



Million Dollar Launch with Sigrun

Episode #26

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Lisa Larter (00:01):

Welcome to, She Talks Business. If you're an entrepreneur, business owner or aspiring mogul, chances are you want to learn more about marketing and mastering and monetizing your business. She Talks Business is where you'll learn all of that and more. My name is Lisa Larter and I'm an entrepreneur, high school dropout, wiener dog enthusiast and your host. Let's get started.

Lisa Larter (00:24):

Every once in a while, you meet somebody online that is destined to become a friend for life. Every so often, you meet people who are more generous than the average person, and they are supportive, and they're high in integrity, and they become a force in your life to be reckoned with. I can say all of this to be true about our next guest.

Lisa Larter (00:55):

I met Sigrun in a Facebook group many years ago. I posted a question that I had about Facebook Ads, and she was quick to answer, jumped on a call, and explained everything to me. From there, I hired her, and I got her to teach me more about Facebook Ads, because she understood it better than I did. Fast forward, I invited her to speak at one of my events, and she flew from Iceland to speak at my event in Ottawa, Canada. After that event, she hired me, and I coached her in her business for a year. She is the type of person who is unique, intelligent, driven, and, I have to say, she walks her own path.

Lisa Larter (01:42):

This episode is a really, really interesting conversation, because the two of us have very different philosophies around what it takes to build your business. I love that we can agree to disagree, or agree and respect each other's unique



perspective. In this episode, I love celebrating the fact that this woman had a million-dollar launch this year. You are going to want to listen to what she has to say, because it is outstanding. Have fun.

Lisa Larter (02:21):

All right. Sigrun, where are you right now? Are you at your new luxury penthouse in Iceland?

Sigrun (02:30):

Yes, I am. I've been here since November, since I moved in. I still feel like I'm moving in, because I don't have all my furniture, I'm still missing a few pieces. But I'm creating my new home, and it feels very exciting.

Lisa Larter (02:46):

That's amazing. Did you ever think, in 2014, when you started your business from zero, that you would be buying this glorious penthouse that you just bought at the end of 2020?

Sigrun (03:04):

Absolutely not. I think I was just thinking of making some money so I didn't have to work for someone else. That was at the forefront of my mind. I was hoping for a six-figure business. I thought that was like... would be stable income and enough for me. My husband had a good job, so I was just more thinking about being financially independent. It's interesting, because the building where my penthouse is in was built around 2015, 2016, and I saw the building. I would drive past it, and I was like, who are these people that buy an apartment in this house? Now I'm one of them. So that's amazing.

Lisa Larter (03:48):

That's awesome. So my earliest memory of you was... I'm pretty sure it was back in 2014 in the B-school community. I remember you being someone who showed up regularly inside of that community, and answered questions, and offered to help people. One night, I was frustrated, because someone on my team had set up a Facebook Ad for me, and the ad was not converting, and there was a problem with the ad. I didn't know what I didn't know, but I knew enough to know that there was a problem. I needed somebody to help me uncover the problem, and you immediately raised your hand and said, "I'll

jump on Skype," I guess it was before Zoom, "and I'll go through it and walk you through it and help you."

Lisa Larter (04:36):

It's funny, I just posted something on Facebook, prior to the interview, about the fact that you walk your talk, and what a generous person you are. Even that evening, it was evening for me, you were just willing to help at the very beginning, before you really were making any money in your business. Fast forward, I've hired you've hired me, we've become good friends, we've continued to share our journeys. But there's been one thing that has been significantly different about the two of us and how we have both built multimillion dollar businesses, and that is basically the path that we've taken.

Lisa Larter (05:17):

I have always been about preserving profit in business, always. I've always been a profit freak, I've always looked at my bottom line excessively, and made decisions based on my P&L to preserve a certain percentage of profit in the business at all costs. In some cases, I've made big gulp decisions to invest, but in most cases, I've been conservative. You, on the other hand, I thought you're crazy, traveling all over the world, joining mastermind, spending money like you didn't need to make money.

Lisa Larter (05:55):

I remember thinking, "Oh, my God, what is she doing? Is this ever going to really pan out for her?" It's great that you're meeting all of these people, and you're rubbing elbows with Gary Vaynerchuk, but can you afford to pay yourself? So let's talk about money, let's talk about your path, the unconventional path that you took to building your business. So I want to hear... You just had a successful million-dollar launch, which is amazing, seven years to a seven figure launch. Not seven figure business, a seven figure launch.

Lisa Larter (06:33):

So I want to hear about the beginning, I want to hear about the decisions that you made to invest early on. You just said you really wanted to have a six-figure business and be able to pay yourself and not work for someone else, but you've built, really, an empire. There had to have been some misgivings, some doubt, some mistakes, some stumbles along the way. So I

just want to unpack it all, because our paths have been so different, and really understand what it's been like to be in your shoes, making those decisions. Because, of course, I never would have told you I thought you were crazy at the time, I can tell you.

