

# Can You Scale Your Business Without Hiring Help\_

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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You're listening to business dad Asri, the audio advice column for your online business. I'm Kirsty Fenton.

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And I'm Amy Posner. We're talking bite sized episodes that solve real world problems with a no holds barred tell it like it is kind of approach.

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Here it is the question we're tackling this week. Are there more creative ways to scale than just bringing someone on? I hate the idea of managing someone and feel like the amount I would need to pay someone decent, might put me out of business. But I would like to grow my business, earn more dollars and keep growing? How do you scale without hiring or subcontracting? I mean, raise your rates is one. But is there something else? The answer might be no, in which case, please ignore this question. I love this question. That's such a gentle and we're not going to ignore this question. Amy, can I invite you to jump on in?

01:03

Yeah, you can. And I said the same thing. When this this person submitted the question was like, oh, no, I love this question. Are you kidding? Christy's gonna love it, too? We're happy to answer this one. So it's interesting, it's very interesting to think about, like, Are there creative, more creative ways to scale than just bringing someone on? So? Yes, I think I think there are instead of us going without hiring or sub contracting. What, and I'm gonna just use an example. That occurred in my business a while back, we had a team member who was good at, they're actually good at what they what they did, but we had some issues with communication. And so what ended up happening was, there was a, there was a lot of uncertainty. So while things were getting done, do you know that feeling like if you don't know the thing is getting done, and you're still worrying about the thing, and then those things pile up, and you always have this feeling of like, you know, you're like you're walking on jello, like,

you just sort of don't know, really uncomfortable feeling. And so, you know, we what we actually found was that it worked better for us to have more control over the whole situation. And for that, for us, that meant not subcontractors, and not hiring anyone, but actually working with other business owners. So I guess you could think of that as a sort of sub contracting, I don't really think of sub contracting. And Christy tell me if this is your definition, because I may be off base here. I think of sub contracting as I take in a project and I don't want to do all of it. So Kirsty, I ask you, if you will do some of it. And now you're my subcontractor, I think of bringing in another business owner as somebody does a specific task that you need done in your business that you're not going to want to do on an ongoing basis. And so they handle everything that happens in your active campaign or on your website, or that sort of thing. Does that sound right to you?

02:59

Yeah, that's exactly the way I think about it. And I mean, we could both be wrong, but at least we're both in the same boat.

03:06

So somebody figured it out. And if we're wrong, don't listen. So I think there's there's a couple of things, right, there's, there's a couple of levers that you can lean on, if you want to scale. I mean, raising your rates is an obvious one. We've talked about that quite a bit on here. And like, Should you win? Do you all of the things? I think the answer to is is so is looking at what what you're going to outsource and how you're going to outsource it. And then also, I think, from time to time, and I that can be different for everyone, but maybe every six or 12 months to look at your offers and see, you know, is there something that you can tighten up? I mean, it might be your pricing might be the offer itself. And I think the other thing to look at the two other levers is what comes easily to you. And what's super repeatable. So in other words, if something comes easily, we tend to dismiss it like yeah, that's not you know, it's not that valuable. But sometimes leaning into that is a way that you know, because usually what what comes easy to us is something we can do quickly. So that's that's, you know, that's a possibility is looking at what, what those things are, so what comes easiest to you. And then also, you know, what's most profitable for you, and what's most profitable in your marketplace? Because, like it may be using a copy example because that's, that's what I know, like, it may be that I love writing landing pages, but it's way more lucrative for me to write emails. So maybe for that reason, I would learn to love email a little bit more. So I think, I think there's those are like some of the levers that you can push on. Personally, let me flip it your way to see what you think. Yes,

04:45

I love everything you said there and totally agree with it all. And for what it's worth to I've never actually had an employee in my business or a subcontractor. I have had people who either have on retainer, so I had a VA Before I went on mat leave who was on, I think she only did like, I think it was five hours a month, it was very minimal. But she wasn't like, you know, on my payroll, she was a contractor, who I essentially hired to do projects. So she tackled my Active Campaign stuff, etc, etc. And then I've hired experts. So I guess at what you were saying, other business owners to tackle certain projects in my business. So I've hired them on a project basis only. And they have been people like assistants and process lady to help me streamline things to free up my time, so that I could spend more of it serving my clients and therefore making more money that way. Other people

