I'm not really sure if there was a penalty but, I can tell you this much that you're basically right. Google did not say, "Oh, let's shower this person with traffic and income. They just gave us a whole bunch of new articles."



It didn't happen that fast. It did happen but, I'm going to say it took about a year for that to fully kick in.

YARO: Right. I was going to say, did you release those articles all at once? Like, did you just go one after the other or did you just feed them over the next twelve months or something like that?

PATRICK: No drip feed. I hit publish every time. I was publishing up to 25 articles a day and so, what happened is, I just got done with and I think maybe like the new content bonus or something, I did see a little spike there but, it was nothing huge or significant and it didn't even break \$700 a month. I was stuck for almost a year at that \$600 a month in income mark and I could not seem to break it.

Somewhere in that year, I did this blitz where I added about 400 to 500 articles in a month and like I said, it did not kick in immediately. If you do this, my guess is you'll be disappointed in the short run. You'll be happy in the long run but, in the short run they'll say, "Where's the money? Where is the traffic?"

YARO: So, if it didn't work straight away, you must have been a bit depressed after spending the entire month almost eight hours a day on your vacation, technically, and to use up a month of your holiday hours and not to be able to quit your job or even show a significant jump in your income like you might even be thinking about stopping altogether at that stage just letting it sit there.

PATRICK: Right. Well, I was... Actually, what happened is, I don't think I can reveal this person but, there is another Internet marketer, I can't say his name but, he had a lot more experience than I did and he has a website that's over a decade old and gets just huge traffic.

He told me, he said, "You need to give it time. You need to wait a year." That's what he kept telling me is, "Wait a year." He said, generally he has found in his experience that it generally takes at least a year for his new content that he puts up to really settle in with the search engines and rank where it's going to rank for the [unclear].



So, he said, give it a year. Your site has decent authority. It's not huge but, he said, you need to be patient. And so, at that time, that's not what I wanted to hear and I didn't necessarily believe them. But, I can tell you now looking back, he was right on the money.

YARO: Okay, so what did you do during this year then? Just go back to work writing three articles a week doing your full time job, is that..?

PATRICK: You know what, no, I didn't. I stopped making content. I shouldn't say that, I stopped pushing for volume is what I did. I had made that big push for volume and I basically slowed down. I was probably back to around the three-articles-per-week speed but, at this point, I was doing more things. I was, for instance, I was trying to get more guest post. I was trying to get some quality links and I was still experimenting with different types of content like the infographics and shooting some videos.

So, I was discouraged with volume blogging, you could say that. I was discouraged with the volume approach.

I didn't quit. I didn't give up. I just started trying different things.

YARO: Okay. I haven't even asked you, doing a lot of content productions throughout this process and a little bit of guest article marketing, were you doing any more marketing for what you do like building links and your other methods? You said you used eZine articles and Go articles. Was that pretty much it in terms of growing your authority?

PATRICK: It was. I did a little bit of, I guess you would say, manufactured link building on link networks. This was quite a long time ago in the process. At some point, I shifted away from that and said, "You know what? I don't think the cheaper manufactured links are going to be sustainable in the long run."

And so, at some point, I made a decision and I said, you know what, when I do link building and marketing, I'm going to just try to get quality guest post from what I consider to be real websites.



YARO: Okay so, take us to what happened next. It sounds like you broke the thousand dollar mark eventually since you don't have a job now, do you Patrick?

PATRICK: No, I don't. So, what happened is basically a year went by or so and I kept pushing, kept pushing, and the work I had done a year previously started to kick in and it started to pay off and it just, all of a sudden, it kind of exploded.

I think I went from \$600 a month to \$1000 a month just like that, just on a dime. When I hit \$1000 a month, 90 days later, it hit \$2000 a month and I wasn't, at this point, I wasn't... I was still working full time and I was not really pushing hard to do anything with the website at this point. I had already done the work and it was tipped in on its own.

It just took that time, it took that year or so for the benefits to kick in.

YARO: Why do you think that is? Is it Google just changing their algorithms and figuring out what's better content and deciding that you are a better content site because you keep doing something every week or years?

I'm assuming by now you must be getting, what? 2006 when you started, you are talking two or three years here. So, getting 2009 or 2010?