Sigrun (07:19):

I'm glad you're admitting to it. But it's great that we're friends, and we can see each other approaching things completely differently, and at the end of the day, the results are the same. So there isn't just one way to build a business. But I would say my approach came from wanting a scalable business. Even though I had humble desires in the beginning, and not huge goals, and I did not see myself as one of those people that has a million-dollar business, I knew that I wanted a scalable business.

Sigrun (07:56):

So that was one idea in my head, scalable business, because I had been a CEO of a small software company. In 2004, I got that job without any business education or business experience. The only way to make more money, besides, of course, having the right ideal client, then raising prices, and all the typical things you do to increase your revenue, was to hire more programmers. There came a point where I couldn't find more programmers to hire. Iceland is not a big country, 360,000 inhabitants. At some point, I ran out of programmers. We didn't have remote work like we have today. Now, there would possibly be an endless supply of programmers, you would just hire them somewhere else in the world. But in 2004, we didn't even have that idea of doing that.

Sigrun (08:48):

It came a point where there was 1% unemployment, and I just could not find more people. If I found more people, they would tell me what they wanted, and then I just had to pay those rates. Since it wasn't my company, I was running it for someone else, I had just done a successful turnaround on it, and now we had this fast growth, 40% growth every year, 20% EBITA. I was obsessed with EBITA back then.

Sigrun (09:15):

Because it was not my business and I had to deliver those results, I went to the owners of the company said, "You've got to sell. We've got to sell right

now. You got to sell this company, because now we have reached this plateau, where I don't see we can grow this any further." I saved this memory in my head, so one day, when I have my own business, I'm not going to be stuck in this place. So that was one approach.

Sigrun (09:41):

Another thing, I was with people that were doing venture capital, and I did MBA grad after I was a CEO, I did executive MBA at London Business School. You learn a lot about getting investors onboard, and there's... I got excited about this startup space. So another approach that I had in my head is like, you need to invest, you need to invest forward. If you want to build an empire, taking your words, you cannot just sit on all your profit like... it's not Donald Duck. What is the other guy's name? Scrooge, or whatever. And hope that they will multiply if the capital is not working.

Sigrun (10:32):

So to me, money is working, has to work for you. And if you sit on it, it doesn't work for you. Not if it's not working in the business. I don't know if this was so conscious, but when I look back, I can see this is one of the things that I took with me after working for other people and doing my MBA. So when I started my business... Actually, I had lost my-

Lisa Larter (10:58):

Can I stop you for a second?

Sigrun (10:59):

Yeah, please.

Lisa Larter (11:00):

Because I see a lot of people who say they're investing in their business, but they're not really investing, they're spending.

Sigrun (11:07):

Yeah. Yeah.

Lisa Larter (11:10):

Talk to me a little bit about what you were thinking in terms of investing. Because there had to be an actual strategy that you were investing in. I know

you well enough to know that you were not just willy-nilly spending. A lot of people say that. A lot of people that, oh, I'm investing in my business, and you and I both know it's not real investing, it's just, I'm just spending my money, I don't understand the difference between cash flow, what's in my bank account, what my receivables are, and how much I owe in taxes, and they're just spending the money because they see the money. That's not what you did.

Sigrun (11:46):

No, but it still was something that was hard to explain or even consider a proper strategy. For instance, I traveled a lot, up until a year ago. In the beginning, I was overspending. I didn't have the money, I was spending my private funds to do all the travel, but it was cost to the business, because I saw it this way. I wanted an international business. I'm not a native English speaker. I was living in Zurich, Switzerland, I come from Iceland. Yes, I was in Facebook groups where we met, everyone is English speaking. But how is someone who was never in an English speaking environment supposed to build something that looks like an international business? That is with travel.

Sigrun (12:40):

I went strategically to places like New York, Los Angeles, I went to San Diego to Social Media Marketing World, I went to London. Yeah, we went on holiday to Dubai, not so strategic, but there were like... I went to all these places, and-

Lisa Larter (12:56):

And to Ottawa, the capital of Canada.

Sigrun (12:59):

Exactly. Annapolis Royal. And I went on a cruise in Alaska with an entrepreneurial friend. That was a part exploring the Abraham Hicks part, because I'm totally not Google, I didn't even know what I was getting into. But I saw all this as a part of... it's almost like further education, how can I expand my horizon by meeting all these people, by going to all these places? I see this as business.

Sigrun (13:34):

It's interesting, because the tax authorities in Switzerland, of course, at some point, wanted to look at my books, because I collected a lot of debt in the beginning, all on purpose. And then they also see this revenue, and they don't really know what I'm doing, so... I was trying to give them my books, just by giving them a login to my Xero, and woman said, "I need to come to your home." And I'm like, "Really?" "Yeah, I need to see that you're actually using this as an office, what you say is an office."

