



**Jake** 02:18

Thank you, Jack for coming on. And joining me on the show today. I really appreciate you taking the time. You are the founder of visualize value, prolific creator of quality content from images, videos, tweets, complete courses, podcasts, all sorts of visuals and just basically anything you can imagine if it's content you're doing, and you're doing it really well at a high quality. So it's great to have you on talk about how you built this brand and how you got to where you are. I think the first thing you know if you could start just by sort of telling your story for those who don't know you, as early as you're going to start to where you are today and how you made some of those decisions along the way.

**Jack Butcher** 02:54

Sure. Yeah. Thank you for having me, mate, I'll do my best to rewind, the most relevant parts as well. So I grew up in southwest England, small town, well, reasonably small town by American standards, and was kind of a didn't really have, like, I think a lot of people look back at their childhood, and they see like things that they love to do, or hobbies or like things that they were like, showed an interest in really early on. I don't I don't see anything like really standing out there that would I can kind of point to as an early indicator one. think one of the most influential things that happened to me in my early life was in the UK at 16. You're you have to do work experience. So normally the school will kind of give you a set of options to pick from random jobs. And the list that I got given I was pretty uninspired by and I knew my cousin worked in a design agency. This is like, what year would this have been a long time ago, like early 2000s. And I asked him if I could go and kind of spend a week up in a design agency and see how that worked. And up to that point like all of my part time jobs and things had been things that I wasn't necessarily looking forward to doing for the rest of my life. worked on building sites worked like sweeping up the floor and a hairdressers worked in in industrial shredders, just all sorts of weird stuff that I got exposed to summer jobs, mowing lawns, things like that. And so I went to this graphic design studio and kind of was blown away by the fact that people did this for a living. So both my parents were in the military, so like, their recounting of their careers was very different than you know sitting in a design studio doing creative



work. and kind of letting your imagination take you to places that was definitely much more of like not the vision of work that I grew up around. So got exposure to that for a week and then kind of went back and finished the rest of school, I studied graphic design couple years after that, for that reason, because I've been kind of exposed to it in earlier on. Because I spent three years I studied in Cardiff, in Wales, which is about an hour from where I grew up. And that was kind of a that was a it was a three year course, I met a bunch of great people had a great time at university wasn't wasn't a particularly talented designer going in wasn't a it's not a great school either. By the you know, if you look at any kind of official rankings, but spent three years the kind of learned enough to come out and apply for some internships, and I, soon as I graduated, I was I was applying for whatever work I could get that was even remotely related to graphic design, and managed to get an unpaid internship in London, which is going about another hour in the other direction from where I grew up. And was doing like a two and a half hour commute each way for three months to an unpaid internship in London, like worked on some cool projects. This was like, back when you had to design websites in Photoshop, and have like a team of 15 people building them and troubleshooting them and very different from what that looks like now. So kind of got into the design industry when I wouldn't say like web design and app design were taken off. But definitely like, I think learned a bit more of the kind of how to design a system from scratch, how to build a design system from scratch, from there. Really weird and random story met a couple guys in a in a pub one night, and they had a friend who could get cheap tickets to New York. And I took them up on that went to New York applied for like 200 jobs on Craigslist, I was just googled. Google, like design internships in New York, configured that I should meet people, if I'm going to go out to New York never did never did the traveling thing or the gap year thing a lot of my friends did. So I kind of had a, you know, an itch to do something different. And got one response, the guy running an agency in West Chelsea in New York, who sent my my university portfolio to me, it's like, yeah, come out, we'll meet and I'll kind of show you the ropes and things. And he, like took a big chance, I would say and got me a visa. And I just started kind of the tea boy for a couple of years in New York. In this tiny agency, five or six people worked on more traditional design stuff worked on TV campaigns, magazines, this



