



SPI Podcast Session #103- Stop Being a Superhero. It's Killing Your Business (and You).

Pat: This is the Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn, session #103! [rapping] My name is Pat Flynn and I'm here to say, be dropping knowledge bombs in your brain today! [speaking] Huh. I'll take it.

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later! And now your host, the Manny Pacquiao of online business, Pat Flynn!

Pat: Hey, what's up everybody? This is Pat Flynn and welcome to session 103 of the Smart Passive Income podcast. I'm actually half Filipino, for those of you who don't know, and I actually just got back from the Philippines. I was an event called Tropical Think Tank by Chris Ducker. It was an AMAZING event and went very well, and so that Manny Pacquiao reference sort of makes sense in that regard...but he's much stronger, faster and quicker than I am and would probably take me out in the first round, probably with one punch.

But anyway, on to today's content, I'm really, really excited and proud to bring back our good friend, Chris Ducker from ChrisDucker.com on today's episode for a number of reasons. One, today's a special day for him, and I wanted to bring him on the show because we're great friends and I wanted to announce for those of you here on the podcast for those of you who don't know that his new book, [*Virtual Freedom*](#)--an actual, it's on Kindle but it's also a physical book. It's in my hands right now called *Virtual Freedom: How to Work With Virtual Staff to buy more time, become more productive and build your dream business*.

So, of course I'm giving him a shoutout here to hopefully help him sell more books. Beyond that, though, I wanted to bring him on here to talk about his experience with hiring virtual staff and working with virtual staff and also share my experience working with virtual staff and the things we can share, even if you don't end up buying the book, this is going to be very, very helpful for you.

I share a lot of stories from my past, success stories and not so successful stories working with virtual staff and the things I learned from that, about how Chris got started in this business and really why he's doing what he's doing, why he published this book, because in the life of any entrepreneur, he or she will eventually get to the



point where there's going to be a fork in the road where a person can make a decision to continue to do things on their own or to hire out other people.

And for many entrepreneurs, including myself for a while, and Chris too--and he talks about this in this episode--we all have this, what he calls "Superhero Syndrome" where we try to do everything ourselves, and if you choose to do everything yourself, especially when you get to that tipping point where you're growing so fast, and you will, you're going to burn out.

Chris talks about his burnout experience. I've almost burned out a few times. Or you can choose to hire other people and expand that way. If you choose to do nothing, you either stay stagnant as a business, which we don't want to do--of course, we always want to grow--but in order to grow without burning out you're going to have to hire other people, and that's the point at which I am in my business right now.

I've hired some team members, and I'm going to talk about them a little bit in this episode and in the future as well because I've been working a lot with them, it's what's enabled me to create AskPat.com, for example, my other podcast, which answers voice mail questions five days a week. I wouldn't be able to do that on my own, I just couldn't, but as you can see and if you've listened to that show, I'm able to provide more value to my audience by utilizing assistance.

Not only that, but as a result of providing that extra value I'm deepening the relationship I have with my audience, I'm also decreasing the number of emails I have to respond to and I'm actually making money from that podcast as well. I have sponsors coming on board for that podcast, too.

And so, you know, again, I wouldn't be able to make more money if I didn't spend money using virtual assistants and hiring out. This is something we talk about and a lot of the things you have to worry about and strategies to help you better the experience that you have with the people that you hire in the future.

Again, congratulations to Chris, I'm just so proud of you buddy, I was there in the beginning as you know, working with you through this book to solve this--all the Skype calls and everything, I'm just so proud to be part of this. I mentioned in the book, and I'm in the gratitude section, so I'm very thankful for that. I recommend you pick it up.



My affiliate link for Chris' book is SmartPassiveIncome.com/vf--that's VF for Virtual Freedom. Now, let's get right into the interview and let's welcome Chris to the SPI podcast for the third time! What is up, Chris, how are you buddy?

Chris: I'm good, brother. Good to be back. And I've got to say something real quick right now--John Lee Dumas, I know he listens to this call, and back in episode 97 right in the end he mentioned that he wanted to be your first-ever threepart guest. Do you recall that?

Pat: I do, I do.