Sigrun (14:06):

She came, I think she was like 35, and I think she fell in love with the business. I think I probably sold her a program. I explained to her the strategy. Like, I'm building an international business, I am not perceived as international without actually traveling to places, going to conferences, meeting people. And she said, "I totally get it. The law just doesn't accept it." She did not give me a huge slap on the hand, there was no fine or anything. I think she said, "In the first year of business, I think you have to take back travel 10% and pay it privately. And then 5% in your second year, in my third year, zero." And completely accepted the rest. I have home office in two countries, which was also accepted.

Sigrun (15:01):

So my books have been checked, and I feel very good about that this was all okay. But anyway, coming back to the strategy. Yes, this was a part of... what do you call... Perception is reality. When people see you all over the place, they think you have business all over the place. Especially in my first year, I did not have any clients in these places. But a year later, I had, because people saw, oh, she comes regularly to the US, she travels to the UK, she goes to Germany. And then I started to attract these people, because they saw me going to these places.

Sigrun (15:40):

I went to Social Media Marketing World, I went six years in a row. When I started my podcast, I could contact 100 people, and they all came on my podcast, because I had met them at the bar at Social Media Marketing World. So, was it a very calculated strategy from the beginning? I'm not so sure. I love traveling, so that's a personal hobby, too. But I would not have what I have today, if I had not-

Lisa Larter (16:10):

You invested in a network, you invested in visibility, but you also invested in building a network of trusted colleagues, and building relationships with those people, as well.

Sigrun (16:22):

Yes. There was not a single person that said no. I had somehow not... I didn't know I would launch a podcast, I didn't know that I would need those contacts later. So that's also what you say, that's a nice thing. You cannot build a relationship or a network if you always have in mind, how can I use this?

Lisa Larter (16:43):

Right.

Sigrun (16:44):

So I just got to know these people. I think you made a few of those connections. I was going to Social Media Marketing World, and you said, "Oh, say hi to Melanie," or say hi to this person, and then I walked up to them, and I said, "Hey, Lisa Larter says hi. I'm Sigrun, I'm from Iceland." Then you have a glass of wine together, and then you're suddenly best friends. And then you go again. So even if I didn't know these people outside the conference, because I went again and again, it was like, "Oh, hi, Sigrun." And then I wear red all the time, which makes it also easier to spot me in a crowd of 5,000 people. But it's funny, for instance, Mark Schaefer, I think you know him already, and his book-

Lisa Larter (17:29):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Sigrun (17:30):

He was at this conference, and I would always say hi. Because I would go to his talks, I would walk up to him, and I said, "I loved your book. Can I have a selfie?" That was it. We didn't have dinner, we didn't even have drinks. Now, when COVID hit, and I know he lost all his business, I raised my hand and I said, "Can I book as a speaker for a virtual event that I'm doing nine months from now?" And I paid. That was the first time I paid for speaker in my life. So

it's come full circle. These people are benefiting that I was doing all these things, too.

Sigrun (18:10):

Besides the visibility and the networking, I realized at some point I needed to invest in myself. That was something I struggled with in the beginning, I must say. I thought like, hmm, I've been 10 years CEO, I have four master's degrees, who do I need? In my first year, I was just really... I call it the throwing spaghetti at the wall phase. I had done B-school, but done it, I had seen the modules, but I didn't have a business, yet. When we met, I barely had a business.

Sigrun (18:44):

I really felt that I, somehow, could puzzle these pieces together. I'm pretty good at observing people. I observe someone's launch, I read emails. I've never done a copywriting course, I just read a lot of emails. And then I developed my own voice and my own style, and now other people are copying my emails. So-

Lisa Larter (19:03):

It's what happens, right?

Sigrun (19:06):

That's how it happens. But I was nine months into my business, and I finally decided I needed some help, and I hired a business coach from Australia. I had seen her help a few clients with launches, and she did just that, she was like a launch business coach. Something clicked, it was just like... I just invested the \$5,000, and I got an email from someone who said, "Do you do coaching?" And I'm like, "Who? Yes, I do."

Sigrun (19:39):

So even before I started to work with her, something clicked in my mind, and I could see literally what it means to invest in yourself. But into real things, not... Just like you say, it's easy to spend all the money. I know people that have earned a million dollars, and it's all gone, poof, it went away just like that, and they don't even know what they spent it on. So I started to see the benefits. I worked with her for six or eight weeks, I learned how to launch. I love launching, it's one of my favorite things.

Sigrun (20:10):

And then, when I joined your mastermind, in 2016, was my first mastermind experience, and I realized, I need this. So every year since then, I've been in a mastermind. Typically, I stay sometimes two years with someone, and then I move to the next person-

Lisa Larter (20:29):

I think that's really smart, too. I think it's smart that you have chosen to move, because it's allowed you to move into different circles, and to meet different people, and to learn different perspectives. And not only learn from them for your business, but also for you personally, but also to learn some of the struggles that people are having, which helps you help other people.

Sigrun (20:56):

Yeah. The more people I get to know, the more I know to help others. I go into the masterminds, of course, with the thinking, like, hey, I need to grow personally and for business, but of course, the further you go, the less you're going to get out of some of these networks, I realize. Sometimes I just see it at that, it's just a new network, a new group of people I get to know. Just yesterday, I had a session on my copy, and that's a woman who was in a new mastermind that I joined. And I was like, I would never have met her, I would never have hired her for this, if we had not met. So I'm seeing it differently today. So it's a bigger challenge when you are further, to find the right group.

