

# don't write *that* book!

## Episode 34:

### Mike's Monetization Strategies

**Mike Michalowicz** ([00:01](#)):

Welcome back to the Don't Write That book podcast where you can learn how to write your bestseller and own your authorship. Follow along with us as we give you an insider's view of the book industry. Now, here are your hosts. Myself, Mike Michalowicz and AJ Harper. Hold on. You said this is one of your favorite things. Are you referring to the podcast itself?

**AJ Harper** ([00:20](#)):

Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([00:20](#)):

Yes, yes.

**AJ Harper** ([00:22](#)):

Yeah. It's turning out to be one of my favorite things we do or that I do. Period.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([00:28](#)):

You know what I love about it is that we, these side conversations, so you're just sharing a really cool story, which we won't share on air, but it's interesting. And then you gimme updates on the family. Yes. And we just <inaudible> We have some profound business ideas. Like it all happens in this room. And ironically, we ha we can only see each other if we slant our heads in this particular angle, <laugh> between all of the steel structures in our way. <laugh>

**AJ Harper** ([00:51](#)):

Yeah. When are you gonna get the podcast in your house?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([00:54](#)):

Um, the day my son moves out. <laugh> that this morning. My god, AJ. So thanks for accommodating this late schedule. So we're starting a half hour late because of me. We've contractors in repairing some tile in the house. The guy says I'll show up at 7:30 and I said, as early as you can, because I've got to get to this podcast. They show up at 7:15. It's amazing. The guy pulls in the driveway. I'm like, Hey, thanks for being early. I'm like, I'll see you downstairs. And the guy's like, gives me a thumbs up. And he sits there and sits there. Well, he's not the boss, he's the worker guy. There's two of them. So I'm sitting there, sitting there now it's like 7:30. And I look out there, they're on their phones. I'm like, what the hell is going on? Where's the boss? And uh, I look at my, my, uh, phone and it says, oh, the boss will get there. This is, they told me prior, but probably around 7:50 or something. But the workers will be there

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early. So I said the workers would come down and I could show him what needs to be done. I could split. So I wake my son up, you know, back from college, but still living the college life. <Laugh>

**AJ Harper** ([01:53](#)):

It is, it is awfully early. Yeah,

**Mike Michalowicz** ([01:54](#)):

It is awfully early, but still, he is like, whoa. I'm like, the workers are gonna come down. So I walk up as I'm going out to the car to come here, I just go to the car. I said, Hey, my son is here. He'll meet with the boss when the boss arrives and the guy's like, oh no, no, I can do it. And he walks downstairs and meets my son. There was some miscommunication.

**AJ Harper** ([02:16](#)):

Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([02:17](#)):

This could have been done earlier, but nonetheless it's done.

**AJ Harper** ([02:19](#)):

So when is your son moving out? <laugh>. <laugh>.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([02:23](#)):

I love him so much, but gosh, it's, it really,

**AJ Harper** ([02:25](#)):

Listen, it's the age. We love them. They need , they need to move out.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([02:29](#)):

Yeah. Love him. Yeah. He needs to move out. He still thinks he's in the college days, which I get it. You have that freedom. You could do what you want and now you're back under your parents' directions and, but there's house rules. Yeah. You know, so it's tough.

**AJ Harper** ([02:42](#)):

I'm, I'm, I'm hoping our son's gonna move out soon.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([02:47](#)):

Maybe they moving together. That'd be a disaster, actually.

**AJ Harper** ([02:48](#)):

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I don't think so. Don't think that's be a disaster. I don't think this is not a good idea. No. I'm pretty sure he wants to move in with his girlfriend. Oh, also maybe not a good idea. Oh, God. 19. It's, uh, I don't know, man. 19 shouldn't move. Shouldn't move in with any romantic person.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([03:04](#)):

No, no,

**AJ Harper** ([03:06](#)):

No,

**Mike Michalowicz** ([03:06](#)):

No. I think it's to way too early.

**AJ Harper** ([03:07](#)):

Just a no.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([03:08](#)):

I think it's a way too early. Yeah. But the funny thing is, if you say no, then they say, well, that means Yes.

**AJ Harper** ([03:14](#)):

That's why I say nothing. Yeah. I literally say <laugh>. It's my whole policy with my son is I have no opinion.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([03:22](#)):

So good. Well, that you'll share. I have no opinion that I'll share.

**AJ Harper** ([03:26](#)):

Well, I have plenty. Yeah, yeah, yeah. But if anytime I share it, that's the thing that then he wants to do the opposite. So I don't know. I'm told he's just like me and that's what I get.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([03:39](#)):

Okay. Well, there, yeah. Right. It's paybacks. Let's kick the show off. (Let's do it.) We're gonna talk about monetization strategies beyond the book itself. But first I want to introduce you. You are a business person. That's something we don't talk about often. You are a really acute business person. So you've built and sold a publishing company. Yes. Uh, you've built an educational platform for authors, for writers. And you've guided me on a lot of business decisions. And we've had discussions around strategies and so forth, and introduced some great ideas. You've introduced revenue opportunities to us by saying, oh, you can also do this. Did you think about that? You're a savvy business person.

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**AJ Harper** ([04:20](#)):

Oh, hey,

**Mike Michalowicz** ([04:21](#)):

Rock and roll.

**AJ Harper** ([04:21](#)):

I love that you've, I don't know that you've ever said that to me.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([04:25](#)):

Isn't that funny? It's something I always notice and I never think about it.

**AJ Harper** ([04:29](#)):

Thank you. (You're welcome.) I will take that. (**AJ Harper**) And IF <laugh> and I, I feel the need to then I always feel like you always kick it off. You always kick it off. Yeah. So I kind of have to do the follow.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([04:40](#)):

I know. I kind of stage it.

**AJ Harper** ([04:42](#)):

You don't stage it. You're winging this whole thing and you know, it <laugh>, you just--

**Mike Michalowicz** ([04:45](#)):

No, I just wanted to hear, you to hear. I want you to reciprocate by saying you're a savvy business person. Right.

**AJ Harper** ([04:50](#)):

Well, you certainly are. I, I, I was gonna try and talk about your artistry actually, to do the flip on that. Which is true. I mean, I've, I've said before on this podcast that I, what I, one of the things I love about you is that even, you could rely on me to just do all the writing, but you don't, and you just work on getting better. But I do want to talk. I would never, we would not be sitting here today if you weren't a savvy business person. Because a number of people who tried to get me to do some sort of deal as a ghost writer,

**Mike Michalowicz** ([05:26](#)):

I can't even imagine.

**AJ Harper** ([05:27](#)):

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Could not think of the number. And were always flabbergasted as to why I would say, no. I'll take my money up front. Thank you very much. I'm not gonna do a partnership share with you because just the fact that you think that you're gonna make, get some sort of \$500,000 advance and then make millions of dollars and tells me that you don't actually know what you're talking about. So, yeah. It's, uh, I, I could say yes to you for the partnership because I knew you were gonna do exactly what you did, which is hustle. Find a way. Hustle find a way.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([06:02](#)):

Yeah. And we're finding a new way, which will reveal

**AJ Harper** ([06:04](#)):

We're in a new day.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([06:05](#)):

We're in a new day.

