

EP103

Elaine Lou Cartas: What if I told you that you don't need to be famous or have a big following to make money consistently? That there's a strategy on how you can create your business sustainably and authentically, but Not everyone does it. let's be real. We see a lot of people do copy and paste models. There's a trend, everyone's following it.

And I'm not even talking about trending on social media, but even trending on marketing or how to do business. So I talk about how you can make consistent income in your business. Your own way, I share my story, my mistakes, and lots of lessons learned. So shout out to rise credit union for having me do this talk, which ended up being like a group coaching session for entrepreneurs earlier this week on Tuesday.

And this is the exact replay on the talk. So let's drop the beat.

All right. In my pleasure to introduce, and she's so excited, I can tell she was already reviewing it up here, Elaine Lou Cartas, who is a drama informed and award winning business coach and speaker for Women of Color and Allies, who has hundreds of five star client ratings and reviews. MSN recognized Elaine as a top business coach, Apple News awarded her as a top five business coach, and LA Weekly featured her as a number one thought leader.

Elaine has worked with over 10, 000 clients. In 58 different countries, helping to scale multiple six, seven, and even eight figure businesses. Elaine also coaches VPs in Fortune 500 companies and has online courses with LinkedIn, USC, Penn, John Hopkins, and Brown, to name a few. Most importantly, Elaine's clients have a life beyond their work, taking vacations and being present with their families and themselves.

I'm happy to announce Elaine is going to take you all through the next segment. How much time do I have? Okay, hi everyone. Okay, so first off, how many of you like free? Free 99? I know, you're welcome. So I want to piggyback on both of my fellow speakers, Ilibit and Claudia. for those of you that want to create a business plan, write this down.

New Women's Business Center. Which is based in L. A. They do 3 workshops to create a business plan and they used a platform called live plan. So you just put all the information and then it spits it out and it's free. You're welcome. I'm just so giving right? So that's 1 resource. You have to do all 3 workshops have access to that digital platform.

So know that. Second is, as Claudia was talking about formations, SBDC LA, so look, you could just Google it. As Claudia was mentioning, sign up for the newsletter. There was actually a workshop on doing a formation for LLCs today at 3, but don't worry about it. If you missed it, there will be more. And then the Economic Development Collaborative, Google that.

They also do free LLC workshops. So I've been in business for seven years, and I have learned to be scrappy. And prior to that, I was a former fundraiser. So I raised, I worked at Pasadena City College, and in six months we raised over 1.1 million dollars for 557 scholarships. No matter where you feel about things in the political climate, I used to work in political campaigns.

Doing fundraising. I'm born and raised in California, but I have lived in Iowa, Indiana, Montana, New Mexico, Massachusetts. And from 0 to raising a million dollars, I was able to do that. And here's the huge difference with my beginning entrepreneurs for versus more advanced. I am not an influencer. I don't have a million followers.

People don't, I don't have a big name. Actually. I don't want to be famous. I want to walk down the street and get my Starbucks coffee. And I think that is the best life to have. And if you want to be famous, that's cool. But I think we have this idea of what we think we need to be like, but the reality is, how do you want to live your life?

Like I was doing projections and my first six figures for next year comes from five B2B clients. That's 122K. you probably never heard of me before this event. I'm not a big name, but I just want to let you know what's possible for you. So during my session, I want to focus on coaching. I did read the survey and that's a huge thing I want you to hear is feedback.

So the feedback I got is, I know, there will be networking afterwards, but I want you guys to get to know each other and also you probably want a break from me. Now that it's been two minutes. So I would love for you to go into two to three groups two to three people and talk about two questions and I'll put two big white papers What's your biggest challenge when it comes to making money and maybe you are already making money Maybe it's a how can I make more and then the second question is what is your biggest challenge when it comes to digital presence?

So for the first 10 minutes, we're gonna do that the next 20 minutes. We'll do coaching and then And I let people know, I am not a motivational speaker. If you feel inspired, great, but I care about action plans. So the last ten minutes we'll do an action plan. So can you get together in two to three? And if you are alone at a table, feel free to move over.

And I have a timer, so I'll let you know, count down. In addition to that, when I put the post it papers, I have post it notes that I will hand out. If you could put what are your biggest challenges and then put it up on the pieces of papers, that would be great. Okay? Thank you. All right. Okay.

