

Combining Processes as a Copywriter - Designer Duo

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You're listening to Business Badassery, the audio advice column for your online business. I'm Kirsty Fanton.



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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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Okay, we've got a good question here this week, I'm launching a joint offer with another fellow business owner, and a copywriter. She's a designer, and we'd love to know how to go about this. How do we combine our processes, invoicing, workflow, etc, in order to ensure we're delivering the best to our clients while having fun ourselves? Okay, good question. Interesting. Interesting one for us. You want to jump in first? Got it got any thoughts?



00:51

Yeah, sure. So I love this question. And I wanted to say just as a starting point, that it's definitely a collaboration in terms of copywriter plus designer that I have seen or have heard of other copywriter and designer Joe's doing. So just to say that I think there is such a nice synergy there between the two services, right, because if someone you know, wants new website copy, chances are they're also want a new website design at the same time. So being able to offer that as a package deal. Working together, I think that's just such a really nice offer, and a really good incentive for someone to choose you to over choosing to independent providers or independent businesses. So I think you already know that because he already made the decision to do the joint joint offer. And you're asking about the nitty gritty. I'm not quite sure where to start in terms of which bit to talk about. First, do you have any, any like particular thing that's flashing out at you, Amy? Or should we just jump in wherever?



01:53

Well, we can jump in wherever. But I'm kind of I'm thinking about like, see, like these questions like how do we combine our processes, invoicing, workflow, etc, but they're talking about a joint offer? Not like, it sounds like it's for one thing, not like we're going into business together? Is that what is that you're ready to?



02:07

That's my greatest? Oh, yes. Okay,



02:09

so jumping anywhere, if you had some somewhere you were going good. Okay, cool.



02:14

So I think I think a really good place to start would be to have a really open honest, in depth conversation with each other about what your existing processes look like, what your rates are, you know, what you each need from the other in order to do your best work, whether there is one of you who is really good at and who really enjoys the client management side of things. So just to sort of find out where there might be synergies already in your individual processes, and where there might also be like little zones of genius within that client management bucket with which you could leverage to make the process really enjoyable for both of you, as you mentioned, it's been really important, and also really enjoyable, or really smooth or really seamless for your client. So I would definitely start there by just having that conversation. Because I think without that, it'd be very hard to map where there might be crossover, and where there might be some tension where you might have to actually rethink how that would work for the two of you.



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Yeah, because you have props. I mean, because you both have businesses and like, the question is, how do we combine our processes, that means you have them? So I think that's a really good place to start is looking at what you know, what things do? What do you love? And what do you hate, like, you know, if you're lucky, there'll be some crossover between the love and hate, and then you can can happily step away from the thing you don't enjoy. And one of the things too, I was thinking, Christine, as you were saying that, from a lesson that we learned is, be careful to share. Be careful, don't you know, we've been in a situation, the two of us where we've not each given 50%, but we've each given more. That's not quite what you're asking. But I think it's a worthwhile point. As we're talking about, like, you know, how do you combine things, and I think the other thing that popped to mind for me is however you do this, whatever you decide about your processes, invoicing, and workflow, make sure that it's all

behind the scenes, like doo doo on the front facing whatever is going to be easiest for your client, and then adapt behind the scenes for you. However, you you best handle that between you. Does that make sense? Personally,

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yes, that's such a good point. And I was gonna write that too. So I'm so glad you did because I feel like potentially the first you know, one to three times you actually run this off a live there could be some it'll hitches and some things that might be sort of like back end sniffers. But like Amy said, definitely try and focus on keeping the front of the client facing and really smooth and seamless. So, you know, for example, and I'm just throwing a number out here, but assuming you're going to split the project, right 5050 I would still recommend finding a way for the client to would pay the project fee to one place rather than sending them different invoices for different parts, even though that might make it easier at your end to receive the money. I think because you're offering it as a packaged up service, it's important that all those points of contact for the client are really streamlined. Because that's sort of what you're meaning me or are you thinking something else?