Lisa Larter (21:49):

Yeah, that's what I like about our... We're both part of The Trust. I like being part of The Trust, because I like the fact that there are other business owners that are seven and eight-figure earners that you can learn from, because I really do believe that every new level is a new devil. Everyone says, oh, I want to be a seven-figure earner. Oh, I want to be a six-figure earner, but they don't understand that there are different skills and different problems, different challenges at each level of your business, and you as a business owner have got to grow your skillsets in order to be able to adapt to each of those new levels in business.

Sigrun (22:30):

Absolutely. So yeah.

Lisa Larter (22:33):

So-

Sigrun (22:33):

Coming back to the point of like spending all that money, I felt I knew what I was doing. I founded a limited company before I had my first client, because I was so convinced that this would work out. I saw enough proof around me, and I realized, hey, I'm a relatively smart person, I will figure this out. I didn't know how long, and possibly, in the beginning, it took me a few more months than I thought, originally. But then I would on purpose, invest for it.

Sigrun (23:10):

But it was also things... I think you just have to know a lot about accounting and bookkeeping and... Because of the turnarounds before, and I had been managing businesses for 10 years, some of it, it's not like... how do you say? For instance, home office in two countries. I meet people that are making seven figures, and they're not renting their office space to themselves, and I'm like, this is just your lost money, because-

Lisa Larter (23:39):

Right.

Sigrun (23:40):

... even now, in COVID, when Switzerland was debating about this, it's mandatory now to be in home office. Now, the employers need to pay the people for the space where they work, and they need to have their equipment. So if you work for yourself, you shouldn't do that? It's exactly the same rules. So yeah, leasing a car to the company, travel. I would say 90% of my travel is business-related. Now I travel mainly between Iceland and Switzerland, it's still business. Going out for dinner. Yeah.

Sigrun (24:18):

I work late, and sometimes I'm working... In a launch, if I'm working until 10 PM... I know this from my parents having a small dry cleaning. If we were working on till 8 PM, it's actually in the union contracts of the employees, we had to provide for dinner for them. So I guess all this knowledge comes together, and I knew exactly what I can do. So sometimes it's not like...

People are possibly spending this money themselves, but they're not putting on the business, and I put-

Lisa Larter (24:53):
Right.

Sigrun (24:53):
... a lot on the business. I think that's one of the advantages of fully owning your business and having no partners or shareholders, is that you can do a lot more with that. When I started my business, I could also take all my photographic equipment that I had accumulated the five years before I started the business, I could put it out as an asset into the business. So I did a lot with the books to actually have depth on purpose. So for three years, you can carry on, depending on country, carry on debt for three to five years. But I knew this would pan out. So there was like... Yeah, I don't think I was thinking so much risk.

Lisa Larter (25:36):
Right. So how did you know? There's a quiet confidence about you. It's funny, because you say that you started a corporation before you had a customer, I did the same thing. I actually remember walking... I started a holding company. I went into my accountant's office and basically told them how I was going to do half a million dollars in this business. In retrospect, I remember saying to him, "I know you're probably going to think I'm crazy, but this is what's going to happen, and this is what I need to build." It's beyond that now. So how did you know? How did you find the confidence to do that?

Sigrun (26:11):
I think it was seeing what I saw others do, like the role models, the proof, and looking at, what have I done myself? I've actually run a business before. I have a lot of experience, and I have a positive mindset, I have a growth mindset, I persevere, I don't give up. I think when you have that mindset, it just cannot go wrong. Of course, I make mistakes. Of course, there are some failures and lessons learned on the way. But I've had launches where I thought I would make a million dollars, and I made 300,000, and I'm like, that feels like a failure, right? But it's all a part of the journey, and yeah.

Sigrun (27:00):

I maybe play a little bit what I call calculated risk. There have been times where I was spending my last dollars on Facebook Ads the day before [inaudible 00:27:15] opened. But I did not have a sleepless night. So I guess that's just something... I think it's not for everyone, and I wouldn't recommend my clients to do it. I wouldn't go to my clients and say, oh, spend your last dollar, and then-

Lisa Larter (27:29):

Right, right.

Sigrun (27:30):

... the launch is going to... No, that's not an advice a business coach should ever give. But I actually thrive on this, this is a part of the thrill. I guess it's also maybe coming from Iceland. If there's fish in the sea, you go and fish it, and then you bring the fish back, and you can buy a car or a house or a TV. If there's no fish in the sea, fine. Then there's just... we eat some cheap food. It's in the mentality of my culture.

Sigrun (28:05):

I don't know anyone, really, that saves here, which is a sad thing. But Iceland has had so much inflation over the years, that anything you put in the bank disappeared. They have taken two zeros off the currency, like they have done in Italy. Italy have done it twice, I think. Iceland has done it once. Inflation means also all real estate loans are indexed. This is one of the few countries, or if not the only country in the world, where all your loans are indexed.