Because like I said, I'm Santa Claus and I want to give you presents. So the other present is I have a consistent customers workbook so you could scan this QR code or it's here to all you got to do is just put your name and email address. So I'm gonna shake coaching. All right. What are your challenges?

Getting clients money? More marketing access time connecting with experienced team of specialists. Time, educating clients, turnover, society's expectations, lack of knowledge, price points, getting you by clients. Who wrote society's expectations? Please elaborate. That's really fascinating. I love that you said that.

That's what you said earlier. You're not an influencer. I am not an influencer. Like you said, I just want to go to Starbucks, get my cup of coffee, not get like a paparazzi all over. I just want to for everybody to see how it is. It is, to get business on your And what do you do?

What's your business or business idea? I am a startup business. So this is a protein that is added to your hair. And with price of time uses, so the protein is stored at the end there. And it helps it heal, grow out, leave it straight for three to six months.

Depending if you keep up with aftercare it is released. professional and you just keep up retouching that consistency. Yeah, that's what I see expectations. I see that my competition out there overcharging is elaborates a little bit too much when it's not like they're doing it. You have to go to Paris to get it really well done with the same thing.

You could get a key, you could get another. So I'm curious, does anyone feel the same way of Guadalupe like I was, talking to this group. I was like, I don't, I awkwardly tried the TikTok dance and then fortunately I didn't delete it, but it was so awkward for me because I was like, Oh, everyone's doing, I was like, why am I doing it this way?

But I wouldn't feel the same way. I'm like, I don't, I have to post five times a day or you have to follow or follow a trend. The voice. Okay. Do you want to know how I raised like a million dollars for each campaign that I did? It's actually not rocket science, but anyone please show your excitement

Okay, I'm gonna tell you it's really simply like really that's it but I will also say there's a mindset block on it So when I worked with elected officials and when I worked in the non profit sector and worked with board members, I'm gonna date myself, each one of them I worked through their Rolodex.

Does anyone know what a Rolodex is? What is a Rolodex?

Before iPhones, it's like an address book. And if you don't own an address book, it's like looking through the names. But so in the fundraising world, we called it Rolodexing. We'd go through contacts A through Z, and we looked for two types of people. We looked for one, who's a possible ideal client or two, who's the connector.

And this is what every single client, whether they're an elected official, a nonprofit board member, or client tells me. I don't have a great network. Like I'm going to challenge you. Listen to whatever music you want. Maybe it's Taylor Swift. Maybe it's Beyoncé for 90 minutes. Go through your contacts A through Z.

And I got paid a ton of money sitting down with elected officials. Okay. Who's John? Oh, he was my law school friend. I was like, Oh, so does he know your dream is about running for ABC? Yeah. I'm like, Oh, we're going to call him. What? Why? Because your dream's happening. You're like running now. So let's go call him.

So go A through Z for your contacts, two people. Now you're not going to pitch. So in the nonprofit sector, wait, I think some of you are in the nonprofit sector. Raise your hand. Anyone? Yes. Okay. We spoke before we do campaigns. In terms of messaging and marketing, we have to connect with our stakeholders, our community members, and donors, and we ask them questions.

We want to raise X amount, call it the impact campaign. So we met with our donors, what should we raise money on? Oh, the School of the Arts, Health Sciences. They literally told us what to raise money in, so then we update the messaging and all of our brochures and websites. And because we were having the conversation before, and because we didn't have something perfect, and we were involving them, they threw money at us.

They were like, Oh, you're doing a fundraising, event for scholarships because my daughter actually passed away from cancer and she was an artist. I'm gonna give you 25,000. Because we started the conversation beforehand. When I became a career coach, I used my fundraising skills with A through Z, talked to people, and I asked these questions, and it's all in this QR code, but, what are your biggest challenges in your career and business?

What support have you tried that didn't work? Why did you always come to me for advice? Secret, I became a career coach because I wasn't getting paid for it, people always came to me for advice, wait, what if I just, Make this as advice. And then I would talk to my friends and my old interns.

Why did you always come to me for advice? Because you knew what to do. oh, I'm thinking of creating a business. Oh, can you help me? So I always, and the holidays are a perfect example. Who knows who to go to for tamales? But that's what I mean. that name comes to mind and you could use that simple concept when it comes to your business.