PATRICK: Well actually, I started in 2006 sort of exploring in the Clickbank stuff. I don't think Spiritual River went live until maybe 2007. But still, I guess I don't know why that delay is there. From what I can tell, it's just based on trust.

If I had a PR-6 website that was older than the Spiritual River, I think those articles would have kicked in much faster. I think the income and the traffic would have went up much faster but, I think it has to do where your website is at it.

If you're 2 years old and you're page rank is 2 and your site has 200 articles, you can't expect to just add a thousand articles and be making \$1000 a month the next month.



It's going to take time based on the level of authority you already have is what I think.

YARO: I can speak from someone who's had a website from 2004 in my case and a page rank 6 at the moment. I don't know what would happen if suddenly wrote 400 articles and released them in a month.

It's been never written that much in that short period of time, maybe 100 articles in a month. The most I have done is 60. That was in the very, very early days. It definitely shows the value of doing something over time.

Patrick, you're making \$2000 a month at this stage from Google Adsense, you must be well and truly ready to quit your job. Tell us what happened? Did you just walk into your boss's office and say, "I'm out of here?"

How did you come to this wonderful decision?

PATRICK: Well, I guess it didn't happen super fast because the main problem is that Adsense income fluctuates and that suck. Even if I had a couple of days where it made \$100 in a day and it gets you really excited and the next day, I'll turn around and I'll make \$35 or \$40. And, you'll say what happened to the \$100?

So, it's tough.

YARO: Scary. Scary to quit your job based on that random aspect.

PATRICK: Yes, definitely it is scary.

YARO: So, how did you get involved?

PATRICK: [*Laughs*] I don't know. I guess I wanted it so bad and it was more than the income level. It was the opportunity there that I said, "If I can get freedom from my day job then, I can really go nuts; then I can turn this into a serious business."



So, it wasn't just that I wanted to make sure there was enough money that I could eat. It was, I wanted to take the risk. I wanted to take the plunge and see if I could make it into something even better.

YARO: And, that's what you did.

PATRICK: So, that's what I did. I quit the job. Put in my notice.

YARO: When was that Patrick? You must remember that day?

PATRICK: You would think, gosh! It's been about a year, not quite been a year yet.

YARO: Okay so this is fairly new. You're living the freedom lifestyle for only a year.

PATRICK: Yes, this is definitely very new. I put in my notice and then, used that nervousness of, "Oh my gosh, I'm not going to have a day job to try to spur me to create more and better content for the site."

YARO: Okay, so take us through then to the next twelve months to get us up to the present. You quit your job, you start working on the website, full time. You haven't even mentioned that you actually sold the website.

PATRICK: Right. Really, that's the next part of the story. Right after I quit the job, this is just incredible timing, I quit the job and here is what happened, here is what actually happened is I got nervous, I got scared like you said based on the fluctuating income that AdSense provides and I said, I was talking to some different Internet marketers who were trying to advise me and they were saying, "You know, you can probably do better than AdSense."

They wanted to push me beyond the AdSense business model because they said, Google has to take their cut and there's different ways to monetize. You can create a product. You can consult. You can create a course. You could do some different things. Maybe you could make more money than AdSense.



YARO: Is there a reason why you don't want to mention these people's names Patrick or are they...?

PATRICK: Well, [*laughs*]...

YARO: I like to know because kudos to them for giving good advice. Let's give it.

PATRICK: Right, I guess... I don't know. If I think of a good example...

YARO: One person in particular because I know in my own experience, I had a couple of people Andrew and Daryl Grant who said, you really should have a product, that's what are you doing? This is before I had a product.

A lot of other people had said similar things, I had read similar things but, it took those two people to actually say it and go, "Do it," to actually make me do it. So, was there any kind of moments like that for you?

PATRICK: Well, certainly, [Chris Garrett](#), he had a huge impact on me and at one point he gave me like a free site review. So, he reviewed my site and critiqued it on his site.

I never did any formal work with Chris but, I had joined his forum basically. He had a free forum in the past. I kind of got to know him and he definitely made an impact in that area and he was one who pushed me to say, "We need to look beyond AdSense. You can probably do a little better than ad clicks in terms of monetization."

So anyways, that was kind of a theme that I had explored even before this point in time and I'd never gotten good results with it. My big idea was that a lot of treatment centers and drug rehabs where the people were advertising on my site via AdSense.