is 2011. So still that era where like, design, like all of the tools that we have now didn't exist. So a lot of those processes are way more involved and spent then like the next 10 years just bouncing around agency jobs. So from little agencies, I worked in big digital consultancies that were kind of like big for consulting competitors, with an agency tacked on the side. Worked a couple of small startups, I worked at Bloomberg for a little while. Yeah, probably eight 910 jobs in the course of 10 years, just all in the creative agency environment was a designer, art director, I picked up a little bit of experience in a lot of different areas, do my own copywriting, write strategy, build pitch decks, etc, etc. And I got to a point in maybe late 2017, I was still working at an agency and kind of been exposed to enough of the agency environment that I thought, Oh, I get the economics of this. Now, I can do this by myself. And I always kind of refer back to this as like, kind of a moment of like a leap of faith. There's also like, a high degree of arrogance in there like you're the one person touching the work obviously takes dozens of people to deliver a project that you're working with a fortune 500 brand or whatever. And my like, naive understanding of it was, well, I'm doing the design work. So why don't I capture, you know, more of the upside that I'm capturing? So I could obviously extrapolate what I'm getting paid versus what the agency is getting paid to do. The job. And that was really my misunderstanding of how much of the job is really just politics and, you know, answering emails all day and all of the stuff that you don't really want to do as a creative person that has to that infrastructure has to exist for you to be able to do your job and interact with companies of this size. Anyway, started my own agency, and basically went the same route just tried to build a leaner, better version of the companies that I'd worked out in the past, and quickly realized, that's just not, not necessarily not possible, not something that I was willing to do. Just, again, you have to kind of absorb the inefficiency of these massive businesses. But I did it for a year or so was in my mid 20s. So it was late 20s ish. So it was kind of had the energy for it. And then after a year or so it was just burned out. And that's where visualize value started to, I guess, find I found a, there's a few threads that came together that made visualize value exist. One of them was just this realization that after running my own agency, I'd realized like, the really valuable part of the process was the ability to pitch the ability to like distill a narrative into a



document, walk into a room and explain what the vision for this thing was. And so visualize value originally was a service business that did that as a service. So outside of the marketing world, though, for product owners, or people building technology companies that had a hard time explaining what it is their product does, I just started working with clients exclusively on like, you know, the only deliverable we're going to do here is, you know, five visuals, and a keynote and a story that lets you explain what you do really succinctly. And then that just did that I've probably for another year, and then started to started to create content as a lead magnet for that service business. So I'd post these really simple distillations of concepts as visuals on social started on Twitter, one of the like, revelations in hindsight about using Twitter is like being able to essentially Coast off the audiences of other people. So reading a book that somebody contributed to finding an idea in there that's worth visualizing, and then tagging that person on Twitter, and then they amplify the thing, you get more eyes on your work, I got more inbound requests for agency work, and then eventually reached the point where I couldn't fulfill the agency work that was coming my way. So had to start thinking about a different model. And that's where the education component came in. So there were a couple of curriculums. One is about design. And the other is about essentially transitioning from a service business owner or a specialized creative person into somebody who can use digital, whether it's media code, whatever it might be to package your experience into products and scale beyond just the number of hours in the day. And then visualize values just been kind of chugging along, doing, experimenting with a lot of different things. In the last couple of years, the course business is alive and well. But I've also been, kind of dip my toes in industries that I think, benefit most from the idea of visualise value. So crypto has been a focus of mine for probably the last 18 months, two years. Just trying to bring clarity to these complex ideas that people seem to. Not necessarily well, people seem to struggle to explain or understand. So that's like, in one way that's in one way. That's like a continuous source of inspiration for material for visualize value, but it's also sad to put a stake in the ground, if that makes sense. So yeah, and today, it's it's kind of an amalgamation of a lot of different things working on, as you said, content, doing some podcasts



outside of that and making art, trying to get some physical products going. It's a little bit of everything.

**Jake** 14:49

Awesome. Well, I appreciate you sharing the full story going way back and really interesting to hear some of those details that you know, having listened to a bunch of podcasts that you did with other people and Got a bunch of your content on on Twitter and law inform and everything like that hadn't heard quite a bit of that. So it was interesting to get sort of the, you know, the long version. Couple points that I think would be interesting to plug in thinking of where to start. I guess going way back, you know, you mentioned, I think you're 16, you had to get a job for school or something like that actually didn't realize that was a thing. And in the UK, but

**Jack Butcher** 15:26

yeah, government mandated program. Yeah, yeah, it's

**Jake** 15:29

interesting as it's like, a week long or something like that.