I've hired have been designers, you know, for creating products, etc. So those kinds of hires, I've had, basically to help me bring ideas to life and to free up my space, time and energy. So I could devote more of that to the money making tasks that only I can do in my business. So that might be helpful to know. And I've been able to scale my income pretty significantly every year, I've been in business with the exception of last year, because I spent so much time off on Matt leave. So just, you know, to let you know that that's definitely an option that can definitely help. And to also say that the thing that I'm reading between the words in this question, and this may be way off base, is that this person wants to earn more money, but they're at capacity with their time. So again, I think if you want to think creatively about how to solve that problem, so rather than thinking, Okay, well, I don't have any more time to serve more people. But if I hired a subcontractor, you know, that would give my business more capacity to serve more clients or do more projects. I think the other way is to think about, well, what can I invest in, that would actually free up some of the time I might spend on administrative tasks, or some of the time I might spend on, you know, processes that could be automated, for example? So if there are things like that in your business, where you're like, Yeah, okay, I know that I spend, like, you know, even if it's just four hours a week on admin, you know, is that a good case for looking for a VA that you could bring on even on a, you know, project basis or a contract basis to start with? Or if you're like, Yeah, okay, I know that there are tasks that I do, you know, week in week out, that could very easily be automated, you know, that could be a very good indication that hiring someone who is really skilled at setting up automations, and systems for a business like yours, could be a good investment for you, because that then frees up more of your time. So perhaps you could fit in another project every month, for example, I'm also guessing that just by this person's question, you know, they're really happy doing their current projects, you know, and the sounds like probably one to one work. So, of course, you can also scale income by creating and selling one to many offers. So things like group programs, online courses, digital products, etc. But what I will say is that all those offers, do take time and energy to get off the ground. And they also rely on new having a bigger audience, to fill them. Because why you can be very lucrative in business, if you serve clients, one to one, you know, you'd even only have say, you know, five or six clients that you serve a year, perhaps if you're selling \$20,000, projects, whatever it might be, once you sell a one to many offer, obviously, you need more people to buy that, for it to be lucrative to the point where it increases increases your business's bottom line. So there are those, those are definitely ways to scale. But I think it's important to flag that, you know, there is a lot of groundwork that needs to go into getting those things up and running successfully. And of course, if you have no interest in, you know, teaching people or facilitating conversations in a group space, then you know, knock those off the list definitely don't go down those routes when it comes to, to finding ways to scale. So those are my thoughts as he already picked up as they may be.

09:11

I thought they were I thought they were great thoughts. And really interesting to look at the editor to look at the way that you've done it and the way that you've brought people in because I forget about that, too. Like what it made me think about is like look at all the little corners, like all the little nook milks, you know where you're spending time, and could could you buy systematizing it or creating a process, you know, just save yourself that time? Right? Because it because I bet I just bet there's a lot of leaks. Because we all have them. That's one thing. But you know, I was thinking too about this, like, I hate the idea of managing someone and I feel the amount I would need to pay someone decent might put me out of business. So I wonder, is there a way to think of this more where you're partnering with someone rather than subcontracting with them and here's what I'm thinking. So if you Do a certain kind of project over and over, chances are good that there are things you love about it, and there are things you would just assume not do. And chances are good that there's somebody else that would like to do those things. So, two things have to happen, because there's no point in taking