**AJ Harper** ([06:06](#)):

But actually we're not talking about that today.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([06:07](#)):

No, no. That's coming three episodes. This one plus two more. And then I think what's cool, and I want to plant this as a teaser as you were suggesting today we're gonna talk about monetization strategies I use in the next episode, monetization strategies you use. (Yep.) And I think you'll see the compliments and the differences. I want to kick off with the story. So, uh, I know you remember this because I've brought it up many times, but that show "The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch." It was on CNBC. This was back early two thousands. So 2005...

**AJ Harper** ([06:36](#)):

I mean, I remember when you would say, I'm going in and you were on a lot.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([06:40](#)):

Yeah. I was on frequently. I, I appeared probably 15 times as a guest. I was probably one of the most frequent guests on that show. And I did have a strategy to get on the show because I wanted to get exposure. We were in the process of writing *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur*. But that's a different story for a different day. The, the interesting story is one particular episode, this is right before *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur* is released. I'm talking to many other authors that I ran into randomly. And I said, you know, can you make money being an author? Now, these weren't necessarily the marquee names. These are just people I ran into and to the person. "No, are you kidding me? Authors don't make money." And so I was hearing this, but I wasn't willing to accept it yet. Well, this show changed everything.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([07:22](#)):

I walked into the room and they're like, oh, there's another guest gonna be on the show with you, and you guys will have a banter, a discussion of, it's this guy named Tim Ferris. And I was like, oh, I know this name because he had released the four hour work week, only six months prior. And he, this guy was on a mission to move books. And my wife was with me too. She came in the green room. She's like, who's this dude? I said, Hey, Tim, I've heard of your new book. Congratulations. I said, I, I've got to ask you a question. He's a brand new author. Can you make money selling books? And he does like one of those, like overly deliberate over the shoulder to the left. Look for a sneak peek to the right. Is anyone listening in? And he says, nice and loud to my face. He goes, you can make an F-ton of money selling books

**AJ Harper** ([08:02](#)):

<laugh>

**Mike Michalowicz** ([08:03](#)):

Then the conversation continued. But that became an eye-opener, is you can make a living on books alone. And I don't know what you want to define that as, but the royalties we collect, the net royalties and that you and I share in is mid low to mid-six figures. It's, it's, you know, it's not like, oh, a hundred thousand. It's hundreds of thousands of dollars. I think our- (Every year.) Yeah. Minus the advance. That's just, yeah. Every year.

**AJ Harper** ([08:32](#)):

But that's in addition to the advance.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([08:33](#)):

In addition to the advance. Yeah. Yeah. So I think, I mean, let me be specific. I think it's about 300,000 this year. It'll probably be about three 50, maybe 400. Because All In, starting a truck, we have 15,000 units. It's gonna

**AJ Harper** ([08:45](#)):

Be way more than that.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([08:46](#)):

15,000 units sold.

**AJ Harper** ([08:48](#)):

It's already got to be more than that. Based on what the truck I already got this year.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([08:53](#)):

Okay. Yeah. And this year there was no advances.

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**AJ Harper** ([08:57](#)):

No, we didn't have an advance Yeah. Last year either.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([09:01](#)):

Oh yeah. There was a Oh, right. Because of All In. All In was the profit share. So you can make money selling books, but admittedly, most authors don't.

**AJ Harper** ([09:10](#)):

Yes. But I think it's also, there's a lot of factors. That's a whole, I'm pretty sure, I hope we did an episode on this, but there's a lot of factors as to why that's the case. You need a lot of, I mean, it has to be a commitment that that's something you want to do. But it's absolutely doable. And even if it's not the thing that pays all your bills, it could pay a big old part of your bills. (Amen.) Yeah, for sure. I mean, I, I don't make on my own book the royalties that I make with you yet, but I make a lot.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([09:48](#)):

Yes. And you're gonna write another book.

**AJ Harper** ([09:52](#)):

Yeah. Eventually.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([09:53](#)):

You plan to, when once you have a collection of books, it starts getting more and more momentum.

**AJ Harper** ([09:58](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. And I, I just want to say before we get into monetization, that the danger of thinking only about how you're gonna monetize the book outside of royalties and thinking royalties don't matter is why we do this podcast.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([10:13](#)):

Yeah, exactly.

**AJ Harper** ([10:14](#)):

Because you can't get into, if you get into that headset of "I just need to get it out, I'm not gonna make any money anyway." All the shortcuts happen. And, but also the shortcuts on marketing and thinking about selling the book. And so we still have to try to make money from book sales. Yes. No matter how well we do with monetization. So I just wanted to make that global statement here, because you are really hurting yourself if you give up on it.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([10:43](#)):

I a hundred percent agree. If we look back at the history of books, The Pumpkin Plan still brings in consistent royalties. And that book is 10 years old.

**AJ Harper** ([10:56](#)):

It's more than 10 years old.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([10:57](#)):

Twelve years old. Yeah. Okay. So it just points to you do the, keep marketing it. And I did a Pumpkin Plan speech within the last month or two.

**AJ Harper** ([11:07](#)):

Yeah. So royalties and monetization.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([11:08](#)):

And monetization. But the speech also promotes more book sales. Actually, two weeks ago I did an event where they had a hundred copies of The Pumpkin Plan they bought. So it just, you have to keep pushing the book out there, and it builds this foundational platform for you. We talked about on the last episode, or not last, it was episode 16 about licensing. So I, I just wanted to give an overview of what that is.

**AJ Harper** ([11:33](#)):

So you're gonna, we're gonna talk about how you monetize your book right now. (Correct.) And one of them is licensing, but we do have the whole episode on licensing.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([11:39](#)):

We do. So that's give a quick overview. So licensing is,

**AJ Harper** ([11:44](#)):

Wait, and it's episode 16. (It is episode 16) Just in case anybody wants to listen.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([11:48](#)):

Yeah, I said it already because you had it here in the notes. So well placed. So it is episode 16. Really, the, the basic summary is this, when writing a book identify, what we do is we identify the expert in that space, who has a great ability to provide the service behind the book, or that, that concept, but not necessarily has the marketing platform they want. And that becomes a great relationship. So let me give you some, some examples. My first partner in the space was with The Pumpkin Plan, Donna Alliance. And Donna is excellent. I think her extraordinary talent is coaching coaches how to coach. And so she's perfect at getting people up to the speed with a Pumpkin Plan. We call them Pumpkin Plan Strategists. And she pays me a 15% royalty on revenue that that company generates. But she owns the company.



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**Mike Michalowicz** ([12:43](#)):

So why that works well is it mitigates the risk. If the company has problems. I, I'm not an owner in it, I just share in royalties. (Right.) She gets the majority of royalty. One thing I did was, before I started this licensing program, we now have it with multiple people. It's always the same structure. It's upfront fee that changes over time as we've gotten more exposure and a 15% top line. And I remember calling someone who did a program, I just don't want to mention the program's name, but it's a popular book in the small business space. They did their program, that company required a 50% royalty share. So 50% of their revenue. And to the person they said, this is just burying us. We cannot sustain. So you, you, you generate a hundred thousand in revenue. 50,000 is going out to the royalty company that does nothing.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([13:29](#)):

They just give you the brand and the, the systems. But you do all the work. And it was devastating in all my research, identified that if you do less than 10%, that there doesn't feel to be a partnership. And the, the licensee doesn't necessarily feel fully engaged in the, the value you bring. So basically, the more people pay to a point, the greater the perception is of value. That's why when you sell a piece of jewelry, the more expensive it is, someone sees it as more valuable because of the price, not necessarily because of the content alone. But after you're over 20%, from my research, it starts becoming burdensome to people financially. So I said, okay, I want people to be all in, but I don't want to be burdened. So 15% became the, norm.