**Jack Butcher** 15:32

Yeah. Just, I think, yeah, I think it was five days, maybe it may have been, may have been like, a week and a half, something like that. But yeah, to like, get in and experience a working environment, and then write about it. And, you know, go back to school and do a little presentation,

**Jake** 15:47

that's probably not a bad idea. I mean, a lot of people, I think, at least in the US, maybe don't start working early enough, maybe, and sort of seeing, you know, learning the value of red dollar and things like that. You certainly weren't like I knew the game. And sounds like you had a few experiences, even before that, doing sort of, you know, menial type stuff and just making a buck over the summer or whatever. But the question I was going to ask was, like, you know, you got into this design thing at 16, with the one week stint, or week and a half, whatever it was with your friend or your cousin, and your parents you mentioned were like military backgrounds. It's pretty, you know, out



there. I mean, you didn't mention anything prior that really like sparked any interest in design seems like maybe it just sort of happened, and you got there and realized you really liked it. I'm curious, like, if you can recall, you know, from those earliest days being sort of exposed to this new thing, and this possibility of like doing creative work for, you know, potentially a long time, what was like the most, you know, what was really intriguing and enjoyable, I guess about it, then. And, you know, you've been doing it for, you know, some version of it for 15 or 20 years now, whatever it's been. I don't want to date you, but I think like 15 years or so 15 is about right, yeah, yeah. And, you know, obviously, things have changed the whole, you know, what you're doing is changed how you're doing and it's changed your show to your own boss now, whereas before you were just getting your start. So lots changed. But I'm curious if there's, you know, something you enjoy back then that has persisted to this day as like one of your favorite aspects or new as sort of emerged, as you know, what's keeping you interested these days?

17:29

Yeah, actually, that question makes me think about a few things that I left out of the story I told. So I was actually working. So I did that did that work experience at 16. And then, when I came out of school, didn't immediately occur to me to go and study design, I got a job straight out of school, I worked in a print, like a print factory that will basically do like millions and millions of flyers that like fall out of newspapers, that was there was a thing, I got a job as an account executive, somehow I forget exactly how that came about, applied for basically every job in the newspaper, I think, and, and it like that job was pretty soul crushing. I remember, like, my job was basically to ring people and say, Hey, we messed this up, or this is going to be late, or, you know, we got the print collar wrong on XYZ. So it was just kind of damage control. I wasn't doing anything creative. I was just kind of inserted in the bureaucracy of this, like, poorly run business. And I remember actually, it's weird. I didn't bring this up as a catalyst. I remember one of our clients was a Graphic Design Magazine. And I think it's called graphic with a K. And it was just this beautiful object, like 50 different types of paper, like the care that went into assembling this thing was so much greater than everything else that was being produced in that in that



factory, or that printers, whatever you want to call it. And I think that was kind of a, you know, that maybe, maybe lit something back up where I was like, wow, like people do do this for a living. And obviously, somebody is somebody somewhere is sitting in front of a computer designing this thing. And that environment sounds a lot more appealing than the one I'm currently in. And after that, I got a job at Honda. So the town I grew up in. One of the biggest employers is Honda, they have a factory that builds civics and CRVs. And I was working on the production line there. And a lot of my friends had gone to university. And I think one day I was just like, Man, I should try and do design. I didn't I didn't have I didn't think I had the you have to apply to university in the UK same way as probably everywhere. I'm not sure how rigorous it is in the States, but you have to have like, certain amount of points and credits and things I was have terrible students. So the university thing was kind of not A, not something I thought was open to me for a long time, but then I just thought, I'll just apply anyway. So I get home late from these shifts working at a car factory. And I'll do like, just, I can't remember now, where I got the ideas from, but just like making these little mock ups of ideas, and had to build a portfolio to apply to university, so I was kind of looking at the application process and trying to reverse engineer it. And then I applied to a bunch of schools got into one. But to your question, so I rambled a little bit. But I think the idea of like, the idea of proof of work, or the idea of building a portfolio, and being able to look back at the stuff that you've created was, the thing that's really, I think, was, like a profound realization. For me, it's not like you're walking into an office every day, and you're like, you know, you kind of you feel like your effort is just like bleeding into the ether, like you're doing damage control, you're on the phone, bah, bah, for some people, I think maybe they get, you get a level of satisfaction from that, but I definitely didn't. Like, I think that idea of building a body of work started to speak to me and having that process proven through, like being accepted into a university, however easy it was to get in just the fact that I've made this stuff out of nothing, and sent it into them. And they accepted me was a bit of a game changer. And then that that idea has just stayed true throughout my design career. And that's what a design career is, right, it's like, you can only jump around to different places of employment by showing a book of work that you've