Chris: Right. Well, John, I got you beat. [laugh] Sorry! A little bit of personal competition going on there between me and the Dumas. I had to get it out.

Pat: Ah, well, are you ready to ignite? Sorry, sorry John.

Chris: [still laughing]

Pat: We love you, John!

Chris: We do, we do.

Pat: We were actually talking right before this episode about how great that interview was and how much value John provided on that episode, so that's SPI podcast #97 for those of you listening. And it doesn't really matter how many times you've been on. I mean, you and John and a lot of other people here--you guys provide tremendous value, and I wanted to bring you back on today for a number of reasons.

One, first and foremost, you are coming out with a book, and I couldn't be more proud of you, Chris, because I was there when you had this idea and while you were struggling with the writing and now all of this stuff happening so fast now, now that it's going to be launched TODAY. It is launching TODAY. I'm just so proud of you, dude, so before we just start talking about anything else, just congratulations. I'm so happy for you.

Chris: Thanks, I appreciate it. And, you know, obviously I give you a mention in the gratitude section of the book because you're right. We are each other's sounding boards. Everybody knows we're close friends and all the rest of it as well, but there are certainly, you know, moments in the writing process where I needed more than just a



shoulder to cry on, and you...you know, you were there to help me out and give me suggestions and all that sort of stuff so thank you, Mr. Flynn.

Pat: My pleasure. And you know, when we talked in the previous episode that we were in together, which was 74, which actually you were in my office and we were recording that together, we were talking about the importance of these kinds of relationships. I mean, I've talked about mastermind groups all the time. Jamie Tardy and I talked about the importance of mastermind groups in episode 98.

However, what Chris and I have is sort of, almost beyond that. We talk on Skype very, very regularly, and we just tell each other like it is all the time. And you know, we do that in our mastermind groups, but there's some connection we have here. Like, part of that title of #74 was BFFs.

Chris: Right, yeah.

Pat: And we are! I mean--we support each other. You know, Chris, I bought 50 copies of your book because I want to see you succeed, and I'm going to be giving them away to people on my email list. So, if you're not on my email list, you know, that's was a perfect way to get people on my email list by the way.

Chris: Get yourself on the list!

Pat: I didn't even make that a real strategy. I just said that.

Chris: You should just buy more books. Just buy more books--there you go, there's a new opt-in strategy direct from the mouths of--

Pat: Buy Chris Ducker's book.

Chris: From the mouth of Pat Flynn, yeah!

Pat: No, but I'm going to be giving away several copies to people who are on my list, and so look out for an email. But again, I'm just here to support you, man, and you know I don't want to talk just about the book here. If we keep talking about it, people are going to sick of it. But I want to talk about what you talk about in the book, because we haven't really talked about outsourcing and getting hired help in quite a while here on the show.



And I want to bring that back, and even bring more to the table than we've talked about in the past. And so let's start with a problem that I had when I first started, which is a problem that all entrepreneurs have, this thing called Superhero Syndrome. Can you tell us about what that is, really quick?

Chris: Yeah, look, I mean, you know. I believe that ultimately every entrepreneur will get to a crossroads in their entrepreneurial journey where they will have to make the choice. It's as simple as that. You will have to either choose to break down and burn out, which I know you've experienced in certain ways and I certainly have as well before. Or, go to the other direction and build your team. And this Superhero Syndrome that I talk about in the book, basically states very clearly that if there's a way to save some money and do a task yourself, you'll do it.

If there is a way to work an extra five hours to micromanage the hell out of a web site project, you'll do that. If the word "recharge" only applies to your iPhone, that is when you know you're suffering from Superhero Syndrome.

It is basically exactly where I was at the end of 2009. I was, you know at that point I had about 130 employees at my call center company Live To Sell, and I was working 15-16 hour days, 7 days a week, pretty much 7 days a week, not spending any time with my family. The diet was terrible. Exercise, what was that, you know what I mean? And I burned out. Plain and simple.

When I hit that crossroads, that Superhero Syndrome crossroads, I made the choice there and then that I needed to start removing myself from my business as much as possible, and delegation was definitely going to play massive, massive role in that entire goal.