So, what I did is I made a list of those, those treatment centers based on the ads that were showing on my site. I started cold calling them. I started calling them up and saying, "Let me talk to the marketing department. Let me talk to the owner," whatever, you know trying to get past those



gatekeepers and talk to somebody who actually works in the marketing for the treatment center.

And so, it's a number scheme. It's just like guest posting. I made a list of 30 treatment centers and made 30 cold calls and sent out 30 emails and maybe got 5 people that actually talk to me.

It's a numbers game. I did that footwork and actually had a month or two in there where I paired up with the treatment center and I removed my AdSense. The treatment center paid me a set fee to run their advertising on my site.

So, I was doing a direct ad deal and I did, I think I did two of those sort of in the year or so leading up to when I quit my job. I had not quit my job yet and I'd experimented this direct ad deal twice.

YARO: So, you mean like a monthly fee for placing a banner on your site.

PATRICK: Yes. It was more than just one banner though. We geared the whole site layout to advertise their business.

YARO: So, it must have been a fairly significant money then.

PATRICK: Yes, it was. It was comparable to the AdSense income at that time, and I tried to get a little more to make it worth my while to replace AdSense.

So, that was kind of the deal and I think I even, like I went into some of my eBooks, that I had free eBooks that people could download on my site and like I even put promotions in them for the treatment center that I was advertising.

So, I really tried to gear the whole site to help the advertisers. So, I did a couple of these direct deals. Bottom line is, it didn't really work out. They got some leads, they got some referrals but, they didn't think it was probably worth their while.



It wasn't a slam dunk either way but, these people that I did the deals with, they were like, "Well, they might continue with it. We're not sure." So, it wasn't a resounding success.

YARO: So, how long did it go for?

PATRICK: Just, I think I did a month trial with one treatment center and we parted ways and they said, "Man, not quite. We don't quite want to keep doing this." And I did it a second time and same thing.

Actually, the second time, he wanted to keep doing it. They wanted to keep the direct ad deal but, they weren't willing to pay enough and so, it wasn't worth the effort because AdSense outperformed.

YARO: What was the difference because Garrett had been giving you this advice later on?

PATRICK: Well, I would say Chris had given me that advice earlier, much earlier and so, what happened is, I had done those deals and then, I quit my day job and I was using AdSense and I was making pretty good money but, it was so fluctuating and I was scared like you said. And so, I said, "If I can get a direct deal, even if it's not..." I was so scared that I was willing to take the same money that AdSense made just as a direct deal so that I'd be guaranteed to get the money.

That was my mindset. I was worried and I was nervous and I was scared and I got a call. Like I said, I'd made about thirty cold calls via the phone and tried to talk to receptionists, and tried to get marketing departments. I had done that.

This was like six months prior I had made these thirty calls. Out of the blue, I had already quit my job, out of the blue, my phone rings and it's some guy and he says, "Who is this?"

I said, "Who are you?" [*Laughs*] And he said, "You called me. You got a website."

I said, "Okay, what are we talking about?"



He said, "Well, something about advertising." And so, it was so out of the blue. I was not expecting it. I don't think this guy knew what was going on either. He dragged up his message from thirty days ago and decided to call it.

He said, "Well, I own a training center. Let's work out a deal. Let's try to do something."

And so, I said, "All right." And, I was not really optimistic because I was so disappointed in the way the previous direct deals had gone. I said to myself, "This isn't going to work. This guy is going to try it. He's not going to like it. I'll go back to AdSense. That's what's going to happen."

So, we worked out a deal and he was willing to pay more than the others, I guess that was the key point. He said, "I'll give you..." I think it was \$2000 or \$2500 a month to run my ads on your site. You take down your AdSense and we'll try it for a month and we'll go from there.

And so, we did that and what happened is about halfway through that month, when he was learning his ads, he had all kinds of tracking installed. He calls me up and he says, he's not doing real great and I said, "Yes, okay."

And, he said, "But, I think I can make it do better. If this were my website, I think I could increase the conversion rates. I think I can fix this website." So, he says, "I want to buy it." And I said, "I need the money to live on. I quit my day job."

He said, "Well, you name a price. You come back with the price." He said, "You think about it for a day and come up with a price because I want your website. I want to buy it."