The reason why I feel like a lot of people don't do it's because we see Instagram and Facebook and TikTok and all this stuff. But if you want stats, 1 percent of your population sees that. I actually like doing email marketing. If people are going to find me on social media, I try to get them. Little tip and hit, that's what I did with this QR code.

I want to build a relationship with you after the event, within the property that I own, which is email marketing. And actually a stat is 20% Of people open your emails. So if I'm going to choose 20 percent of emails as opposed to 1 to 2 percent on Instagram, I'm going to choose a 20 percent and it's different models.

So let's say you have a low tier service or product. It is a numbers game, but I've just decided, you know what? I want to be like an Ivy League in liberal arts school. Where I work

with a limited number of clients. Look, I'm tired. I don't want to work all the time. That's why I don't want to be big name and I don't want to be famous.

So I want to work with X number of clients that I want to work with. But I want to hear from you, what are you taking away from my coaching so far? Anyone want to share? What are they taking away for their business? Because I care about action. actually, this is good. If all of your friends are coming to you for your problems, whether it's hair or yoga and meditation, what are constant patterns and themes you are hearing from them?

What are words they're using? Cause I think so often we think, Oh, shut. GBT will tell me, but if you literally people are telling you, you could use those words to market yourself. So majority of my business, when I start about 90 percent is referrals and also know your numbers. 50 percent of my sales comes from Google SEO and 40 percent from referrals and reviews.

The SEO is because it's important to look at, Just some trends that are happening. People started telling me who are not referrals. I was looking for a woman of color coach. I'm like, huh, interesting. These are people not referrals. If people are using that keyword, why don't I title myself that? And then I titled myself that.

By the way, RISE found me because they were looking for diversity and guess what keywords they used. but what I'm trying to say is, Listen to the feedback you're getting, and then how can you market and message that. And then, I'm going to go back to the notes here. Getting you right clients. I remember I was talking to this table about it.

Do you want to elaborate on that? What do you mean by getting you right clients instead of everyone? Or this group? Okay. Can you please share? Oh, we were just sharing that. Not all your clients are going to meet for you. Like you said, either you don't want to take on too many clients, or they're not. The market that you want served in there.

Maybe they're not going to pay you enough or they're just not the clients that you want to work with. How many clients have you gone in so far? Or are you starting right now? No. Okay, so using the A through Z list, I would say, put contacts and contact them. You're not trying to sell your gathering information like, hey, I'm wanting to create a service about this.

I know you've come to me about it. I just want to gather information. Right and make sure there are people that you, if there is someone like them, you would want to work with them. If that makes sense, so what do you sell or what do you want to sell? Are you not sure you're not sure yet? Actually, perfect.

That's how I started. So I want to start my own business. What I did was like, I know I want to do some service. So I actually asked my friends. Hey, I want to start my own business. Not saying I'm trying to sell to you, but what would you buy from me? And so I got the, actually, can you be a health and fitness coach?

Cause you lost 20 pounds. I'm like, no, cause I enjoy working out, but I don't want to teach people. And then people like, how about a career coach? I was like, huh, that's interesting. So I would just ask people, but ask people you feel safe with, because I also know in the beginning of your business, like it's a very vulnerable topic and I also know people will judge you, but I just want to remind you, those people that are judging you, that's them, not you.

Cause you're triggering them and it's your, it's not your fault that you're triggering them. They're just triggered that they're not going after their dreams. What was resonating? Go ahead, Amber. Amber is a client of mine, but what was resonating? When I first started my business, we have a lot of like self doubt, we feel like, Oh me throughout my client or, things like a lot of things, both in your mind, but what I'm getting from this is quality or quantity, because when you first started business, especially when you have a bad relationship or anything.

You want to take every client, to code a thousand here and two thousand there, but that doesn't mean that goes the right way because you end up spending more time and energy servicing clients that are not for you. So I love that you said that you're not here to be famous, you're not here to have a million clients, you're here to have maybe six or seven core clients that are for you consistent business.

And so because I have a high premium to charge, I think about, and this will transition to digital. presence, how is my ideal client going to want to, get the education? So I'm not going to dance on TikTok. I'm Filipino, but for some reason I do not have the dancing gene and I don't have a singing gene.