**AJ Harper** ([14:17](#)):

Okay. That's a good summary for licensing.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([14:19](#)):

Okay. So let's talk about the other things you can do with it. So Profit First. So when Profit First came out from day one, I said, oh, this is gonna be something that's a value beyond the education of the book. It's gonna be also an opportunity to produce certifications for coaches, for accountants and bookkeepers. And I knew this because of something you came up with early on when we were writing the manuscript. You said, we've got to get early readers. So we started getting early readers, and one of the first readers of the manuscript came back and said, okay, this is fantastic. I love it. Who's the bookkeeper that coaches this?

**AJ Harper** ([15:00](#)):

Right?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([15:01](#)):

And I was like, what do you mean? And like, what do you mean? Like, tell me the bookkeeper that will support me in this. (Right.) So we started that business the, uh, the next day effectively.

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**AJ Harper** ([15:11](#)):

But it's important to note that you didn't start the business until after the, I mean, the book, the business came after the book.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([15:20](#)):

Um, let, let me give you a clarifying point. The business was, the LLC was formed before the book was published.

**AJ Harper** ([15:26](#)):

But we didn't really talk about it in the book.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([15:29](#)):

Uh, no, we do talk about Profit First Professionals is mentioned in the book,

**AJ Harper** ([15:32](#)):

But not in any significant way.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([15:33](#)):

Not in any significant way. The second version, we did more of it, I partnered with Ron, who was here this morning. So we're in the Profit First Professional building. Ron came in, kindly gave me a cup of coffee, and I approached him. I said, I got this new manuscript coming out, uh, and I think this can be a business. I said, do you want part of this? Here's the strategy I suggest for our listeners is I love entrepreneurship. I like running a business. I don't love running a business, and I don't, and managing employees and so forth. This is, it's wonderful to a point for me. But then I get exhausted. So my God, this isn't sustainable for me. So for me, it's important to find partners who want to run the business for the long haul. I knew Ron historically and approached him and he said, yeah, I'm in. His first day, we actually worked out of the house, my house at the basement.

**AJ Harper** ([16:21](#)):

I remember the basement very well. (Remember that?) Yes.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([16:24](#)):

We were able to pack five people in this basement, suited for like two in a furnace. And Ron's kind of first day was promote the book. I said, all you can do for the next month is promote the book.

**AJ Harper** ([16:35](#)):

You know what I, in my, I guess I never knew that you were actually starting that wall. Because we were at the very end of getting that book to market that was self-published. I guess I thought you came-- (Huh? Why?) Because it was such a small mention in the book. I guess I didn't realize. I thought it sort of

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evolved. Okay. This is actually interesting for me. But it did, you really did focus on it once the book was out.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([17:01](#)):

Oh yeah. Oh, of course then, yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([17:03](#)):

Then you went to town on it. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([17:05](#)):

Because we didn't know if it was gonna work. And I told Ron, I said, this is the risk. It may not.

**AJ Harper** ([17:09](#)):

Well, so explain what Profit First Professionals is.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([17:11](#)):

Okay. So Profit First Professionals is a certification program specifically for accounts/bookkeepers and expanded now to business coaches. What we give people are the tools, but the authorization to leverage the brand and to distinguish themselves in the market. So if you're an accountant, you already shot yourself in the foot by saying that because to the consumer, an accountant is an accountant. They're, they're a commodity, a bookkeeper's a bookkeeper. But if you're a Profit First Professional, now you've a distinguishing nomenclature. And not back in, we started, but today, the vast majority of small business owners recognize the term profit first. Right. So they're like, oh, you're affiliated with that. They're, yeah, yeah. I'm, I'm authorized in this.

**AJ Harper** ([17:51](#)):

So it's training. It's a certification. (Right.) And then you also matched people, right? So when people were looking for a professional, you could help them find one in their area or wherever.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([18:02](#)):

The book generates, as of this morning, 21 leads a day for our members to consider. So we get 21 inquiries a day. So we call this Natural Lead Flow. So over a year, that's, if I run the math right, six or 7,000 leads a year just from the book. This isn't someone going on Google saying, oh, where's the Profit First Professional? It's not someone, it's someone who's read the book and emailed them because they read the book.

**AJ Harper** ([18:30](#)):

Right. So it's a very, very good lead.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([18:32](#)):

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Very good lead. And it's also, we think the minority of inquiries. When I read a book, I don't necessarily feel compelled in the moment to, to contact someone more often than I'll say, oh yeah, that book was great. And I wonder if who's out there that supports this? So it's a large volume of demand. So profit first professionals. I'm a, I'm an owner of the organization, equity owner along with Ron.

**AJ Harper (18:55):**

You helped build it.

**Mike Michalowicz (18:56):**

Helped build it. Yep. I did spend, because Ron has not been a business owner in the past, this is his first go around, but he is been a great salesperson. So the agreement was, I'm gonna help you get this going long haul. I've got to write more books. Like that's, I'm, I'm a book guy, I'm an author. That's who I am. And we did it. It's been a fantastic ride with, with bumps and moments and stuff.

**AJ Harper (19:19):**

But though, how long was that? So about five years that you built it together and then you stepped, because you're in an, yeah. You have your other office down the street, which is your author office.

**Mike Michalowicz (19:26):**

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**AJ Harper (19:27):**

And but was it like five years?

**Mike Michalowicz (19:29):**

Yeah, it was three years at my house. Then we, the next book that came out was Clockwork, I think.

**AJ Harper (19:35):**

Yes.

**Mike Michalowicz (19:35):**

Yeah. And that was kind of a tough transition for Ron and me. I I, it was clear this is the path I had to be on. I don't think Ron really got it emotionally, logically he got it. But emotionally like, oh, this, he's gonna do more books. So when Clockwork came out, I was like, oh, there's your project. Let's get back to Profit First. I'm like, no, no. I got Clockwork to do now. Right. And that, that became a period of, of productive conflict. I think our relationship and the business is stronger than ever. But we went through these bumps and every book that came out, I think Ron went to that little another one, <laugh> like, and now he's like, you know, "bring 'em on." Yeah. Bring 'em on. And it's coming through.

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**AJ Harper** ([20:14](#)):

And, and we did the revise and expanded version of Profit First for Penguin Random House.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([20:19](#)):

Right. Yeah. That was, and that was huge. The book volume jumped from her. Well,

**AJ Harper** ([20:24](#)):

Actually we skipped, you skipped a couple books.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([20:26](#)):

Fix this Next. I think it was.

**AJ Harper** ([20:27](#)):

No, no. You skipped Surge. The worst book <laugh>. So you've got to give Ron, got to give Ron some credit. Yeah. Yeah. Because he was probably like, what the, what the hell?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([20:36](#)):

Hell's going on?