I said, "Okay." So, I hung up and I thought about it for a day then, I kind of ran the numbers of how much money would really change my life and allow me to invest and actually make a difference and I figured a quarter million would be nice *[laughs]*.



YARO: Before you keep going, Patrick, a quarter million, yes, it is nice but, I'm thinking if your website is generating say, \$2500 a month in income at that time, even if you say you optimize it a bit more and do a few things, get up to three thousand a month, that's still only \$6000 a year. You're talking about a multiple of almost 10 times the yearly income to reach a quarter of a million. Did you think about that?

PATRICK: Oh yes. And, I even said that to him in my reply. I said, "I know the site is not worth a quarter million but, that is what I want." I even said that because if you go look at website valuations, everybody is like, "Oh, 12 times the monthly earnings, maybe 18 times, maybe if you've got a really nice website, 36 times the monthly earnings."

YARO: Yes, looking at a hundred grand at best sort of thing.

PATRICK: Right yes. More like fifty grand. There is no way. But, it didn't matter because I said, I need the money to live on. I quit my job. I'm stuck here. I can't sell these things for \$50,000. That's not going to help me. That's not going to make me, allow me to reach my business goals, my investment goals.

I can't live on that long term. So, I was not excited at this point. I was not excited at all and I was realistic. I always thought I was realistic because I said, nobody is going to pay more than thirty six times monthly earnings.

YARO: So, you thought you'd say "no" but, you said, "Why not? I'm going to tell him the truth. That's how much I want."

PATRICK: Right. And so, I did that and he said, "No, you're right. The site is not worth a quarter of a million but, he said, I will tell you what I would do. I will give you \$200,000 for that [*laughs*]. And, my jaw just hit the floor, talking to him on the floor and I said, "Really?"

YARO: Did you keep it cool or did you jump up around?

PATRICK: I was stuttering like a fool. I was like, "Uh, uh, I'd have to get back to you on that. I couldn't even... just... Yes, to me, that's a mind balling amount of money. It still is. It's just crazy."



So, yes. I said, "I'll call you tomorrow and let you know."

YARO: Did you really have anything to think about for those 24 hours or you pretty much, you know, you were "Yes" from the moment he made the offer.

PATRICK: Well, I started calling people and I got some investment advice from a trusted investment advisers that my family has been using for decades. He kind of convinced me, he said you need to jump on that and then, you know what he said, "Can't you just build another website?" I had to laugh at that.

So, yes. I basically said, yes, this is enough money where I can bank it. I can invest all of it and start building another business and go from there. And so, yes, there wasn't much question. I even talk to some other people, Internet Marketers that I knew called them up and they said, "Dude, that's insane! You have to take that deal." They said, "A hundred times monthly earnings or so, that's unheard of. Do it."

YARO: Yes, I would have said the same thing.

Impressive so, how did the... we're almost at an hour, Patrick so, I should probably start wrapping it up here. But, can you give us an indication how did the deals move? Did you have a contract?

PATRICK: It was very smooth. He said, "I'll have my lawyer draft this up." And so, that's what he did. He had his lawyer draft up a contract and the lawyer, I believe it was the lawyer, his lawyer said, "We go to use [Escrow](#) for this."

So, the lawyer took money in Escrow and I talked directly to the lawyer. He was very professional. I was not worried about a thing to be honest. I was not worried in the lease.

YARO: Did the technical transfer went smoothly as well?

PATRICK: Yes.



YARO: ...details, I guess, huh?

PATRICK: Yes, it did. Actually, they just... I think I was hosting with Media Temple at the time and they said, "We'll just go get an account with them and it will be a snap."

And so, that's what they did. So, it was really easy. They just bought in to the same hosting and that...

YARO: Okay, they bought the hosting. They [Escrowed](#) the money. You're happy that everything transferred. They were happy. Money came into your bank account and that chapter was done.

PATRICK: Yes, and that kind of did it.

YARO: And, what have you even been investing in, I mean, if you're able to talk about, how are you, well, actually the next question is how are you spending your life now as well? What are you doing?

PATRICK: Well, you know it's interesting that for one thing, the people who bought the site actually want me to keep writing on it on a Freelance agreement which sounds crazy at first.