produced and be able to speak to it intelligently. So that, like, always, has stuck with me. And that's still how the still help visualize value functions to this day is like, the business is only as good as the proof that I can put out into the world. And I was obviously, as I mentioned, a terrible student. So I didn't have a great personal network. So it wasn't really a function of knowing the right people, it was more of a function of like, make your work better, and then you'll be exposed to better opportunities. And there's obviously people, lots of people along the way that gave me a shot and turned me into came out of those places a little bit better than I went in. But that theme throughout proof of work, just publishing, not even publishing in those days, just like making stuff, and having it in a format that you can walk into a place and show it was really, uh, you kind of take it for granted in the moment. But then when you get out of that, when you get out of the individual environment and look back, those have all been like, those have all been the catalyst for for new opportunities, like a project that I worked on, that came up great that I then showed in a different interview and move to another place. And then obviously, to win work as an agency, you have to show the work that you've already done. And there's lots of there's just lots of little memories I have of even seeing people make stuff that they wanted to exist, you know, in a design context, like, you're not necessarily waiting for, you know, waiting for a company to give you a brief or give you an ask you just come up with a solution to something and and then put it in front of them. And in many cases it works. So that was kind of a, I guess the the shortcut. If there are any shortcuts, that was definitely something that started to resonate with me. And I started to use subconsciously for a long time. And then I think slowly became conscious of how useful of a device that is.

**Jake** 23:55

Yeah, I can definitely sympathize just doing this podcast even and sort of recording episode after episode. And suddenly, you know, I'm past 100, and I've got all these amazing people have been on and like looking back at that, it feels good to sort of have that collection. And it feels good to, you know, have that public. And I think you know, when you started, obviously, you know, you're doing some work and you're collecting your favorite pieces, and you're going around



with your portfolio and give an interview, you're showing what you did at your last couple of gigs and all your best work. But at a certain point. It seems like I don't know exactly what the order was. But, you know, maybe at some point, you realize, hey, I should have this stuff up all the time to show anyone easily without having to hand in the folder and I can have a website and then you know later I can have a Twitter and then suddenly I have this huge like sort of you know, flywheel of just this brand that's spinning itself and getting new eyeballs and my work. Every time I put something out in public, like everyone sees it instead of having to go and collect my favorite pieces and show them and things like that. How did that transition sort of go over time when you wasn't just collecting your your favorite work anymore and, you know, taking pride in your best stuff, but actually having that just default public? I'm assuming sort of that's how it is today.

**Jack Butcher** 25:12

Yeah, it definitely is. And public is an interesting, I guess an interesting way to think about it, because my portfolio website was always public. But there was no reason for anybody to look at it unless they were interviewing me for a job, which is, I hadn't really thought deeply about this. So my answer might not be that eloquent. But I started to realize that towards the, towards the end of my, my own attempt at building an agency was this, this didn't quite feel like it was compounding in the same way that even your reputation inside a company can compound like when you're out on your own. And you're like you do great creative work. It's, it's if there's not some consistency in terms of like, your focus, or your message, or your, like if the if this is just a collection of commercial projects that you happen to be, you know, you happen to be exposed to at various different jobs over the course of your life. Rarely does that show like your very unique perspective. So I think the transition to visualize value was that it became, like, more of a magnet and more of a not to say that a creative portfolio doesn't show off your skill set and the way you think. But if the creative briefs that made that portfolio weren't like yours to choose in the first place, maybe it's not the best way to showcase your skill set or your point of view in the same way that like this podcast, like you're reaching out to



people who you have questions for, as opposed to being assigned people to speak to Does that make sense?

**Jake** 27:08

Yeah, that would not be a good podcast. Right? Right.

**Jack Butcher** 27:11

Yeah, exactly. So you can do your best, but more often than not like the product is gonna lack because, you know, the level of interest and curiosity etc, etc, is not there, versus something that's self directed, where all of that tends to compound and it becomes this, like, really specific magnet for the types of people that appreciate the same things you do, which, you know, again, can, you can form great working relationships, that way you can build things that you know, people are going to be interested in. There's, there's all sorts of amazing things that look like coincidences off the back of that, but they're really like a product of having a very specific focus.