And so I set that goal up. 2010 was the year that I removed myself. I became what I wanted to be known as a virtual CEO and by the end of the year I achieved that goal, and I think I ended up hiring eight people to replace me in the--that's how thin I was spreading myself.

Pat: Mmhmm. That's interesting because you were running a call center, and you're providing services for people who are understanding of the idea of having other people do the work for them, and here you are putting, you know, 12-20 hour days in and burning yourself out.



And you know I felt the same way, even--especially when I first started. I didn't have kids at that time and I wasn't even married yet, but I was pretty much married to the idea of hustle and doing hard work and as much of it as I could, and I remember getting challenged along the way technically and mentally and especially technically.

I felt like I had to go and figure that stuff out on my own. I didn't ask for help right away. It took me a really long time. I'm even still learning how to do that even better today, now, six years later. But when I first started, I remember--and I tell this story a lot--I remember setting up my WordPress site and that taking days just to get to a point where I could finally start writing. And I remember putting an image on my page, it was on the right-hand side of the page, and I spent like seven hours trying to figure out how to put it to the left hand side of the page.

I was like "Okay, I can do this, I'm going to go on YouTube, I'm going to learn HTML and CSS" and I did. And you know, I figured it out eventually. And the code was probably the worse code to ever make that happen. It just ruined my site and you know, eventually I ended up asking a friend for a favor to help clean all that up. But...

Chris: Right.

Pat: I mean, that's just one of several instances of something just like that.

Chris: Right. and that's Superhero Syndrome, right there. That's exactly what that is. Doing stuff that you shouldn't be doing--um, I had the same thing when I started my first blog. I bought an out of the box premium theme for \$70 or something, and then proceeded to waste literally 3-4 days trying to customize it through changing tiny little bits of code and copying and pasting--what am I doing? Pay somebody \$70 or some--no, \$150 I paid somebody in the end to fix it on [oDesk](#). And it took them like three hours to fix all the mess that I created and get it looking the way I wanted it to look. So, you know, massive lessons to be learned.

But yeah, you know, we're weirdos. Entrepreneurs, we're a strange bunch, and we like to think that there's nothing out there that we can't do and the moment you sit down and you start working through exercises and seeing what you're doing on a day-to-day basis inside your business, you'll realize sooner or later that you are not running your business. Your business is running you, and that is a massive, massive brain drain right there, and it's just something that as an entrepreneur you shouldn't be handling on a day-to-day basis.



Pat: How do you get over the idea of having other people do the work for you? If you have Superman Syndrome, it's really hard to just turn that off, and I'm still learning how to turn it off today, but you know especially in the beginning I just wanted to do everything on my own. And I think, I mean, there's probably a number of different reasons why people don't think of doing that.

One is just the idea of spending money on something like that is different for people. Why would I hire somebody else to do it when I can do it myself? Or, for me and--one of the things was, I need to do it myself. This is my baby, my site. I don't want anybody else to touch it.

Chris: Right. And who better to build your baby, grow your baby, other than the person that gave birth to it, right? So I completely understand that, and that's the entrepreneurial, logical mindset is that we should do it all, and society has led us to believe--this is the screwed up thing--society has led us to believe that working those 15 hour days, 6-7 days a week, not spending any time with our family, but having a big bank balance every quarter is quote-unquote "success."

I don't call that success at all; I just call that being stressed out, unfit, unhappy and just unfulfilled. The moment you get to that point in overwhelm and you start breaking down the things that you're doing day to day, you can then start to really see what you're doing and what you should and should not be doing as the business owner and this is exactly what I did at the end of 2009 when me and Urz, my wife, for those listening in--when me and Urz checked into a hotel here in Cebu for a few days between Christmas and New Year, we worked out what we were going to do in 2010 to remove myself from the business. And I sat down and I just made three lists.

I didn't know at the time that these three lists were going to become ultimately the starting point of my entire outsourcing/delegation journey, which sounds a little ironic because of the fact that I had 100+ people working for me already, but just imagine. I was involved at every single area of my business, everything--recruitment, training, operations, IT, marketing, sales, I was doing everything.

And so once I made those three lists, which have now become the three lists of Freedom Exercise that I've done with so many people, tens of thousands of people, online, live, you name it--once I made those lists, it was so obvious that I was doing so many different things that I shouldn't have been doing as a business owner. And it just opened up my eyes.