Why would you sell your website and keep writing for it? But, it's actually worked really well. I banked the money. I took it to an investor. It's grown. It's amazed me how passive income works when you put money at that scale when you just got a couple thousand bucks, it doesn't do anything but, when you get that kind of money, it actually grows.

YARO: This is a post GFC so, you've managed to [*unclear*].

PATRICK: What's that?

YARO: The sale happened after the global financial crises. So, you didn't put all your investments in the stock market and then, watch it disappear.



PATRICK: Right.

YARO: So, you have been okay.

PATRICK: Right. It's just been doing great since then and it's quite diversified. It's not like I've taken it all to the casino kind of thing but, so yes. And then, I continued to do some freelance work for them and because I write so quickly, it's a fantastic deal for me, still to do that and then, of course, I work on, shifted my attention to another website to try to fill future income and business with that.

YARO: Which is?

PATRICK: It's actually makemoneywithnowork.com.

YARO: That's a good domain name.

PATRICK: It's kind of a spammy URL name but, if you've ever heard one, "Make money with no work." But, I had started that a couple of years back and just kind of let it sit there and didn't really know what I was doing at that time and figured, after I sold this, I said, "Well, now, I know what I'm doing."

So, I should build this into a business. So, I've started putting a lot of, what I would call, "epic content" on that site and started building it...

YARO: Okay, so that's where your at today, I presume-- writing for your own site, freelancing still for SpiritualRiver.com and watching your investments, making sure you've got your living coming through there.

PATRICK: That is exactly right, yes.

YARO: I'm guessing you don't quite work, you don't do those 400 articles in one month sort of tricks anymore, huh?

PATRICK: No, I definitely do not but, I still try to do about three hours a day of solid writing where I actually sit down and pound the keys for three hours and for me, that's... It's well over 3000 words, sometimes up close to 5000 words.



YARO: That's a good habit to keep, isn't it? Especially online.

PATRICK: Yes.

YARO: All right, well Patrick, that's a fantastic story. Thank you for taking us through the entire thing. I found that really interesting. Maybe just in passing while we wrap up this, first the websites if you want to tell people where to find you, SpiritualRiver.com is the site you created and sold and still write for; and Make... give me the whole address.

PATRICK: It's MakeMoneyWithNoWork.com.

YARO: Okay, that's where you're currently at in terms of your current writing.

PATRICK: Yes.

YARO: Fantastic, all right. So, one last tip that you could give people if they want to do this process, you talk like you've described probably three years of your life there, maybe a little bit more but, much of it why you had a full time job which is probably a lot of people listening to this will be in that situation so, it's appealing to hear that, you were able to break out of that situation while still working full time.

What would you tell those people. What's the most important thing to do?

PATRICK: The number one tip I can tell you is a daily quota. Two words, you need a daily quota and that's content production. You need to produce a certain amount of content every single day and if a day goes by and you don't produce anything, you wasted an opportunity.

I did those content blitzes. I did 25 articles a day and I didn't have to do that. I could have just done two articles a day for the entire Internet marketing career and I would have come up the same. See what I'm saying?



A daily quota is very powerful. If you can say, "I'm going to write two articles everyday," and you keep that up, you can build a business that way. It just takes consistency.

YARO: Good advice and the advice I personally haven't taken in a long time. I did that early on and I would like to get back there so, I'm going to take that on board as well, Patrick. Thank you for that.

All right, great! Thank you for this fantastic interview. I wish you good luck with the new project and I'd love for anyone who's listening in to what Patrick said, please feel free to leave a comment and I guess, can I take, ask some questions, Patrick? You'll be watching the comments, as well?

PATRICK: Oh definitely.

YARO: So, Patrick will be there to reply to the comments when this interview goes live on Entrepreneurs-Journey.com.

Okay, that's it Patrick and I hope I'll speak to you soon.

PATRICK: Okay, thank you so much, Yaro.

A huge thank you to Patrick for doing that interview. I hope you got a lot out of it and take away something you can action immediately with your online business.

If you are looking for more podcasts interviews like these, please head to my blog which is Entrepreneurs-Journey.com or you can Google my name which is YARO and you'll find me at the top search result.

Thanks again and I'll catch you on a podcast interview very soon. Bye!



Relevant Links Mentioned in this Interview

- [Clickbank](#)
- [4-Hour Workweek](#)
- [Stat Counter](#)
- [Chris Garrett](#)
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