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No, I that 100%? What I mean? And I think I'm glad you said all points of contact, because I think and that's, that's kind of what led me to the don't share, because it's kind of because you each have your own business, and you're used to doing things you have your own way. And I would suggest like for the first few, like how long have you do it your way? Like you don't have to combine your processes quite yet. Like do an analysis. And then I don't know, I think there's some some merit to like easing into it and figuring it out as you go, rather than figuring it, figuring it out as you go using something that's already proven. That's what I want to say, rather than testing out your new process on your first project or your second project on a client.

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Yes. And I think too, I suspect that a good way to also think about this might be working out sort of how your work and your processes overlap in terms of creating the complete deliverable. So there's not much detail here about what kind of copy and what kind of design is happening. But if we use the example of a website, say someone is wanting a completely new website with new copy a new design, you know, which piece of that puzzle should come first, I would suspect it would be the copy. Although I know I'm saying that with some bias, because I am a copy writer. But you know, I think sometimes the copy can really inform the design. So I wonder if that was the case, if there would be a way for I guess, the process of you working together to be sort of a really smooth handover in the middle there, between having the copy created and signed off on and then moving into the design phase of the project. That may or may not be the case. But I think it's something worth thinking about, rather than, you know, you both trying to create an order, do your work at the exact same time, if that's going to muddle the process or overwhelm the client. So just something else to think about that too. Yeah,

 07:16


I think that's I think that's a really good point. And I imagine as you do this more and more together, you'll have more synergy. And you may be able to work more side to side because like, oh, like the one we did here. And you know, you sort of know, know the direction that you're going?

 07:29

Yes, I think so too. And I think it's also worth saying, and I won't name names. But there's someone that I mean, I both know, who did a copywriter who did pair with the designer to offer a joint service like this. But who has since moved to working with designers and I think probably just one or two in particular, but more as a referral pathways. So rather than having an offer that is a package that does both copywriting undecided for the client, which for whatever reason didn't quite take off having really solid referral pathways and ways of working together that way to help deliver a client the same outcome. But what that does mean, I guess is that each person is still working independently within their zone of genius. So I'm not saying that this joint offer won't work, I think it's a great idea. And I would love to see it flourish. If it doesn't, or if you do the first couple and you know, you get the feedback from both of you, or even from clients that things felt a bit funny. Or perhaps you're both finding that the service isn't as profitable as if you were to each land, the work you're doing on this joint service independently. You know, that could be a sign that it might be worth experimenting with how this looks like as a referral option. Does that make sense?

 08:45

Yeah, it does make sense, but I'm thinking about, and I will name names. I'm thinking it's funny, because I was I was just talking about her today. But I was thinking specifically about Dana Owens, that extra little copy of the kitchen insurance case studies. And she sells them designed and she works hand in hand with a designer. But they have a really interesting partnership. And I don't think how do I want to say this? I don't know what their arrangement is. But I suspect it's not a 5050 arrangement, because I think it's I think Dana is doing much more work. But she's got someone who's committed to whatever it whatever it is she sells, and she's working on this person, um, designs it and so she's selling a finished product. But I don't I think that the person the designer, like works with the client, under Dana's auspices, I'm not sure because I wasn't I was a client, but I knew data too. So I don't know if she did with me then then we typical clients. So can you can't give you the answer there. But anyway,

 09:43

but that's really good to think about too, though, because I think in that kind of arrangement. In one sense, the designer might be a subcontractor of Dana in a way that the designer doesn't have any client facing time or contact, but they obviously add to the value of the deliverable that she's offering. So that could be another way to think about it to it from what this person said in their question. It doesn't sound like that's sort of the arrangement they're looking at. But I guess I mean, I just like floating other things that we've seen or heard of in terms of how a partnership like this could work, if you find that it is hard to be adequately rewarded for the work you're doing and to, you know, evenly split in a way that makes sense, and creates a

good experience for the client, if you're trying to be like, really 5050 Both people having a presence. So yeah, sorry, I might have taken things I'll check then any but I just wanted to say that point while it was fresh in my mind,