Sigrun (28:44):

Last year, I paid everything off. I wasn't traveling, I wasn't investing much forward, and I just took all the money and paid everything off. So I'm personally debt-free. I owed \$100,000 in student loans, but I owed \$100,000 for 10 years. So even if I was paying every year, because of the inflation and the indexing together, it was never paid off. So when you grow up in a society like that, you rather spend money than saving it. And you find a way to maybe spend it in a smart way, like I think I did, rather than just wasting it. I was investing in networking or visibility or in education. But, of course, I could have spent less money-

Lisa Larter (29:38):
Right.

Sigrun (29:39):

... that's for sure. But it comes from a cultural background, sure.

Lisa Larter (29:43):

Right. So talk to me about launching. Because launching, it just... oh, it brings up all kinds of ickiness for so many people, including myself. I would say I am not an aggressive launcher, I am more of... an invitation marketer, is what I call it. I will put something out there and see who's interested, and if I get enough of a response, then I will go and do that thing. And if I don't get a lot of interest, then I just don't even spend any time, effort, or energy on it. Whereas you have taken a very different path. You are very much focused, and your launches have changed and grown and evolved over the years to culminate in a recent seven-figure launch. So talk to me about launches, and, I guess, the mindset that it takes to be willing to launch without the fear of being too salesy, and talk to me about the long term planning that you put into launching to ensure success.

Sigrun (30:52):

Yeah. So I think launching gives me the thrill of something new and exciting happening, and I think I'm just a typical entrepreneur. If things are just regular, I get bored, and I don't enjoy my business. The great thing about launching, even if I have now developed my own method, and I stick to that, there's always things you can still vary around it, so there's a lot of creativity around it. I love being on video, I love... especially live. I don't like prerecorded video at all, I just like being live with people and interacting with them. Launching gives me this awesome thrill. I love this mixture of like... It's almost like art and science.

Sigrun (31:35):

So, launching is a numbers game. You got to have a certain number of people interested in the first place in order to make a certain number of sales. So we have, how many people will buy, and conversion rate is 3%, 5%, and then we just know how many people we need to get into our launch. I was always thinking about scale, coming back to that thing, and it's very hard... I love

invitation marketing. I think it's great what how you do it, and I see a lot of other people do it.

Sigrun (32:11):

I do this for smaller programs, where I'm just expecting maybe 10 people to be in the program, but now I have over 400 in my latest launch. There's no way, with invitation marketing, you could get so many people, unless you have a million followers, or something, and I am never aiming for that. So I have a relatively small social media following compared to the revenue I make, which is quite interesting. I know we're similar there. Like-

Lisa Larter (32:40):

Yeah.

Sigrun (32:41):

... we're not social media stars, we're not-

Lisa Larter (32:44):

My list size is small compared to my revenue. If you did revenue per subscriber on my mailing list, it's pretty high.

Sigrun (32:51):

Yeah, yeah. And the same for me. My mailing list has... We clean it out so regularly, so it always hovers around similar numbers, and social media doesn't grow so much. But I go into launching, and I attract people through Facebook Ads to some sort of a training, and they want to come to that training. And then I give it my all for at least a week. Now, for a seven-figure launch is longer. You need longer time with people when you're trying to have a bigger launch. I would say nowadays, I'm seeing more and more launches that are more around the 30-day mark.

Sigrun (33:32):

So you have invited them to something, it's not necessarily the launch training itself, but it's something else they can do, and they start to get to know you. My favorite way, and this has been doing... I've been doing six years in a row, 12 days of masterclasses around-

Lisa Larter (33:50):

Yes.

Sigrun (33:50):

... Christmas, and this has become my signature thing. In the beginning, it was just like, hey, I've done all these webinars. Maybe I should reuse them around Christmas and do 12 days of webinars. So I started to do this 12 days of masterclass, first time, 2015. The cool thing is, they run over Christmas, so 12 days is actually between December 25th and January 5th, and not in the middle of December, like many marketers are trying to create now. This is a time where people have time. They have time to watch. And-

Lisa Larter (34:25):

Yeah, people are working on their business, because-

Sigrun (34:27):

They're working on their business. Yeah. They're not having any meetings. Even if they have dinners and lunches with family, and probably less in last Christmas, still, you'll find an hour, you squeeze in an hour a day to do some further education. So I have seen women that say, I wake up hour earlier before my kids wake up, and I watch your masterclass. So then I have someone who's watched 12 masterclasses, 12 days in a row, and then I said, "Do you want to come to my live training?" Because the master classes are prerecorded, and I'm not there to answer their questions or anything. But now they have the chance to come to live training with me. And then I do a live training five days in a row. And it's a lot. I do four hours a day. I know, I'm a bit crazy.

Lisa Larter (35:20):

That is a lot. Four hours in one sitting?

Sigrun (35:24):

No, there's two hours and two hours. So-

Lisa Larter (35:26):

Okay.