**AJ Harper** ([20:38](#)):

What's going on?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([20:38](#)):

It's a good book. I was just actually re I had to do an educational thing on it and I had to, we are, we're doing an educational thing on Surge. Yeah. It is such a good concept. But it's a theoretical book. It's not consistent with our how-tos.

**AJ Harper** ([20:51](#)):

It has. You need to give it a new cover.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([20:53](#)):

Yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([20:54](#)):

Okay. But anyway, so the point is he weathered Surge. We got a couple more books. (Yep.) So that was five years-ish. Five, six years. Yeah. Where you were actively with Ron, building. Yep. And then now you are an equity partner and you also, but you're extremely involved. You've got Yep. Uh, and then I want to point out that this evolved profit, I love this. This is the coolest thing about Profit First Professionals from a book. You have this company and then you have Profit Con

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([21:24](#)):

Profit Con.

**AJ Harper** ([21:25](#)):

It. I love it. Like Comic Con, when you first, when you first told me about it years ago. Of course, of course, of course. And I've been to Profit Con.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([21:34](#)):

Yeah, you spoke there,

**AJ Harper** ([21:36](#)):

Didn't you? Uh, well, it was on, it was during the Pandemic. So it was on Zoom. That right.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([21:40](#)):

That's Right.

**AJ Harper** ([21:40](#)):

Right. A lot of my authors actually have a lot of the authors that went through my class have spoken.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([21:47](#)):

Let me share some numbers. But--

**AJ Harper** ([21:48](#)):

That is cute. I love that you have a con.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([21:50](#)):

Yeah, we have a con. Yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([21:52](#)):

I've definitely been, I've been to the closing parties and the speeches and stuff. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([21:55](#)):

Yeah. Profit First Professionals is a multimillion dollar business. It has 600 members, its height, 600 members globally. We're down right now to 500 and I think 30 or so. We have, we expanded to multiple locations. So this is another form. (It's all over the world!) Yeah. Foreign monetization. So as the book has been licensed and translated into different languages, it's in 29 languages besides English. So 30 languages now. Um, I just did a video for the Lithuanian one. And actually on the flight I was flying back home with my sons. The new version, the updated version of the Chinese Simplified's done. I was doing an interview, uh, written interview on my flight. What's interesting is, as you get these translations,

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what we did is we said, is there a zealot, if you will, in these countries that have read the book and they want to teach it. They were becoming certified in the US standard. But saying, you know, Profit First in the Netherlands, for example, has cultural differences. So it's, it's not translating, but we kind of get it. And then we'd approach the right person. And you have to find the right person saying, Hey, would you want to buy the license for the Netherlands? So we have licensees in Australia, England, the Netherlands, Germany, I'm forgetting there's another one. Uh, Canada, I think there's more I'm forgetting. These are people that buy a one-time licensing fee. It's substantial. But then they own the license for that country and they build it. So the Netherlands has 78 Profit First professionals, the Netherlands.

**AJ Harper** ([23:23](#)):

So that's in addition to the work you do here in this country. (Correct.) So there's a licensing offshoot of the certification program. Correct. That's pretty good.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([23:32](#)):

Yes. It's amazing. And then our, we have, uh, Profit Con US, but we have Profit Con in, I'm, I'm attending as a speaker to three other conferences in Europe before Profit Con US. So those are all monetization opportunities. Yeah. The workbooks are a monetization opportunity. Something we explored with Penguin, which kind of actually was interesting. It was kind of the conclusion we'll talk about Penguin, but conclusion of that relationship was very peculiar. I got a call one day saying, All In doesn't sell enough. Uh, we don't want you to produce another book with us.

**AJ Harper** ([24:04](#)):

Yeah. We did a whole episode about it.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([24:06](#)):

Whole episode. And then they call literally a week later, make a six figure advance offer to do a workbook. (Yes.) Uh, which once I ran the numbers, I was like, what the hell's going on here? No. And then they said, well, it's over. Well,

**AJ Harper** ([24:19](#)):

Don't tell the whole thing, because that's two episodes from now.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([24:22](#)):

Okay. Very interesting. Bipolar dynamic. So that's Profit First, let's talk about some other stuff.

**AJ Harper** ([24:30](#)):

So speaking's huge for you.

# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz** ([24:31](#)):

Massive. I think I will do 40 to 45 engagements this year. My speaking fees, what's called a rack rate, is \$45,000 per speaking engagement.

**AJ Harper** ([24:42](#)):

So can wait, <laugh> can wait. So I just have to take you back because you used to do it for free.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([24:48](#)):

Free. Yeah. I'd never paid to be on stage, but I would've <laugh>

**AJ Harper** ([24:51](#)):

<laugh>. I know you would've. You've like, can I, can I get you some pizza? You want some beer? (Yeah.) Yeah. So from free to 40 5K from free

**Mike Michalowicz** ([24:58](#)):

To 45 K. I mean, it's over 10 years.

**AJ Harper** ([25:00](#)):

Yes. But I mean, 15

**Mike Michalowicz** ([25:02](#)):

Years,

**AJ Harper** ([25:02](#)):

That's not that long. When you consider, you're making incremental jumps along the way. Correct.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([25:08](#)):

And I, you know, there was a time I found for speaking, we could do a whole thing on speaking actually. But there's basically different kind of criteria. And this is just mine. Most speakers will get paid nothing or pay to speak if they simply are trying to get lead generation. Then if you have, if you're local enough and you have a degree of expertise in a space, I think you can get up to five, maybe \$7,000 for a speaking engagement. Which is nice. Once you become a topic authority, like, oh, you are one of the experts in forensic investigations. I think you can get up to maybe \$25,000. Then once you are a marquee expert, meaning you actually draw audience. So I'm so fortunate now I'll go to events and I would say a percentage of the audience attends simply because Oh, Mike Michalowicz is on the list.

**AJ Harper** ([25:59](#)):

But that, that's also because you're a good speaker.



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**Mike Michalowicz** ([26:01](#)):

You have to be a good speaker.

**AJ Harper** ([26:02](#)):

You have, you have to be a good speaker.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([26:03](#)):

You've got to match that. Right. Yeah. I spent a lot of time working on that. You can get to 50, I think the next level. This is where, where you blow the roof off the top, you can get hundreds of thousands or millions when you draw the entire audience. So when you're a celebrity, if, if Barack Obama says, oh, hey, I want to do a keynote, he'll get a million dollars or more because everyone will attend to hear that presentation. Or if you're Shaquille O'Neal, I went to an event, it was an accounting conference. All these speakers got paid, whatever, very nominal. And then Shaquille O'Neal got probably two, \$300,000 to speak for 20 minutes. But the entire crowd came and said, I saw Shaquille O'Neal.

**AJ Harper** ([26:44](#)):

I mean, they just, they just want to see him in person.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([26:47](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Just a couple quick things about this. When it comes to speaking, the book is the gateway drug. I just spoke at a large small business, meaning they have a thousand employees. They brought in all their employees for All in. It was the, one of the first corporate gigs like this I had. And the owner said, Hey, only came across my desk. I skimmed it. I was like, this is amazing. Gave it to my HR team. They all read it. We made into a book club. Like, we've got to get this guy here. So the book is that gateway of qualifications. You know, it's the first qualifier. It's very hard, it's very infrequent to say that I see a speaker speaking that hasn't had a book.