 10:40

no, it's a good it's a good point. And I think, you know, to just make sure we've addressed everything here. So I'm thinking about invoicing and workflow, we're assuming here, because I didn't ask about like an international challenge like we have. Because if you're both in the same country, it's very easy to transfer money between you or you know, or, or to share an account. If it comes to that, I wouldn't recommend that in the beginning. I can't get your feet under you first and tested out experiments and see what you need. Because very often you over get what you need. Because you don't know you might need less than you think I can't imagine a scenario where you wouldn't one of you being like where you invoice them twice, like Christy was saying you don't want to make them pay to people. So I can't imagine a situation where they're not paying one of you. So what you're you need to figure out is how do you how do you work that part out? If it's important? How do you have transparency in that, because it's going to be one person's bank account, or maybe you know, you've known each other forever, and your best friends or your twins, and you're not worried

 11:39

that maybe you're twins. I would also say too, I totally agree with Amy, I think at least in the beginning, you know, even if you are in the same country, and obviously, you know, Transferring money between is very easy, I wouldn't launch into setting up a joint bank account straightaway, I think, you know, give yourselves the time and space to test whether this is an offer that has legs and that you want to continue offering, you know, for the long term. Also think too about and I'm obviously not an accountant, so speak to your own accountants, but think about things like how you're actually going to report this income, because of course, if one of you is receiving the entire project fee to your bank account, you know, even though they're receiving that entire fee, that's not their own taxable income. So again, speak to your accountant, but how it works for Amy and I, as an example, and this is on the advice of my accountant is that Amy invoices me as if I'm a subcontractor for any costs we have related to the podcast, etc. And, you know, in the eventuality that one day, we might have some profit from something that we do together. I will invoice me for that. So that there is, you know, a really clear record of where the income is getting divided, and whose bank account or whose business is actually making that income or is covering those expenses. So just something else to think about too, so that when it comes to tax time, you don't have a whole lot of mess to untangle.

 13:02

Good point. Are you telling me I'd never save any money?

 13:06

Where am I billions Amy?

WHERE AM I MISSING, AMY?



13:11

on that happy note, I think I think we've covered everything invoicing workflow. Oh, yeah. workflow, we're gonna have to leave you to that. Well, you certainly don't want talk to me about workflow maybe? Firstly,



13:21

yes, I think we have spoken everything. But I would love to just offer a little summary. So I think first port of call, like, have a really open, honest, deep conversation about how you both like to work, what pieces of information or what assets, you both need to do your job. So you can build some sort of map for what the process will look like. I think also talk about the pieces of a project. So not just specifically like the copywriting part or the designer part. But you know, the client management part, for example. Or even like, if you have good systems set up for invoicing and booking calls, like that's also something you could bring to the partnership. So work out what else within the realm of this kind of project or offer, you could happily take on board or you would happily offload to the other person. And also work out whether it is a process of sort of both being on at the same time, or like I suggested earlier, maybe there's some sort of natural handover point in the project where one person has finished the bulk of their work and the other person begins. So try to just map things out. Be prepared to, you know, meet after every client project that you do together to work out what worked well, what didn't what you'd refine for next time. Because like Amy said, I think you'll probably learn a lot as you actually go about and do the work.



14:43

I am dying to know what the offer is now from going through all these things in my mind as we've been talking. So if you feel like telling us, I'd love to know.



14:54

Likewise, yeah, drop us an email or find us on social media, whatever, whatever you'd like to do. Oh, head to businessbadass.co/podcast And I know that that is usually a question submission form. But if you just identify yourself and you can always let us know through there and we would love to close that loop. Best of luck with this new offer we both hope it goes really, really well. And hopefully something in here has been useful for you.



15:18

Thanks, catch you next time.