Pat: Let's talk about that list because I remember when we did our one-day business breakthrough in San Diego, you had done this exercise and it was one of the things that most people commented about after the day was over. So, can you run us through that exercise? Can you actually give us or give the listeners...you know, tell us how to do it so we can benefit from it.

Chris: Yeah, sure, okay. So, what you do is, you know, you just sit down in a nice quiet place with your beverage of choice. It can be a cup of tea, a coffee, a beer, a wine, whatever.

Pat: The beverage is important.

Chris: The beverage IS an important--it's an integral part of the entire process! [laughs] No, just get yourself relaxed and in a zone where you're going to do some serious thinking.

And then you get a piece of paper or an iPad or whatever, draw a couple of lines down creating 3 different columns.

In the first column, the list that you're going to create is a list of all the things that you don't like doing. You hate doing them. You procrastinate doing these type of tasks. That's the first list.

The second list is a list of all the things that you're doing day to day that you CAN'T do. You talked about moving images from one side of the screen to another on a website. HTML, coding, graphic design, selling, all these different things that you struggle with and you know, even though your Superhero Syndrome is in effect and pulling you back, the fact of the matter is you know that you can't do this the way you want it done, and that's your second list.

And then lastly, the final list, the third list, is by far the single most important one because this is the one we really have to think--this is why you need the beverage, okay. This is where you really need to plug in and get rid of that Superhero Syndrome and start thinking properly like a business owner and this is a list of all the things that you feel that as that business owner, as the head honcho in incorporation you, that you should not BE doing on a day to day basis.

The reason why that particular list is so hard to put together is you might LIKE doing some of these tasks. You might actually be really good at doing some of these tasks.



And I look at somebody like you, who--and I'm talking to you, Pat, not the gazillion people listening in [laughs]--but I look at someone like you, Pat, who is great with Photoshop, who IS a good little graphic designer when he needs to be and wants to be and actually genuinely enjoys doing it, but the question is for that type of task and for any type of task that is in this column, is should you actually be doing it as a business owner?

Could you time be spent on more high-level tasks like coming up with new products or services or spending more time with your 20% top clients or at a conference networking, or could you just have more extra time to spend with your family, you know what I mean? So those become your three lists for freedom.

I did them not even thinking about having that little title for them in late 2009 and it was the catalyst for me to fundamentally remove myself from my business by the end of that 2010, to the point now where I'm not working 7 days a week anymore, 16 hour days, I'm working 8 or 9 hours a day, Monday-Thursday. I have a three day weekend now, and I'm really proud about that.

Pat: That's cool. So let's recap those columns again.

The first column, and you can even like, pause, after you listen to this, so you can think about these things--

Chris: I suggest they do, yeah.

Pat: The first column, Chris, you mentioned writing down--or if you're listening to this in the car, at the gym, or something, these are all the things that you DON'T like to do in your business. Perhaps you do them and you hate it. You know, when you're doing these things you just despise the idea of doing these specific tasks.

Now, how specific and details should we be, Chris?

Chris: As much as you want to be. As much as you want to be. There might be people that just don't like spending time on Facebook but appreciate the fact that they have to be on Facebook because their audience is there, or their perspective audience is there. So instead of wasting time in putting together posts and then getting on the Facebook and, you know, posting those status messages, get a VA to do that for you and then you can head back later in the day and spend five minutes interacting with your fans on



Facebook. You don't need to be in there with the nuts and bolts, you know? That's just one particular task.

I'm not a big fan of Facebook. I utilize Facebook, I respect it for what it is and what it can bring for my business, but I'm not the biggest fan of it, but I'm there because my audience is there and I want to be with my audience and take the conversation away from the blog and the podcast every now and then, and Facebook is perfect because there's so many people there.

Pat: Right, I mean you A, have to know where your audience is and B where they are, and you have to be...you can't--

Chris: Sure.

Pat: Expect them to always come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.

Chris: Yeah.

Pat: That's a very cool side-point there.