**Jake** 27:56

Right, yeah, I think, you know, people can argue whether, you know, luck is blind, or you can do things to make your own luck and away. But I think I mean, an example that I have from from my past that sort of, you know, I think it's similar to what you're saying about your portfolio page, like no one has reason to go there. And that's why it's helpful, I think, to like, plug into a Twitter or some sort of some sort of, whether it's a network or whatever, somewhere where people can stumble upon you, like, no one will stumble upon like a domain name that doesn't get hits, you know, you can't really do it. So, and it's interesting, because I think it brings up the question of, like, one of my favorite visuals that you've done, and you're tweeting about it all the time, like, keep going, you've got this visual, I think it says, This is pointless, like a certain point where you know, all the, like a bar chart, and all the bars are really small. And then this is pointless. It's like right before the point where everything starts to go vertical, and you start to take off. How do you know, though, like, you know, if you had just kept doing your domain name portfolio, or if I'd kept doing my blog, probably, you know, it's not really compounding, like, it's not really working, you can keep going and keep going, but you're actually just going to sort

of stay in the, this is pointless, like, you're never going to hit that escape velocity. I think sometimes it's kind of hard to know. Like, even myself, you know, I have some listeners and things like that, but I still consider myself like, pre vertical in terms of, you know, the, this is pointless, and I'm happy with what I'm doing. I'm gonna keep going for sure. But um, you know, it's like, how do you know? Are there things you look for where it's like, you know, sometimes keep going, actually isn't the right advice. Like, sometimes it's like, well, actually, you know, stop what you're doing. Think about it, and then, you know, keep going on this other path.

29:46

Yeah, I like keep going cuz you could look at it from many different levels, right? It could be like, keep going into oblivion, or it's like you're working on the wrong thing at that point where you're illustrating this is pointless and you need to buy Take all of the learnings from that like trail behind you and apply them to something else. So there's some level of nuance that is lost in visualizing some of these concepts for sure. They're. And they're like, affirmed by survivorship bias in many cases, too, right? Like you'll get, you'll put that out there. And everybody has experienced that can kind of self select into saying, Yes, this work for me. So I think the nature of social networks in particular is like, there's definitely a double edged sword there to where the, the, like, the desire to appeal more broadly, actually takes you away from the potential upside, I think that upside is illustrated, like, I don't think it necessarily means reach. It could mean this like degree of resonance you have with the thing that you're doing that converts into like, non scalable opportunities, I experienced, like, you could plot that same graph over my design career where you're doing this, like, you have this very, very linear experience, up to a point, and then you gather enough experience to hone in on a problem that, you know, a lot of people have, and you can create connections virtually to a lot of people through something like a Twitter. And that opportunity to work on a project or produce a product that is going to resonate with a very specific type of person becomes, like obvious in hindsight. So I think there's definitely, there's definitely like there's two sides to it. One is like, you have to listen to the feedback you're getting, I don't think, you know, just keep going is necessarily wise. Just keep

going, just put, keep putting work out, I would say, is not bad advice. But if you're not listening is definitely bad advice, if that makes sense. Like you're not listening to how things are being received, then you're not making the adjustments you need to get closer to something that resonates, I think there's a good there's a 50 cent quote about this as if you're not getting a response. Like you're being told something loud and clear, you're just not listening. And I think I've written reasonably extensively about this, where, like, the ability for you to do things permissionless ly on the internet is very different than than it was even 10 years ago, where a network like Twitter didn't have, you know, the types of people that has now the wake up every day and check their Twitter feed. Being a graphic designer, very specific, like to give a really specific example, like working on things that you wish existed or you wish you could collaborate with someone on. One tangible example of this, for me was navall, Raava Khan, a lot of his ideas, like really resonate with me when I was transitioning from agency to product business. And a lot of those ideas actually, like, just illuminated a different direction for the Visualize value business, in like permissionless, Li posting all of those things, I ended up getting a gig illustrating his book, not something that would have happened without like, just like not something I could have just applied for on the fly. I don't think the network putting work into the network began to just create opposite really specific types of opportunity. So I think, like the luck and work the bay is, is very, it's kind of contentious, and also, like, we are really arguing over definitions of words more than anything that there is definitely, you know, there are definitely people that start in much more advantageous, advantageous positions and others, depending on what you're, you know, what the outcome or the goal is. But there's also all of this like, incalculable, you know, Butterfly Effect craziness going on around that stuff, too. So, I don't I definitely subscribe to the you know, it's possible to increase your luck surface area and go out and do things permissionless ly and put work out into the world while acknowledging that not everybody. You know, not everybody's even exposed to the end. information that would help them realize that that's possible. Like, the the luck for me was that my cousin was interested in this thing. And he, you know, happened to mention it to me I happen to remember, who knows what I'd be doing if I didn't? If I didn't like ask my mom



Hey, is, is Brett still working at that place? That one little thing? And then probably dozens and dozens of things before that also contributed to those things. So long winded answer, keep going. I believe in it. But there's also there's also a lot of nuance to it.