So that's not my strength. But what I will say, so Sampas goes by Sampas, a Filipino American modern restaurant. They're one of my former clients. They were former dancers. How they grew their business, and they've been featured in, NBC, LA Times, they're growing rapidly. But how they grew their business is their dancing community.

dancers will tell other dancers they do events, that's how they built it. And they love Instagram and TikTok, so that works well for them. For me, I have a premium service. I'm not cheap, I'm expensive. But how is that ideal client going to want to get education or learn more about me? It's through long form content.

So I have a podcast, so people get to know me. And I might sound like I'm bragging, but I know when I talk to people, they fall in love with me. So my podcast, one. And then two, I do emails. And in my emails, I put GIFs, so I make it fun and entertaining. So that's what works for me, but maybe you are a great dancer and maybe Instagram or TikTok works really well for you.

That's great. But what I'm trying to say is, what can you do that is enjoyable? So I'm going to read the, what are your challenges with digital presence, getting prospective clients to engage with content, not enough knowledge, getting lost in social media, consistent content. Ooh, consistency. Not waiting to put my info on social media.

Actually, who wrote the Getting Prospective Clients Engaged with Content? Who wrote that one? Consistent content. There's two of you that wrote that. Anyone want to share what they meant with it? Yeah, what did you mean by that? For me, my business is transitioning from just fashion to wealthiness.

Rebranding and so consistently sharing. what are your updates on? What are you doing with the brand of Cogru's? That's my downfall, so I'm fully bored. I'm just a person. I don't have that much time to do, I know what I want to communicate, but I haven't necessarily been on a schedule, so I still have plenty of stages.

Can I challenge you? Cause this happens to me where I'm like, Let me hire out! I don't want to do this! But actually it's not like that. Because it gets easy to be in the rat race of, I need to talk to more people, I need to make more money. But actually having the consistent time to look at, where are my clients coming from?

How are they getting content information? in, in the QR code, I have a spreadsheet of keeping track of your current clients, ideal clients, and then even seeing, where do they come from? How do they like getting information? Because how do, you said a lot of your clients comes from referrals. The Vasha business was all referral.

right now, it's half and half. For the, Uli Vegetation Services. It is partially referral for the others, or the people that I need in person, and for different places, like business deputies. Coming from relationship building. One is what you talked about earlier. What are the words and patterns you're hearing people use?

Cause that could be your messaging. Second is as you're having conversations with people, you could casually ask, Hey, if I were to educate or provide marketing, would you, where would you get information? Do you do Instagram email? You can ask them, but what feels good to you? It's not just asking, but what feels good to you intuitively on how you want to create content.

I think those would be. I get a lot of feedback, so that I've asked it, so I think just listening to some of the feedback and then being directed about it. I will say, so I had a model that worked really well for me to get clients. I used to do free monthly events. And I have a whole model down. I had a really good turnout rate, about 70%.

Usually it's a 25 to 50 percent show up rate for events. I would have about 70 people sign up, 50 people would show up to my events, and I would convert about 5 clients per event. So that was consistent. I was young, though, I will say that. And that also burnt me out. And I'm sharing this because you probably feel this way, where it's I don't like this model anymore.

It used to bring me joy. Yeah, change is I'm in just this different era, so I'm like, how am I going to change this? And I had to come from a place of curiosity. What did people like at my

events? They liked the coaching, the interaction. How can I do it in a way that feels energetic to me and similar?

And that's what made me decide to do podcasting because it was the same type of energy that I liked, but I see nods. What are, what's coming up for you in terms of what you possibly want to explore in your business? Anyone want to share? I saw you nodding, so sorry I'm going to it's just the way that you spoke to, find what works for you.

I think that's flipping it for me in my mind. I would always like making it about the customer and their needs. You're saying like, find what motivates you and find what makes, what feels good to you. That's, start from there. And also, I don't have a YouTube for my podcasts. I don't want to do the whole video thing.

I'm in my PJs with my hair bun and no camera. Yeah. Because, no, I don't want, I tried tonight, okay, because I wasn't going to see you in person. I put heels on, you are welcome. I'm Filipino, usually it's like socks, but I tried tonight, but do what feels good to you. And also another thing, what I read in the post it notes, there's two words, consistency.