Sigrun (35:26):

... there's one hour break in between. Yes, there's a drop. Most people don't stay the whole time, but it's massive. We did barely see a drop over five days. Typically, you see most people attending the first day, and then-

Lisa Larter (35:40):

Right. You're right.

Sigrun (35:41):

... a lot less, maybe even just 10% of the people from the first day join on the last day. But no, we don't see such a big drop. And most people who do like... If we call this a five-day challenge, it isn't really a five-day challenge, it's a five-day course-

Lisa Larter (35:55):

Right.

Sigrun (35:55):

... worship thing. They say-

Lisa Larter (35:57):

So you're really investing in them in the front end?

Sigrun (36:00):

Front end. I do a proper course with an upfront. And then I brought them to a certain place, and now I'm like, do you actually now want to make it happen, what we have created here together? And they do. I do all the various things that... I want them to experience how it is to work with me and my team. So I do a workshop, interactive, I have breakout rooms, where they can connect with other participants and get to know them, I have a Q&A, and I have case studies. So I bring on clients that I worked with, and they volunteer for this, they're excited to be a case study live.

Sigrun (36:47):

We have hundreds of people watching, and then the person is telling how they worked with me, and how they had created a six-figure business in 12 months, or something similar. And then the people can ask them directly, so

what... [inaudible 00:37:03]. What was the product you sold? How long was the program. They-

Lisa Larter (37:07):

Yeah.

Sigrun (37:08):

But they leave, and like, this person worked with me to achieve these results. And then I do hot seats, as well. Because one of my favorite things is to not know anything about a person, and they come on, and I have a timer... well, I have my phone ready, and it's five minutes, and I give them an inside breakthrough, tell them what they can do next in their business. I could be doing that all day long, every day. That's-

Lisa Larter (37:40):

Yeah, I like doing that, too.

Sigrun (37:40):

... so much fun.

Lisa Larter (37:41):

To me, that that is a real sign of having grounded expertise, is when you are not... I hate script-reading, I hate... I'm like you, I would much rather do a video live, I would much rather do hot seat coaching live. It shows what you know, and the depth of your experience and knowledge.

Sigrun (38:07):

I've started to do this now on Instagram. I'm trying it out to see if this world like... The question is also, when you launch you do something, and then it goes away. Like, it's gone. So I will not do a live training like this until maybe six months from now again. So now I'm trying it out on social media, and I wonder if that becomes too accessible, that it's too easy to get on the hot seat. So I will see. I will see how that goes out.

Lisa Larter (38:38):

So you did all of this, and then you presented people with an offer.

Sigrun (38:45):

Yes. I did something different this time. I had them message me that they were live with me on day two already. I should have asked on the first day, but this was just... I get new ideas every launch.

Lisa Larter (39:02):

You asked them to message you and say what?

Sigrun (39:05):

Let me know that they're with me live on the-

Lisa Larter (39:08):

Okay.

Sigrun (39:08):

... training.

Lisa Larter (39:09):

Okay.

Sigrun (39:10):

Because I have their email address. Yes. But we know email addresses are not as valuable as-

Lisa Larter (39:15):

Right.

Sigrun (39:15):

... what they should, because open rates-

Lisa Larter (39:19):

So where did they message you?

Sigrun (39:20):

They sent me a DM on Instagram.

Lisa Larter (39:22):

Ah.

Sigrun (39:27):

I was teaching them something, and then I said, "Guys, I'm going to do a short Instagram training for you. How about that?" And everybody said, "Yeah." So I just connected my phone to Zoom, and I quickly showed, here's my Instagram account. Oh, please go and follow me. Oh, and send me a DM that you are here with me.

Lisa Larter (39:46):

That's brilliant.

Sigrun (39:48):

And then-

Lisa Larter (39:48):

You can engage with people.

Sigrun (39:50):

And then my team could start a conversation. What's your business about? Are you building an online business? Are you still with us on day three, four, and five? And then we opened card earlier to a wait list. So during 12 days of master classes... These were all prerecorded masterclasses, but I did something. I put on a Christmas hat, and we did an intro and outro for every master class, and in it, I said, if you like this masterclass, come on the VIP notification list to be the first one to know when we open up the program. So-

Lisa Larter (40:29):

So you're not hiding the program, you're really upfront, I'm going to teach you stuff, and there's an invitation for you to do more.

Sigrun (40:38):

Yes. But it's not salesy, and that's the key, and this is where people can... who are worried about being salesy, it's not salesy at all. It's invitation to come on the wait list. We were able to build a wait list, just in those 30 days, with 1,000 people, that said, I want to know when the program opens up. And then we made a special offer to them, that they could buy the program a day before everyone else. That's where I made over 500,000 in 24 hours, and that was a shock to me.

Sigrun (41:13):

So, because we had a seven-figure launch, we actually made the bulk of the money just right there, because we had seen it. We had talked about the program every day, get on the wait list, or here's the case study, this woman has achieved that because she joined the program, and it felt not salesy at all. I didn't feel I was selling anything.