**Jake** 35:35

Yeah, I'm definitely a big, big fan of the butterfly effect effect concept. Whenever I started thinking about like, these little things like that, that, had they not happened, where would I be? How would things be different? It's just like mind blowing, I just can't wrap my head around it.

**Jack Butcher** 35:51

Right. Yeah, it's like on another timeline, you're, you know, yeah, it's hard to even use language to describe those things. It's, it's just unfathomable the combination of options. And if you step out into the road at the wrong time, obviously, your life will be totally different, as well as just, it's a pretty fascinating thing. And like any, any level of conviction, I think, just speaks to a little bit of inexperience. Because there's so much nuance to it, and there's so many, there's a lot of talented people that just don't get on in the right environment, or, you know, don't get exposed to the right piece of information. And that's a lot of what I'm trying to do with visualize value too, is just try and bring some of those ideas, concepts, even just like mental frames for experimentation. open mindedness, because I think, you know, being open to the possibility of x is going to drastically increase the chance that you put yourself in an environment that helps you learn the thing, or do the thing or meet the person that's going to change your circumstances.

**Jake** 37:07

Yeah, it's, I think one of the things that's also really interesting to me, it's like, you know, we spend myself included, obviously, a lot of time, usually and thought on these decisions that we regard as being important in life, right? Like, you know, moving to New York, for you, for example, is probably sort of a big decision, you might have made it pretty quickly at the pub, but Right, right now, it's, it seems like that that type of decision, that size of decision is the one that sometimes we can make quickly. But oftentimes, we spend sort

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of quite a bit of time and energy and thought on, but really, like, it could be that the most impactful decision in your life, you know, I'm just speculating, obviously, that's the case. But it may have been just asking your mom, if your cousin was still doing what he was doing, right. But you didn't even think twice about you just sort of like sat it or whatever. And it all

**Jack Butcher** 37:55

depends on what you like, what you mean, in terms of significance, like, how are you measuring that? Because there's also crazy amounts of sacrifice that go with any significant decision is like saying no to 100 million other possibilities, right?

**Jake** 38:11

Yep, totally. All right. So coming back a little bit from the from the philosophical. Coming back to what you're doing today, with, with, with visualize value, you mentioned sort of at the point, you know, where it started to take off, you are maybe a little bit beyond that point, you started to get more clients than you could handle. And I think a traditional minded person might say, okay, you know, time to raise the prices, but you said, Okay, time to change the business model. Walk me through, like, you know, when you hit that point, you're like, probably doing pretty well, you don't even need to necessarily change anything. You could say, All right, great, I'm full of clients, we've got a good business going, let's keep doing it. Or you could raise the prices or you could sort of, you know, audible and seek to do this different thing, which, you know, I'm sure it was less common when you started than it is now to sort of seek, you know, leverage and, you know, create all these, you know, Evergreen things online for people to consume. It's even, you know, now I'm sure it'll be more popular in five years than it is today. So how did you sort of arrive at that conclusion and start to bring that all to fruition?

39:26

So, I'd mentioned of all in the last answer, I think, always got to give a hat tip to the concepts in that tweetstorm how to get rich without getting lucky. And the only world I knew from when I was a kid, my whole you know, my whole childhood. I was told like, get a good job. You know, a well paying job with X, Y and Z like longevity.