**AJ Harper** ([27:29](#)):

Right. But let's be clear, if it has, you know, any book can do that. It actually doesn't matter. It could be any book.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([27:36](#)):

Yeah. Any book. Yeah. Yeah. I agree.

**AJ Harper** ([27:37](#)):

But I think if you're really trying to get the big fees, you have to actually have a book people--

**Mike Michalowicz** ([27:44](#)):

Hundred percent agree.

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**AJ Harper** ([27:45](#)):

Find that actually read it.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([27:46](#)):

And particularly a good book. So there, and this, this is the book not to write. So don't write that book where it's like, oh, this is my, my Better business card. I see a lot of those people, they do not get the big speaking.

**AJ Harper** ([27:58](#)):

Do you see a lot of those people?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([28:00](#)):

Yeah. No, no, no. But not speaking, I'm saying I see a lot of people circulating.

**AJ Harper** ([28:03](#)):

No, I mean, do you, do you see them when you're out speaking? I mean, do you see?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([28:06](#)):

Not on the main stage, no. Oh, they're, they're little breakout sessions.

**AJ Harper** ([28:09](#)):

Breakout. See, this is what I want to get across. Yeah. Because I say this in my own book, you could, speaking can, or a book can get you the things you want, but at a lower level Yeah. You're not gonna get the big old dreams. I mean, okay. Don't write in with your exception to the rule. There's always an exception, but most people are not the <laugh>. That's why it's called the exception to the rule. You know? Yeah. So I, I'm curious about that. So you do see these people who have this glorified marketing piece, but they're not on the main stages.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([28:39](#)):

No. What they're doing. So I just did an event where it was me, John Maxwell. Do you know what I name? And Seth Godin, were the three, the three main stage keynotes. It was, I didn't see John or Seth speak because they, it was each day. So day one, I think the big open was Seth. Then it was John Maxwell. And I was the, the close for the main stage. They'd have the keynote at 10:00 AM So I spoke from 10 till 11:30. And that's what I, the other presenters did too. Seth and John. And then lunch. And after that, all breakout. All the breakouts. Breakouts. And these are rooms. So the main stage room, 1500 people, the, all the breakouts were 30, 15 people. And that was all the better business card folks. What they're likely doing. This is--

**AJ Harper** ([29:24](#)):

And, and great people with good books too, in those breakouts that are working their way out.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([29:28](#)):

Oh, for sure. Oh yeah. And I, I've done the breakouts. I got breakouts. That was a transformative moment. I'll, I'll tell you about in a second. But most of them are trying to generate leads. So if your intention is to generate leads from an audience,

**AJ Harper** ([29:40](#)):

Clients.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([29:41](#)):

Clients, you're generally a breakout type of person. Yeah. Generally, of course there's exceptions to the rule. If you see Michael Port says this, our mutual friend, if you see reverence for the stage, and this is a performance. You're a keynote. Likely. I will tell you a transformative, I I, I was presenting to a women's group when we first got started, identified that the stuff we were writing was doing was resonating with female entrepreneurs who were reentering the workforce as an entrepreneur. I got invited to this woman, Angela Gia Kim had an event, I can't remember what they called it. And she, we had just written Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. She's like, I never heard of you, but I got in. She's like, you can, you can do a breakout. I rehearsed for that presentation over and over and over again. There was four breakouts going on.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([30:29](#)):

And I didn't know how it was gonna be structured. They were right next to each other. There were four rooms, like with one of those partition walls that kind of, the xylophone walls I present. And I just lean into it and it's, people are laughing, engaged. And so I'm five minutes, 10 minutes into the presentation. It's like laughing and stuff. People start, more people start walking in. More start walking in. And I'm just like, oh, this is, this is great. People are showing up late, keep going. Dropping knowledge bombs. I find out afterwards it was going so well that people in the other rooms were hearing the, the laughter and the cheers. Started leaving. They shut down two of the breakouts and the other person, uh, wrapped up their presentation early.

**AJ Harper** ([31:08](#)):

Oh, no. (I feel you.) Those poor people.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([31:10](#)):

Well, you feel a dick about that. I feel I don't feel good.

**AJ Harper** ([31:12](#)):

That wasn't your fault.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([31:14](#)):

That was never my intention. But I, that's when I realized it is all about presentation. You have to master the craft of

**AJ Harper** ([31:20](#)):

Speaking. I, I know. That's why I am proud to be aligned with Michael Port.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([31:24](#)):

Michael Port. There, there's two people I refer Michael Port and a guy named John Briggs. John Briggs, John Bates. John Briggs is a great guy too. But John Bates as my personal coach, he'll work with me. One-on-one throughout producing a presentation. Michael Port is the master of presentation of performance.

**AJ Harper** ([31:38](#)):

Uh, um, I, yes, I'm proud to be a partner at Heroic, which is Michael and Amy Port's, uh, premier public speaking program.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([31:46](#)):

Uh, another tip about speaking, how to monetize. I don't believe, at least in this context, back of the room sales, but people do that when I'm hired to speak, it's reverence for the stage. I'm here to perform. I'm not here to sell a single thing that, that actually diminishes it. There are venues, usually your own, we'll sell you back to the room. So when I do Profit Con, we will invite our members if we have other opportunities, say, Hey, back of the room, this is what our offer is. Well, I'm present it someone else's. I never do that. But I do want to generate leads if people are interested. So there's two things you can do. Book sales at the back of the room, which I generally, we just have the event,

**AJ Harper** ([32:23](#)):

The event purchases certain number...

**Mike Michalowicz** ([32:24](#)):

And you sit there and sign, and I will sign all day long. I remember, uh, watching some news broadcast and some child said, LeBron James, or whoever the famous basketball player was, stayed until, you know, four hours later making sure everyone got it signed. So I'm like, if I think it actually was Will Smith, ironically, uh, so it was a movie slipper, but if, if that person's willing to do it, little on me, better be willing to do that. I will never stop signing books. And I, I recently had it went, went for about two hours long. And every single person I will greet, like it's the first person I'm greeting. Like, this is awesome.

**AJ Harper** ([32:58](#)):

But that's, I mean, why wouldn't you? What do that's, that's just, (but people don't.) I know, but it's, we have to, we have to put our readers first all the way to that point, you know? And plus how lovely,

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([33:10](#)):

How lovely. You know, I, I think as an author, our dear listening friend, you are on the list of celebrities for these individuals. You're, you know, I consider myself a z-lister. Like, you can't go further down. But sometimes, certain moments, certain people are compelled by what you spoke about. Or read what you've read or you've written and want to meet you.

**AJ Harper** ([33:29](#)):

Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([33:31](#)):

I also have had these experiences where someone's like, oh, you know, behind the scenes such and such, celebrity's a real jerk.

**AJ Harper** ([33:36](#)):

Yes.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([33:37](#)):

Uh, or behind the scenes, like, I've heard this about Jerry Seinfeld, nicest guy on the planet. Every person you have an interface with is gonna render a judgment of who you are. Yes. And they're gonna be talking about you. So golly, you better bring it.