So it's really hard, but be unattached that it has to work. And come from a place of curiosity. So if you're going to be consistent, if it is podcasting, or if it is an email, then I suggest what's your consistency? Is that doing an email once a week? Okay, do an email once a week. And then after I always like doing 90 days test trial it for 90 days and see what works and track it I have a whole spreadsheet on it. I have a marketing tracker where it's like I look at the open rates for my emails, but that's vanity metrics similar to followers. The more important metric when it comes to email marketing is the click rate. How many people are opening the click rate? So like I talk about followers, I have a seven figure business and I have I think 4, 000 followers on Instagram.

I think I get like maybe five likes and five comments. But most of my content that's popular on Instagram is my Muay Thai, because I do Thai cake boxing. But that has nothing to do with business. And so here's how I've translated Instagram. It's my reality television show. I take a picture of my Starbucks coffee.

That's it. But I don't think I'm a big deal. And how, and this is very millennial of me, how I treat my emails, because, actually, who had Zynga or LiveJournal back in the day? Anyone? Do you, Zynga, LiveJournal? Thank you Sabrina. It was like blogging back in the day, let me tell you about my high school crush, or life is over cause teenage hormones, I loved blogging.

This is the same era as Myspace. So because of that, I write my emails in that way. I'm like, I'm failing in life because I didn't watch Wicked. I, make it personal. And also with emails with open rates. Sorry. You could be, this is why I know I love emails because I'm creative with it. So this subject line had the highest subject line where it said, I had dinner with my ex.

Not all my whole, my email list of a thousand people opened that cause they are nosy. And in that email, I said, I had dinner with my ex boss and I wanted to know the drama, but I just, I have a really great relationship with my ex boss. Because she helped mentor me with my own business and just seeing her leadership at Pasadena City College.

But, that's why I knew I wanted to do email marketing, because it excites me. But even like Instagram, when I posted, like trying to post about this, I just didn't want to. I want to do about five minutes where you're in the same group. And I want you to think of one action. Because I'm not a motivational speaker.

I care about action. What is one action you could do? And I'm gonna give you some options. It could be, I'm gonna look through my Rolodex and listen to Beyonce for 90 minutes, A through Z, in two contexts. I'm gonna look at people that I could talk to ask for feedback. And there's questions in this QR code, the workbook I made.

Maybe it's two, you know what? There's three people in my mind. I wanna reach out to them. I'm just curious, you know what? You really like that I do yoga. you know what? How would you want to get information from you? I'm thinking Instagram, TikTok, what is it? Or what's the topics you want to learn from me?

Or if you're starting a business, I just want to have my own thing, what would you pay me for? But remember you have that choice, so that's a second. And then third is, what is your consistent plan? Maybe you do want to do emails once a week for three months. It doesn't have to be once a week, I have plans to do it once a month.

Or maybe it is trying podcasting for 3 months. What? What is it? And it's coming from a place of curiosity. So 5 minutes. If you could talk to the same group of what is your one action item? So we're going to do 5 minutes because I care about actions if I could have 1 or 2 people in each table share.

What is your action item? You're aligned action item because it needs to feel aligned to you. And then what's your takeaway? So I'm going to start at this table only because. Amber's here and you're my client. What's your one action item?

Okay, what time and what day? Okay, Friday at 9. And what music are you going to listen to so it's enjoyable? R& B, okay. Amber's been a client of mine for six months but I, when I work with my clients I'm like, do you want tiger mama mode or do you want like nurturing mom mode? And I just tiger mama'd her.

Okay, anyone else that wants to share at this table their Allied Action Item Takeaway? Same thing, I have people that I'm thinking of that I'm just going to ask them, if you had to pay for a service, what would you name? What are the three names that come to mind? You say them out loud?

You can say their first names. Ralph, Daniel, and Daphne. Ralph, Daniel, and Daphne. Little tip when you message people to reach out to them, or follow up or anything, Do it like 45, before it hits 9. You want to do it right before the day starts. And this is a fundraising tip, because when you get them at the end of the day, they're not going to pay attention.

They're putting out fires. And Tuesday, Wednesday is a good time, because Monday, as we had Sunday's scares, and we're recovering from it. Also, if you have I don't know about like teams, but if you have Gmail, you can schedule the emails. And do it according to their time zone. So if it's New York, you send that out at 5.