Like basically, you minimize risk in that sense, right? Find a find somebody that's going to going to pay you well, and don't enter anything that's too tumultuous, risky, volatile, etc. And then went into a career in advertising where it's time and materials based. You spend this, I always thought that there was a huge conflict of interest here, like advertising agencies charged with their clients by the hour. And it's like, well, that's kind of like the opposite incentive structure that should be in place, right? Our incentive is to spend as long as we possibly can on this thing as a company, which makes very little sense. And just not being exposed to technology. And even though I was building websites, it's kind of strange to think to look back now and not really didn't really have a grasp on the internet or the like, the internet economy, I should say, until I started to work by myself and start to think about or started to even experience like, doesn't really matter how good my work is, if I'm not, if I'm not able to position it in a way that is bringing me like the exact type of person I want to work with. And it just doesn't seem to be. Like there's so much energy was being wasted. That's what I felt like, I was like, building this portfolio website up, I was making like Instagram profiles with all of these, like, in my opinion, great pieces of work that I've produced, and like labored over for hours and hours, years and years, and it just didn't. There's just no, there was no connection to people in the same way. I think that's another, like, retroactive observation is like I was working with corporations at a size where you're dealing with somebody who is not the principal of the business, right, you're just dealing with a middle manager in a company that has 10,000 employees. And although you can build great relationships and make great work, it doesn't. Again, you just never really learn, like the, you're kind of abstracted from the fundamentals of business, you're so many layers away. I remember asking questions in a lot of project meetings and just like trying to get down to like, Okay, well, what's the actual objective here, what's the number we're trying to hit, or X, Y, or Z. And, you know, there's a lot of, there's just a lot of kind of smoke and mirrors or like, you know, somebody has one mandate, the department next to them has another mandate, as long as they kind of leave each other alone, they just, you know, just just trying to get through the day. And that, like experience I had, when I became a sole proprietor or owned my own company, I was responsible for a p&l. I was



like, Okay, now I really understand why this is not going to be like, short of like me staying up more hours, like, I can't make any more money, I can hire people. Yes, I've worked in like, really lean, amazing agencies. But all these service businesses, it's hard to imagine an example of a service business that gets more efficient by adding people kind of by definition, the opposite happens. So that realization first led me down the like, okay, let's specialize route. And then secondarily was like, Okay, this is, like, there's clearly a demand for this thing. And I need to identify what it is people are interested in. And I think this may not even be the final realization, but what I realized is people are interested in like, the ability to communicate in a simpler, clearer, more compelling way. So they can either hire me to do that, obviously, there's only so many, so many people I can do that for, or I can train people to build that skill. And that was like the realization that led the product. And I can't even take credit for realizing that by myself, because people started asking me for it on Twitter when I was posting stuff. So it really kind of it was a, I think there's a Marc Andreessen quote, I think it's Marc Andreessen says, creativity is a collaboration between the creator and the audience. And when you're like, when you're on a platform like Twitter, where the audience isn't, you know, a boardroom of people that have different, you know, incentives that don't necessarily align with yours. It's just a bunch of people that want stuff they want to try and buy things learn things. I think that led me down the path of creating these these education products initially that people just want to build that same skill set. And then, you know, from there, I just started to figure out how to refine the ability to transmit those lessons. And that's just like, as a constant process, I don't think, you know, it's not necessarily done the first time you do it, you can continue to refine it and learn from everybody that goes through the process. And, obviously, improve your own skills and put the things that you learn from continuing to practice back into the curriculums you produce. And that I think there's, there's obviously a lot of different ways you can use technology to break the relationship between your time and your income. But for me, specifically, it was really just identifying that this is a, this is a skill or an ability that I think a lot of people would benefit from, and you don't have to be a designer, you don't have to, you know, this is something that is more broadly applicable, then people who work in

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design departments of agencies or wherever, is something that everybody can use. So there's obviously more people you can serve that way.

**Jake** 46:19

Yeah, and I think the messages that you're communicating through your visuals, or, or the like, through tweets, anything, they're pretty like high level, right, like you said, you know, it's not just for like graphic designers, it's, it's pretty, it's at a pretty high level, where people who specifically are in all sorts of niches like can probably benefit from these sort of general, you know, nuggets of wisdom, or what you may. And you sort of I imagined how to, at some point transition to, you know, coming up with these messages, messages, I know, some of them are, you know, quotes from others like navall, or, you know, there's, there's a bunch of people that you've quoted in creative graphics, you know, about their quote, for in the past, but a lot of these messages, I think, are original. And that's not something that you've been doing for 15 years, like for the vast majority of that time, I think you were sort of working on some kind of mandate, and maybe they didn't give you the exact copy, and you had some freedom to, you know, take a messy message and make it clean and clear and succinct, but you sort of graduated this place, probably within the last few years or so where it was sort of on you to bring a message out of thin air, you know, from zero to one, come up with the idea, come up with the best way to communicate the idea, come up with a visual to illustrate that idea. And then, you know, maybe package it on how best to share it. I'm curious, like, you know, is there anything you do to help sort of, you know, systematically get that process going, and that idea generation machine, sort of keeping it well oiled or spark it when you feel like you're in a rut or anything like that?