**AJ Harper** ([33:48](#)):

All right. So you, so that's speaking, that's a huge part of your monetization. What about classes and workshops?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([33:54](#)):

Yep. Do those, uh, we do them online, offline. Um, we can do 'em around the books. We can compile the books We've done together classes on authorship.

**AJ Harper** ([34:05](#)):

Right. But can I say something about that? Yeah. This is a little bone I want to pick.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([34:10](#)):

Okay. This is such a fun episode.

**AJ Harper** ([34:12](#)):

No, it's just, look, it makes sense that maybe you and I are doing some classes around authorship because you have Pen With Purpose. Yeah. But I want to discourage authors. I see this so much. An author does one book, then they start teaching.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([34:27](#)):

Oh yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([34:27](#)):

About how to do a book. Yeah. And I think it's great for you to share your experience and knowledge, but I think you need to stay in your focus area.

**AJ Harper** ([34:39](#)):

And maybe take, if you're gonna devote something about authorship after your one book to make it something that's part of the launch, and it's something for, uh, buy X number of copies or something like that. Because, uh, you know, what do you obviously, but we have a tendency to, oh, I did this one thing and now I'm gonna teach about it. And this is, this is something that requires a depth of experience so that, because not everybody is gonna follow in your same lane. Anyway. That's a, i I cannot tell you how many programs for authors the person had has done one thing.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([35:19](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. That's, that's a quick money grab. And your reputation will likely be harmed. The classes and workshops we do are typically around each book. But here's what we found. Don't necessarily use the title of the book for the workshop. So,

**AJ Harper** ([35:35](#)):

Oh, interesting.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([35:36](#)):

Yeah. So the Pumpkin Plan Workshop is not as effective as Healthy Organic Growth for a Business <laugh> or the, the 10 Secret. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. So be careful of that. The second thing, this is a tip I got from, uh, another author, Melissa Dugalecki. She's working with Pen with Purpose when she sells a workshop for one something. Oh,

**AJ Harper** ([35:56](#)):

You shared this last time, I think.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([35:58](#)):

Did I? She runs a survey first and says, what do you want? And so she shows it's relatively the same content, but it's under that title and adjusted accordingly and becomes fresh. Yeah. So consulting, just guy consulting gig for, uh, Profit First for the individual employees at the company. So I did Profit First Speaking gig. The author, the, uh, owner of the business loves the book. And he says, our business has improved as a result, but my employees individual financial management has not improved because they don't get it yet. Could you come in and do could consulting? So we're going as a team and we're teaching Profit First for Individuals to a large business, to all their employees.

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**AJ Harper** ([36:38](#)):

And you have, I know, how much is consulting a part of your package? I don't think it's a huge part.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([36:43](#)):

Me personally, almost none. But when they come up, we will outsource it. You know, the funny thing is you don't have to do it yourself. You're the the source of the intellectual property. But you can assemble a team.

**AJ Harper** ([36:53](#)):

Yeah. But I think for some books that's, that would be the, a huge part of it. It just kind of depends.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([36:59](#)):

Totally depends what you want to do. That that's not my, I'm not good at consulting. I would say that depth and detail is not my thing. <laugh>. So, as you know. (Yeah.) So if I had to be intensely working with someone for a long period, I will do some one-on-one. Some people say, Mike, I've learned so much from you. I want to work with you personally. (Yeah.) And I'll say, well, I I

**AJ Harper** ([37:22](#)):

What about like a VIP day?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([37:23](#)):

Yeah. So that's what I do. So they'll say, well, what do you charge? I'm like, well, I get \$45,000 to speak for an hour, so I'll work with you one-on-one, but it's've got to be commensurate to that price. And I'm not trying to take advantage of someone. Yeah. But you know, that's what makes sense. And, and some people are like, yeah, yeah, I'll do it.

**AJ Harper** ([37:40](#)):

You just have a day with you. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([37:42](#)):

So that's one guy flying from California. We spent a whole day working on his business model. And I think he worked out, he walked out with three or four new ideas. But I'll tell you, and he's implementing them, they're game changers just because he had an outsider, someone like myself who's not emotionally attached and can see some perspective.

**AJ Harper** ([38:00](#)):

And it's perfect for you because you just said, I'm not a detail person. If I can just, I want to just point out the thread here. You are doing stuff that makes sense for you. (Yeah.) So Ron's running PFP, you're not getting into, you don't love that. You don't really want to get right into the nitty gritty forever with the

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business. Right? Yeah. You don't want to get into the nitty gritty, too far consulting. Correct. Speaking makes sense. These licensing deals, all the stuff you're doing makes sense for you.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([38:32](#)):

That's right. You, I think you talking to our listener have to define what your thing or thing plus one is. And for me it's authors. My thing and my plus one is I'm a spokesperson.

**AJ Harper** ([38:45](#)):

Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([38:45](#)):

That's it.

**AJ Harper** ([38:47](#)):

Spokesperson.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([38:49](#)):

That became, yeah. That--

**AJ Harper** ([38:50](#)):

Like Vanna.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([38:51](#)):

Have a little bit like Vanna White not as attractive.

**AJ Harper** ([38:53](#)):

Would she be a, I'm thinking of, she's the letter turner, but she's been a spokesperson. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([38:58](#)):

She, I mean she represents the brand.

**AJ Harper** ([39:01](#)):

That's right. Yeah. She represents the brand. You're you're the brand rep.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([39:04](#)):

Exactly. So when--

**AJ Harper** ([39:06](#)):

Face, brand.



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**Mike Michalowicz** ([39:07](#)):

So when Profit First Professionals has a promotion, I'll do the video behind it because that's the guy who created the concept. Right. Um, and that's true for the other things.

**AJ Harper** ([39:15](#)):

And that's a natural fit for you as well. You're not afraid to do that stuff. You like being out front. You're cool with it.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([39:21](#)):

Yeah. I love, I love being the spokesperson because I, I think I can cheerlead folks. You know, I think when it comes to any of these concepts is you have to first have an enthusiasm or belief that I, it can work for me, too. Yeah. So that's what I'm good at. I can get people seeing the potential in themselves, I think.

**AJ Harper** ([39:39](#)):

Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([39:39](#)):

And excited about it and willing to take that first step.

**AJ Harper** ([39:43](#)):

And there's some trial and error you didn't know. So there's some stuff you've tried, you abandoned and so forth. So you have to be willing to try different monetization things to see what's your jam.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([39:52](#)):

Totally. I'm trying to think of stuff that didn't work. Well actually, you know, we will just talk about swag. Swag has been marginally successful for us. So we have a, a shop that we don't promote that aggressively, that has some swag. Ryan Holiday gave me great insight with swag. He goes, if you have to have different sizes, he goes, don't do it like t-shirts or something like that. It, it's a nightmare because--

**AJ Harper** ([40:16](#)):

You have to keep it in stock.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([40:17](#)):

Keep it in stock. But also people are like, that wasn't my, I asked for this size, but I'm, uh, but it did, it wasn't, it wasn't my size. I'm a medium.