Lisa Larter (41:37):

So talk to me about planning this launch. Because clearly, there was a lot that went into it. So, you have these 12 days of prerecorded webinars, you've got a week, where you are basically teaching people a course, you have a pre sign up page to be notified when the program opens early. How much planning did you need to do in advance of all of this? Did you have the entire picture laid out that you were going to do, or did you style-flex and do things on the fly? How did you approach it?

Sigrun (42:21):

We're not as planned as people might think.

Lisa Larter (42:24):

That's what I was hoping you'd say.

Sigrun (42:27):

Yeah. [crosstalk 00:42:27]. But I think what helps a lot is that this was the sixth year we do 12 days of masterclasses. So we have tried everything, what works and what doesn't work. So the intros and outros was something we did for the first time a year ago, and now I get them even better, we put it on their teaching platform, so they also experience how it is to be on our teaching platform, everything nicely organized.

Sigrun (42:55):

Last year, let's say a year ago, we didn't have enough interaction in the Facebook group. This year, we give out prizes for watching the masterclasses at the right time. So we are taking the same plan, and just... we have a list, what worked well, what didn't work well. I think the biggest thing someone can do to plan a launch is to do a launch review.

Lisa Larter (43:24):

Smart.

Sigrun (43:25):

Yeah. So we do a launch review, and we really lay out, okay, what would we do with the launch? What worked well? What are we going to do differently? We have all the emails, we have the open rates and... We put this in the day after. So we send out an email, 24 hours later, my team goes in and checks the open rate and click rate. Because people can be clicking six months later-

Lisa Larter (43:46):

Right.

Sigrun (43:46):

... and that's not relevant for the launch. So we want to know open rate and click rates right away. And then we can take this plan and we say no, we don't use this email again, we use this email again. So it's fairly easy now. The first time around, it's, of course, more work. I used to write all my emails myself, and that's the biggest shift in the last 12 months, that I actually hired a copywriter on my team, and she can write as closely as I can do. She's European, but can... German or Austrian, actually, but can write in English. That's been the biggest help.

Sigrun (44:28):

That was the most stressful part for me in the past, was writing all the emails. Because I'm such a in-the-moment person that I don't like writing the emails upfront. I have previous emails I can use. I hired a copywriter back in 2017 for launching a similar program, so I know the drill, I know what I should send out first, I know what the last email needs to look like. And then I started to write them myself, because my emails, obviously, work better than a copywriter's emails. And then I would always look at the email the day before, or the two emails, if there are two emails going out, and I'd make adjustments. But I-

Lisa Larter (45:13):

Do you still do that? Do you still-

Sigrun (45:14):

No.

Lisa Larter (45:15):

... look at them and make adjustments?

Sigrun (45:16):

No. Now I don't even know what's going out.

Lisa Larter (45:20):

Interesting. And that doesn't concern you?

Sigrun (45:24):

No. I really trust my team. They're using my words, these are... We're taking emails-

Lisa Larter (45:31):

Right. Previous ones.

Sigrun (45:34):

... that I had created... Previous ones, as much as we can. But we also have... I have a person on my team who is responsible for writing customer success stories. She will have an interview, so she goes on Zoom and interviews clients and then she writes it up. If I have to write an email, I could copy paste the customer success story, I write an intro and an ending. But she has written it in a way that can be used in the email. But yeah, not watching my emails before they go out is probably the hardest part of delegating for me. It's been easier to delegate like graphics and social media, and things like that. But emails was always something I thought I could not outsource or... It doesn't feel like outsourced, because people are on my team, and I see... If I want to see the emails before, I can see them, but I'm protecting my energy. I-

Lisa Larter (46:30):

Yes.

Sigrun (46:30):

... want to really... I want to be 150% there when I do those hot seat calls and workshops, and that's really my role.

Lisa Larter (46:39):

Yeah. No, that makes a lot of sense. Email, writing copy over and over and over again, and feeling responsible for writing the copy daily can be really draining. For your team, if they're waiting for just in time copy for you, it's stressful and difficult for them. I know even for my team in Thought Readers, the weekly emails that come out, they're not all written by me. They get the notes from my books, I send them the notes, and I send them the things that I consider oh, here are ahas and here are discussion questions, and here are things we should ask the author, but I don't micromanage what they pull out for each of those emails.

Lisa Larter (47:25):

And then they write... Basically, what they send me is the introductory part, and I always change it, because I always write some little thing that is in alignment with what's going on that week. So I always write the introduction, but that's one email a week. When you're in launch, it's like, boom, boom, boom.

Sigrun (47:47):

Yeah. And it's-

Lisa Larter (47:47):

It's a lot.

Sigrun (47:48):

... not just a lot. We had a launch for this program called Summer Kickstart. But at the same time, we have people renewing our membership. We also had people who messaged us and said, "Do you have another program? I'm further in business." We were selling that. Even for my high level mastermind, Red Circle, someone was just messaging on a live, on my Facebook page, we realized that this person was ready for making a million dollars. And then my team, hey, book a call with me.