**Jack Butcher** 48:08

Yeah, there's a few things. The first is, it is remarkably similar to like, physical training. Like when I first started doing it, I could do five, six a day. And it's almost like, I'm not a neurologist, I don't know how any of this stuff works. But it's almost like the you know, the the kind of neural pathways that help you translate, things to visuals just get kind of bedded in and you start seeing stuff



everywhere or your reader, you read a sentence, you could kind of pull out the logic from it, and then think about a way to add, add some visual context to the statement. I think that's one piece of it. And then the second piece is like, trying to make it is an output of my like, continued experience, or like, as I try and evolve what visualize value is or what I know, or what I put out into the world, all of those experiences and the things that I need to read and understand to take the business to the next stage are all like, kind of truths that are being tested in real time, like understanding how, like leverages has been such a huge component where there's like this dance between what you're learning and implementing, and then how you translate that back into, it's kind of like documenting the realizations that you're having in real time. So that's another like if I get stuck, it's normally because either I'm not like, reading new material. I'm not like curious about something in particular, or, you know, I'm just, I'm not pursuing something with a view to learning something from it as soon as I get into that mode. It all starts flowing naturally again. So it's just trusting that your curiosity is gonna lead you to a place where there's going to be something worth sharing. That's like, about as tactical as it gets, I definitely keep things where like, if I read something, and I can't like, read or write something, and I can't quite come up with the visual solution for it, then in there, I'll write it down, have a running list. And then, you know, some days, I'll come back to that list, and it will, it will jump out or, you know, something gets defragged while you go to sleep overnight, and you just wake up and an idea pops up. So it's reasonably organic, but I try and try and keep track of a lot of it too. And that's like, with the speed at which the world moves, it's like there's always new material or new things to is funny. There's, there's like this weird paradox where everything changes, but nothing changes. So you're kind of using these principles that you've illustrated or thought a lot about, to just continually communicate a similar thing in a different way, I would say, somebody's actually built a database of all the visuals and tagged the themes of a lot of the visuals. And there's dozens and dozens of themes, but you do start to notice there are, you know, there, there are things that begin to overlap, like ideas that are common in areas of like self reflection, like is, for example, the idea of perspective, looking at a thing or a situation from a different vantage point. You can portray that

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visually in lots of different ways. It may resonate really heavily with a certain person one way and a different person another way. So that's the other, I think, forgiving thing about this, this format is it's not like this is like v one v two V three before versus like zero to one every single time if that makes sense.

**Jake** 52:12

Yeah, definitely. I think a lot of these concepts are sort of building on on each other. And I saw the the art archive, I think it's archive dot visualize value.com. That's right. And that's the one I got double the double view is pretty cool on on the archive. So was that that wasn't something that you led that was someone else came in and did that?

**Jack Butcher** 52:34

Yeah, so one of the courses is called permissionless apprentice, and it talks a lot about a lot of what we discussed in the first half of this conversation. And yeah, guy's name is Pierce and he just messaged me on Twitter and said, Hey, I built this thing. What do you think? And I was like, yes, it's badass. Let's we like went back and forth and sent a few login details over and tweaked a couple bits and then went live that's happened a couple of times a couple people have built apps with visualize value content. One of the planner tools that I designed a few years ago someone turned into into iOS app is a lot of cool permissionless stuff that has come out of just consistently publishing

**Jake** 53:22

I mean, I guess if you're teaching a class called permission this apprentice you can expect to get a few permission this apprentices of your own so you know people not only turn in your your products in the apps and things but I saw people getting tattoos with some of your visuals So pretty cool stuff going on.

**Jack Butcher** 53:38

That's all I know.

**Jake** 53:40



I know we're coming up on time here but appreciate all the time you spent I want to wrap things up thanks again jack for coming on and joining me it's really really interesting conversation and really enjoyed it. Where can people go and follow you and your journey you know, visualize value.com I'm sure anywhere else anything new you want to point people to?

**Jack Butcher** 53:58

Yeah, I think Twitter is the best place to to catch anything that might be going on. So at Jack Bucha for me and visualize value for visualized value. And yeah, we've got a got a couple of different newsletters you can get to via visualized value.com If you're interested in learning more and then all of the products that we talked about, you can find there as well.