on a partner, and you just do twice as many projects to make half the amount of money because you know, because then you're making what you were already making. But there is a point to it, if you have that experience of you know, of kind of like the third mind. So if there's a right person, and you're working together, where it makes the whole process lighter and easier, and I'm not suggesting like, you know, these, you know, these unicorns or genies are easy to find, but they do exist. If you have someone that you really enjoy working with, and you can sort of trade off some of the things that you prefer or are better at, there is a good chance that you could serve more people enjoying your work more, and possibly even being able to charge more for it, because you might be able to, to meet timelines that people need more easily, or some kind of other specialty that you know that that comes from combining your brains. It's a really interesting thing. I don't know, like if you've read about the third line concept, but you know, the idea that like two minds together have like, you know, each entity exists. But there's like a third mind, that happens when those two people are together. It's like the thing that they create. And some people are really good at that they find someone who they, they can work really well with I actually someone in my writing business like that. She loves doing all the things I hated doing, and it was a perfect fit. Yeah, it costs me. But I was much happier in my work. And I was able to do it more quickly. And I was able to bring in, you know, bring in more work for that reason. So anyway, I feel like that was a little bit long winded. But the other thing I want to just just reiterate it, because I said in the beginning, is to hire people who you're hiring to do pieces of, but that's what they do. That's their specialty. Right? So it's right. It's a very specific thing. Like I know, there's some copywriters who will hire people to do research, or they'll hire people to do research and write a brief. And it's, you know, and the reason that copywriters will do that is because for many of us, the writing part is easy. It's like gathering all the correct things to write about is, you know, is what's time consuming, you know, actually writing it once we know those things, that's the fun part, or that, you know, if you will the easy part so. And is it? I mean, is it easy to find that? Not necessarily? Is it worth it? I think it really is, if it appeals to you, I mean, if that whole thing makes you want to groan, and you know, put your head down on the desk, like it might Kirsti you may not want to do that. But no, if you think like, oh, you know that that could be appealing. You know, it might, it might, it might actually be a thing for you, I lied, I have to add one more thing, you may find in doing that, that you can actually deliver more value and in a different way, which may cause you to charge more for that service to which can be like a sort of a side effect of, of taking someone on and worrying that you're going to lose money, you might you might actually find that with a good partnership, you can you can make more and enjoy it more.

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Yes. And I love that you floated the idea of partnerships, because I feel like as this person says, If you hate the idea of managing someone, then I feel like you know, you never want to bring on someone who isn't an expert in the piece that they're doing. So that informs like yeah, get a partner rather than a subcontractor or hire other business owners or other experts for projects in your business, rather than hiring a staff member. So I feel like that's probably a good, you know, piece of overarching strategy for this person. And I hopefully, there are some ideas in here that, you know, they hadn't thought of before, and might give them a little spark of inspiration of some ideas to try. And of course, you know, it may be that you try something that you've heard us talk about here, and it's not a fit, that's okay, you know, try before you locks to lock yourself into anything for too long a period of time. You know, and you can only really ever find out what the right fit is for you by testing. So my advice would be to, you know, pinpoint something that feels like a good idea for you to try and give it a burl and reflect on it and see how it fits, and then go from there.

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Yeah, I think that's really the only way to do it. And, you know, inevitably when you do that you discover like, Oh, I didn't realize this would be a benefit needed. And likewise, like, Oh, I didn't know this would be such a pain in the ass. I mean, you just won't know. But you know, you can by doing that you can refine and refine like I did. I didn't, you know, when I first started with someone, you know, started with people in my coffee business, you know, who weren't doing admin, but were actually doing the coffee with me. I had no clue what I was doing or who would be good or how and I just sort of you moved around and figured it out. And it wasn't that hard to process. I have to say there was rarely a time where I was, you know, disappointed in you know, doing something was someone in order to, to figure it out. So I think sometimes it feels like it's going to be more treacherous than it is. And I think the only risk there is like saying, Oh, I don't really know this person, but it's gonna be great. And I take on 10 board projects, and you really don't know the person. You've got 10 projects, and like your names on the contract. So just, you know, this low test, test, test.

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Definitely, yes, one project at a time with a new person, just to test to test and see how you both feel. Yeah. All right. Well, hopefully, we've given you some ideas that you're excited to maybe test or try and, you know, tweak and make your own. If you're listening, have any other questions about this topic, or you have any other questions, in general about running and growing and scaling your own online business, head over to [businessbadass.co/podcast](https://businessbadass.co/podcast) And you can submit your question or conundrum right there.

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Thank you for listening. And with any luck, you'll listen to us again next week, and we'll see you then. Bye for now.