A little tip to make it so obvious you scheduled it, so I do 547. And then what my boyfriend does, which is fun, he does area codes. So he does like 818, 805. He's what area code am I feeling at this time? I don't know, just a tip. Okay, one of you. What's your aligned action item? L Y, raise Yeah. And you keep getting open ended and ask Hey, I'm thinking of doing this, what are your thoughts?

Or even asking, If you want me to delve in deeper, what would it be? So you could ask. I will say I do target market research. I check in with my clients and ask for feedback once every six months. And when I do that, I figure out how to improve my services so I could increase my pricing for new clients.

And then I get renewals. Cause I'm about making money. Alright. One or two of you that want to share a live action item or take away? Okay, I'll share mine. I would like to be, reach out, do the goal adjusting, reach out to some kind of contacts that I made in the past, and, see if I could get some funding to do my free event, because I want to do the, self awareness workshop.

And I want to offer some of the activities I had in mind was like pain therapy, sound building meditation, journaling. I've talked to people in the past about this idea and they sounded very enthusiastic about it and just told me it's such a good idea. So I would like to reach out to some of those people and see if I forget the funding.

The first three event and just invite people to I could also I could just want to challenge you. Maybe it's not even funding. Maybe it's using the venue space for free. Like maybe they have a friend or a cousin that has a space. Don't think it always has to be like, How can I get funding? Do you know a space?

Maybe you have a cousin that has a candle. Shop? I don't know, I'm making stuff up. Can you introduce me? So I have a former client who does Reiki and she does workshops in a bus. And because she does Reiki, she has relationships with different people. And be okay making new relationships. if you buy candles from a certain place, hey, who's your owner?

I want to get to know them. You just never know. Anyone else want to share here? What your action item is? I plan to change my mindset having a day. An hour, 30 minutes to a year,

that changed my state. I would also say the 90 minutes to learn doesn't have to be about business. Like I, I've been on and off doing Muay Thai for 21 years.

I was just saying like the business wise, it's both mentally, physically, it all connects. Cause she was a earthbender. It's us. All together, connect. So just she took that mindset and created that connection with her, Yeah. To evolve into. That reminds me of the lesson I learned beginning of the year.

So I do Muay Thai, which is Thai kickboxing. It's the art of eight lens and my coach, he was just like, I know not all of you are going to be professional fighters, but you're wearing my shirt, you're 24 hour fitness, you're working at the boxing bag and your, style is shit, that's my name on the line.

So I'm going to teach you the right technique because my name's on the line. And I needed to hear that because I need to end two partnerships. After he said that and gave me that lesson and it was just boxing, I ended two partnerships because it was so draining. So that's another thing, whether it's customers, collaborations, people you connect with, how do you feel energetically?

Cause it's also not about the money. Sometimes you have to end a contract. So that is my coaching. If you need more support, feel free to reach out, but I gave you this present. It has all the questions on how to roll decks and how to look at patterns with ideal clients who you get more of it. So thank you.

So an update after the event. I actually got a request to work with an organization. Actually, I got a couple of requests, but 1 organization particular is oh, my gosh, this could be a possible 6 for your project. That means I'm up to possibly 200K in contracts already for the new year and I don't have a big following.

I'm not posting all the time. I'm focused on creating my business my own way, which is building relationships, improving my client service for the best results and working with at maximum 24 clients at one time. Remember, you get to define your own definition of success and happiness when it comes to your business and more importantly, your life.

And for me, that's. Me not doing the most, that's why I only do two podcast episodes a month. I was like on vacation last month or I only did one. So if you enjoyed this episode, here's four things you could do if you feel called to do them. One. If you could leave a five star rating review, that would mean a lot to me.

My team and I created this podcast for accessible education for women of color and allies. Each episode takes about four hours to create, it takes me one hour to prep, and another 30 minutes to one hour to record. Then my team spends another two hours to edit and mark it. Two, because I care about accessible education.

Share this with a friend who's struggling on getting consistent income three. Do not forget to hit that follow button and subscribe when you hit that button. It allows the podcast platform you're listening to know how important this podcast is to women of color and allies like you. And fourth, if you need support in your career or business, and you're interested in working with me.

Then schedule an introductory business and career review call with me. I only bring in two to four new clients each month to ensure each client receives the results they deserve. And you can schedule that call at elainelu.com forward slash call. That's E L A I N E L O U dot com forward slash.