**AJ Harper** ([40:23](#)):

Now you're in the T-shirt business. Yeah.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([40:25](#)):

You're, you're in apparel business. So you said jewelry is great 'cause it's one size fits all. Generally. Hats

**AJ Harper** ([40:31](#)):

Hats.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([40:31](#)):

Mugs. His big thing is these commitment coins like the military uses now everyone's making,

**AJ Harper** ([40:39](#)):

So I, I put swag on the list to talk about because remember we met with um, dude from Savannah Bananas. Why is my brand Jesse Cole? Jesse Cole. We, we've met with him. You, you're friends with him? (Yeah.) I personally met with him several times. But we, do you remember we had a meeting, uh, in the author building down the street (With Jesse?) Yes.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([41:02](#)):

No, <laugh>, I can't remember now.

**AJ Harper** ([41:05](#)):

Yes. And he was talking about swag and how they, during the pandemic when they, they weren't, didn't have ticket sales.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([41:14](#)):

Oh yes. I do remember that.

**AJ Harper** ([41:15](#)):

Yeah. The Savannah Bananas, they were doing a ton of stuff with merch.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([41:19](#)):

I would say merch for their organization. Maybe.

**AJ Harper** ([41:22](#)):

That makes sense.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([41:23](#)):

And maybe they're number one or at least number two, revenue generator.

**AJ Harper** ([41:26](#)):

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But he said, why isn't everybody doing merch? And you were like, yes. And so then you went on the merch,

**Mike Michalowicz** ([41:32](#)):

Right. Yeah. The merch. Yeah. And we we're trying not working for us. It's interesting. I think Savannah Bananas, I want to associate that identity, a little crazy fun side, whatever. I think it's an identity Yeah. Component. And I don't think what, how, at least how I'm positioned my merch now is not an identity thing.

**AJ Harper** ([41:50](#)):

Yeah. I I would say that the merch that you aren't doing that you could be doing Yeah. Is more workbooks and journal-y type things. (I agree) That that's what I think would be easy. And you don't need a size <laugh>. No, no. And you can self-publish the heck out of it and it'll look great.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([42:06](#)):

We do it for Fix This Next. You're right. And that actually probably is our biggest revenue generator, ironically.

**AJ Harper** ([42:11](#)):

Yeah. I think that's scenario you guys could lean into.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([42:13](#)):

Yeah. That's a good one. One thing we don't have on this list I want to share with you, that's been a huge monetization that's overlooked by almost every author. Crescendo moment... Sponsorships.

**AJ Harper** ([42:24](#)):

Oh yes.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([42:26](#)):

Freaking. Huge. So we have, I'll tell you the, the best sponsorship relationship I've ever had was with Nextiva. Yeah. And they're back baby. They're back. (Oh yeah?) Yeah, yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([42:37](#)):

For what? The new book we're gonna be working on

**Mike Michalowicz** ([42:38](#)):

Maybe a TV show. My God, I'll tell you.

**AJ Harper** ([42:41](#)):

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Oh, that's right. Yeah,

**Mike Michalowicz** ([42:42](#)):

Yeah, yeah. But we'll, we'll see if that comes back. But we're, but they funded now a, a basically a pilot. So what's a sponsor? Want a sponsor if they have alignment with the community you speak to. It's a software presenting themselves. For example, American Express has been a sponsor in the past. A legit one. I've also used them. Nefariously I'll, I can share that secret later. But uh, early on. But American Express, if they go to a small business and say we get you small business in American Express card. Small business guy is like, no, you don't. But if I say, I get you small business, by the way, American Express supports us now. Small business gal is like, yeah, okay. I there's a, you're, you become the bridge or the conduit for big business to speak to small business in this case. So sponsorships have been great. Uh, Relay is an extraordinary sponsor.

**AJ Harper** ([43:30](#)):

We do a whole episode on sponsorship actually and break the whole thing down. Because I get, when I talk to, uh, my students and say, Hey sponsorship's another revenue model for you. It's, it's just a bullet point item that I'm talking about. And they want to know everything about this and I give them information. But people are fascinated by this. So yeah. We should do a whole episode on sponsorship.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([43:49](#)):

Yeah. I remember some dude said like, it was an author, I don't remember who just said, I'll wear whoever sponsors me, I'll wear their T-shirt for the day and uh, whatever your T-shirt is and I'll, I'll put on my website with and every day you just would wear a new T-shirt, whoever was sponsoring for the day. And I think the sponsorship was maybe two or \$300. So it was very accessible to small local business. But \$300 for example, over 356 days. <laugh>. No, it's like a hundred thousand dollars of sponsorship. Yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([44:17](#)):

For, and you get some free T-shirt <laugh>

**Mike Michalowicz** ([44:18](#)):

And you get some free T-shirt. So let's talk about some things that didn't work. So we talked about swag. It's interesting. Here's one thing that didn't work recently was we tried a class with Get Different and uh, we had one signee. So we decided to cancel the class on Get Different. And I think what we did incorrectly was we promoted it as Get Different. Which already is confusing. We didn't say, you know, new marketing strategies in a changing economy or something like that. So we just went with the book title. (Yeah.) Which I know is dangerous. And yet we, we did that. We didn't survey the audience. We just said, oh let's just get this out there because we want to revitalize the collective of books. I think we were thinking about us and not the consumer.

**AJ Harper** ([45:04](#)):

# don't write *that* book!

It's always back to that.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([45:05](#)):

It's always back to that. Yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([45:07](#)):

You know what I wish you would do for Get Different to monetize?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([45:10](#)):

What's that?

**AJ Harper** ([45:11](#)):

and you could do free versions or just low cost. Um, I wish you would do challenges. Challenges are underrated. And for that, that's the perfect book for a challenge to get people together working together to psych each other up. Because the main barrier with that book is people who are nervous. Yeah. To put themselves out there and to stand out in a crowd even though they want to stand out. That's been the main barrier I think, besides the book title to sales. And I think if you got challenges going kind of on the regular.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([45:50](#)):

Yeah.

**AJ Harper** ([45:51](#)):

And they were super affordable, then you would see a lot of people engaging in those. Personally, I think that would be a good thing.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([46:01](#)):

I have two more things that actually, now this is flipping back to kind of worked and is really working. Uh, just because I didn't want to forget these. One is a mastermind.

**AJ Harper** ([46:10](#)):

Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([46:11](#)):

Oh yeah. Now most people bastardize what a mastermind is. They say, oh, it's me just espousing great ideas. That's not a mastermind. A mastermind in its true sense is a collective of peers who work on an individual's challenge. So if 10 people in the group and I suggest a group of 10 or less, that's 10 minds working on one challenge and the insights you get is amazing. So it's really about facilitation as opposed to just, you know, throwing up ideas. I start a group called the Sison Collective and it's worked in regards to, we got our 10 people, actually 11 people, which is, that's now a burst at the seams. It's not scalable.

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It's a challenge because I'm the one who's facilitating it. Here's what's wonderful. We have certain entrepreneurs that have joined that group and have been in seven consecutive years. Like, I've got to re-up. It's a one-year program of getting together. Some go for a year or two. And I have one, two people I just interviewed last week who want in for 2025. So we're recording this in June of early June of 2024. They're already like, I can, I put my money down. So it works. But I'm like, I just don't have room and I can only do it once a year because it's me. So I became the, the linchpin or the keystone or whatever the thing is.