Sigrun (48:24):

So it's a lot, because we have different programs, and not just selling one thing, so that also, every time you launch, people are suddenly interested in renewing their membership, or upgrading to another program. So that makes it a little bit more complicated, but I had now a bigger team, so it can just happen organically.

Lisa Larter (48:47):

I think what happens, too, is you create energy and enthusiasm within your community, and people want to be part of that. Now, you talked about having a growth mindset and a positive mindset, and I think people are attracted to that. I don't think it is the default for a lot of people to be optimists. Especially with so much not good stuff going on in the world, I think it's easy for people to get caught up in fixed mindset thinking. When they come across someone who has had success and has a positive, optimistic mindset, and they have this community of people that's excited and enthusiastic, it's like a virus, it's contagious, right? You want to be part of that, you get-

Sigrun (49:31):

Yeah.

Lisa Larter (49:31):

... sucked up in it.

Sigrun (49:32):

Yeah, yeah. That's what I like about launching. And then I bring them in this community. I know I will be changing these women's lives, so they feel that. It doesn't feel salesy, and I hear this again and again, especially a lot of my clients are German speaking, they are even more worried about Facebook and sending emails and privacy and all of that, and I tell them, selling is serving. We're all put on this earth to follow a mission, to live our purpose. If we're not telling people what we do, and how they can work with us, then we are stealing from them.

Lisa Larter (50:13):

Yeah, absolutely. It's a disservice to people to not let them know how you can help them.

Sigrun (50:18):

Yeah.

Lisa Larter (50:19):

You can sell without being pushy. Buying is a choice.

Sigrun (50:25):

Exactly. I know these five emails on the last day is something that like, a lot of resistance. But I have done a lot of maybe not like qualified research, but let's say, within the community, friends and family, I said, how do you buy? If there's something offered to you, how do you buy? And my sister, who has been in online business herself for seven years, she said, "I always buy on the last day." I was coaching a client the other day, and I said, "My sister always buys on the last day. So let's say my sister was on your launch list, and you don't send out several emails in the last day to remind her that now is the last day, she will not buy."

Lisa Larter (51:07):

That's very true. I used to see a... When I was watching, I would see a 50% lift in sales from my last chance emails. But I never sent five on one day.

Sigrun (51:18):

We send five, we send even six, I think. But one email is just for those who have clicked to the sales page, for instance, or... We don't send all five to everyone.

Lisa Larter (51:31):

Right.

Sigrun (51:31):

We do have launch lists. People-

Lisa Larter (51:33):

Right.

Sigrun (51:33):

... have raised their hand and said they're interested. So we have the rest of our email list, they will get, in a launch, max, three emails-

Lisa Larter (51:42):
Right.

Sigrun (51:43):

... a week. I don't like to disturb or annoy people that are not interested. So I really believe in this, you've given me permission, you said you're interested-

Lisa Larter (51:53):
Yes.

Sigrun (51:54):

... and we have the soft opt out in every email. There is always this sentence, if you don't want to hear more about this program, click here, you will still stay on our email list.

Lisa Larter (52:04):

Yeah. I think that's so smart. You're really showing up for the people who have raised their hand, and you're giving them the opportunity to raise their hand again and say, stop emailing me.

Sigrun (52:17):
Yeah.

Lisa Larter (52:17):

So I think that's... Again, it's very strategic, it's very smart. You're not just throwing the same stuff at everyone, you are communicating directly with people based on the level of interest that they have expressed.

Sigrun (52:32):

Yeah. We're going into an affiliate launch soon, and my team was a bit like, oh is this fitting to what we're doing? And I said, "There will be people on our email list who are interested, and there will be people who are not." So we're going to do it even more closed. So there's going to be an email, and they have to click, and then they will get more information about how they can join this other program. But those who don't click will not hear anything.



Lisa Larter (53:00):

Right. Right. Absolutely. So smart. All right. Sigrun, I think I need to have you back. I think we need to continue the conversation. I know that people... I keep saying, I could become Tim Ferriss in these podcast interviews, because I could talk to people for hours. We have been conversing for almost an hour, I want to be respectful of your time. I would like to bring you back, so that we can continue this conversation. Will you come back and join us again?

Sigrun (53:30):

Absolutely. It's a pleasure. I didn't realize how the time flew.

Lisa Larter (53:35):

I know. Where has the time gone? All right. Thank you so much, Sigrun. I'm going to put all of your links and information in the show notes, so that everyone can find you. Clearly, all you need to do is Google Sigrun, and you'll find her everywhere. Look for the trail of red. Thank you for being here.

Sigrun (53:53):

Thank you.

Lisa Larter (53:56):

Thank you for joining me for this episode of She Talks Business. If you enjoyed the show, you know the drill, leave us a review, tell someone about it and join the conversation on social media. Thanks for listening and until next time remember, done is always better than perfect.





Lisa Larter is a Business Strategist, Digital Marketing Expert, Author and Speaker.

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