**AJ Harper** ([47:28](#)):

Yeah. But I, I still think masterminds, that's great. That's even if you're the that's... Plus that's great work. I mean that's the, that's the juiciest work. The mastermind work.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([47:37](#)):

It's juicy. Yeah. I it's just not scalable. So at least for me, if you're the facilitator, so you have to build into an organization. But I don't know if we're gonna do that. But here's the one thing that's really working that we didn't touch on that has the most, we'll say long-term potential is, is an investment group.

**AJ Harper** ([47:55](#)):

So, oh shoot, I didn't expect you to say that.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([47:57](#)):

Yeah. So we started Prosper Group as a test now eight months ago. Maybe, maybe now, maybe June of last year, maybe a year ago. We have 11 businesses that we have equity in short term phantom equity. So we don't actually take ownership. We have a very specific structure. I could do a whole episode on that. And we only do it for five years. So we say, listen, we're gonna share in your success for five years. I'm gonna bring everything I know. Now here's the beauty. I bring in a Profit First professional, a Pumpkin Plan strategist. Yeah. Clockwork specialist. You have all those people. All In folks. Yeah. So I bring in our own team, we just cover the cost for those people. So we'll pay those people. We use Fix This Next to the foundation for the guidance. And we've turned, we, we focus in on distressed businesses. You've got to be over a million dollars in revenue and be struggling, uh, with profitability, overworked, you know, the traditional things. The things we fix. And if that's you, we'll partner with you. We've turned six of them to permanent profitability within four or five months. A couple others we have to work on because they have inventory challenges and so forth. But they're on the path.

**AJ Harper** ([48:58](#)):

Shoot.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([48:59](#)):

Average size company is 5 million, two are over 10 million. Uh, one's an appliance sales company. Joe is amazing. Another one they repair diesel engines. We're, we're in all these different business. There's one in New Jersey called, SEW Jersey. SEW Jersey right here on Route 10 <laugh> that they're, they're a

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challenge. They have a lot of inventory, but we now have 17 new companies that have, that have inquired

**AJ Harper** ([49:24](#)):

What?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([49:25](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. So my,

**AJ Harper** ([49:27](#)):

Oh, and this sounds like you would love this is would bring you joy. I love I love it. This is your love.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([49:31](#)):

This was the original intention. Something I wanted to do 15, 20 years ago. I know.

**AJ Harper** ([49:34](#)):

But that's, this is a story in Profit First when you were just being an, uh, just a butthead Yeah. (And struggle with it. )And you were like thinking you had the mid touch and you were trying to be an angel investor in startups. And this makes much more sense for you to come in, not invest money, invest knowledge, expertise, bring your team's and then fix it. Instead of start it.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([49:54](#)):

Correct.

**AJ Harper** ([49:55](#)):

Oh my gosh. You found your, that you found a way to do the thing you love. I'm actually gonna get emotional about it.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([50:02](#)):

It's amazing. Yeah. It's been an amazing journey.

**AJ Harper** ([50:04](#)):

Oh my gosh. I well you saved it the best for last!

**Mike Michalowicz** ([50:06](#)):

It's, it's, and I don't have the maas touch. That was the realization. I have the ability through the work you and I have done together to find people who are in need and I know great people now profir first professionals.

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**AJ Harper** ([50:18](#)):

Yeah. You're bringing them together.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([50:19](#)):

Yeah. I just know all the great people. I don't know if you know Kelly Rutta. She's come in, she's a mindset specialist. Yeah. We had a couple people struggling with it and bam, it's a, it's, it's addressed. Maybe not resolved permanently, but it's addressed. It's, it's now conscious. Uh, this guy Greg, Greg Eckler, "elk turd," he's in our books. <laugh> Elk Turd is managing our portfolio.

**AJ Harper** ([50:40](#)):

So all of this knowledge networking resource bank that you have developed as an author you're now putting to use in this Prosper group. (Yeah.) I didn't even know about this. (Yeah.) That makes me very emotional for you.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([50:58](#)):

Thank you.

**AJ Harper** ([50:59](#)):

Because you care so much about it and you, First of all, you get so happy. I mean, this just, you just love it. Um, other people's success thrills you.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([51:08](#)):

Oh my God. Ugh. Particularly when, when they're, it's good people who are just struggling. Yeah. I'll end, I'll end this. At the end of the day, I used to think that I had to beat the bad competition. Like there's some people out there with nefarious or "me first" kind of mentality and I used to think I've got to beat them. And I'm now I'm like, I've got to elbow them out. Like the, the good guys have to win. And we, and we all, if you identify yourself as a good guy, you got to get exposure. You have to be successful so you can elbow out, uh, the not so good guys, in my opinion.

**AJ Harper** ([51:47](#)):

You want to tell them what we're going to talk about in the next episode?

**Mike Michalowicz** ([51:49](#)):

Your monetization?

**AJ Harper** ([51:51](#)):

Yeah. Which is total. It's very different.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([51:54](#)):



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It works.

**AJ Harper** ([51:54](#)):

It works for me.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([51:57](#)):

It works.

**AJ Harper** ([51:58](#)):

Yeah. It's, it's funding a lot of good things. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([52:00](#)):

And maybe that's a good way to kind of put a bow tie in this, all the stuff that we just shared in this episode isn't, it's not mandated that you do this. Like, oh, I have to do all this stuff Mike's doing. No, this is just trial and error stuff that's now found solid footing for me. But it doesn't mean it's gonna work for everybody. Yeah. Um, I, a lot of people call me about the licensing. That's so smart. I'm gonna do it. Cyndi Thomason was one. Um, other folks, um, that are authors. And it hasn't worked out well for them, or it's not sustainable. I I'm not saying it's the right model, but I think it is. What I'm hoping is we've planted seeds for you, the listener, to investigate ideas. And then pick the first one for you to do for yourself and then the next

**AJ Harper** ([52:45](#)):

Yeah. And of course if you write a fantastic book that is truly a game changer, it's much easier to find these opportunities and capitalize on these opportunities.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([52:58](#)):

That, that's, that's the end of it. Like write a great book. Yeah. Write a great book. Do we have any corrections or anything we need to make? Or are we pretty much good?

**AJ Harper** ([53:07](#)):

I think we're good.

**Mike Michalowicz** ([53:08](#)):

Okay. Yeah. Then let's get the hell out of here. I want to thank you for listening in. I hope we inspired you. Some ideas. You can get free materials. A lot of people are emailing us now. AJ, I don't know if you're seeing that. I know.

**AJ Harper** ([53:19](#)):

I love it. Makes me so happy.

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**Mike Michalowicz** ([53:21](#)):

We're they like us. They really like us. Please email us. It's [hello@dwtbpodcast.com](mailto:hello@dwtbpodcast.com). It's the same website you go to [dwtbpodcast.com](http://dwtbpodcast.com) to get our free materials. Join our email list. Stay connected with me and AJ, and as always, thank you for joining us on today's episode. We'll see you next week when we talk about AJ's monetization strategies. We look forward to seeing you there. And as always, don't write that book. Write this one.