Okay, now second column are things that you can't do. Things that you might know that need to be done in your business or you always feel like you're asking for help on, perhaps, that you cannot do yourself. Or, you really struggle with doing these things. Again, just...you can't do it. That's what you write down there.

Chris: Right. For me, graphic design is a big one. I try, trust me. I try. But eventually I just gave up and I just--I can't do it. I'm just not good with Photoshop and I know what I want things to look like. My father was an architect, my mom was an interior designer, so I've been born and raised around stuff that looks very cool and nice and particular and everything, and I am a very particular person to work with. I even had graphic designers say to me they can't work with me anymore because I'm just too...particular, you know.

Like "Move that 5 pixels to the left!" You know? That sort of thing.

Pat: Yeah, I can see that.

Chris: So, I mean...



Pat: I'm just kidding.

Chris: Yeah, of course you are.

Pat: But really, I can see that.

Chris: [laughs] You can! Because you know me! It's the way I am! But I can't do it. I can't do graphic design. I just can't do it. Just like I can't code as well. I just...I don't see the point in me even trying anymore because there's people out there that have got far more talent in relation to those particular tasks and the roles...and my, you know, my skillset is helping my audience and working with my clients and that sort of thing, and that's what I should be doing.

Pat: Right. So I mean, there's a few things here--A, like, you know, understanding how much YOUR time is worth and where that time should be spent. B is understanding what are your strengths? And really focusing on those instead of trying to go against what you or you and your body and your mind are sort of meant to do.

Chris: Right.

Pat: And again, going back to Superman Syndrome, you think you can do everything but what are you GOOD at? Do more of that! Outsource everything else.

Okay, so pause, and then #3, column #3, this is the hard one--as a business owner, someone who is treating their blog or their website or whatever they have going on online, as a business these are the things that you should NOT be doing that you, perhaps, even like to do and can do very well.

And that's a tough one. That's a tough one.

Chris: Really tough. But it's the most important one, because once you start getting rid of those particular types of tasks off your plate, that's when the real freedom comes. That's when the business growth comes and your business stops running you and you then start again to run your business.

And I've often--you know, somebody--I was on another interview a few nights ago, and somebody asked me this question. "Why did you write this book?" And my reply was something along the lines of "I wrote this book because I want to bring calm to the entrepreneurial storm."



Pat: Nice.

Chris: And it's so true. This can do it. We shouldn't be doing everything ourselves as business owners. There are other people out there who can do this stuff for you and that's when the freedom comes into play, and that's when you really start to enjoy what you do because you're focusing in on what you do better than anyone else, and that's the key.

Pat: Or where you are absolutely needed, for instance when on with your actions, which you perhaps charge a lot more for.

And then also understanding that these VAs, you know, they're probably going to do a lot of these things much quicker and much better than you could yourself.

Chris: Absolutely.

Pat: Now, okay, so I have this list, or the listeners have this list ready, BOOM, we find one VA, hand it to them, "Do all this stuff for me." Is that good or bad?

Chris: Heh. It's about as bad as you can get. You're setting up that answer, aren't you?

Pat: Yeah, I am, I am.

Chris: [laughs] Because you know how I feel about this. You know, this is the effects of the super VA myth that so-called quote-unquote experts or "gurus"--I hate that word--gurus have, you know, online said that they're experts in outsourcing and what not. You can get one person to do everything for you--but, you know, it couldn't be further from the truth.

I mean, if you think about it very logically, and I know you've gone through this recently, Pat, with your house, right? You build a house...you don't hire a head contractor and then he does EVERYTHING. What he does is he then goes and sub-contracts the electrical work, the plumbing, the brick, the plastering, the roofing, to people that specialize in those particular roles. You have to look at building your team in EXACTLY the same manner.

If you expect one person to be able to come on and save the day, you're in lala land. It's not going to happen.



Pat: It's not going to happen, OR if someone says they can do that, they're obviously not going to be experts at ALL of those different things.

Chris: No, no. I mean, there is no such thing as a Jack-Of-All-Trades, right? There REALLY isn't. So, the #1 rule when hiring to build your team is to hire for the role and not for the task, unless you're actually hiring just for a task, right?

So, if you want a logo design, you can go to 99 Designs or [oDesk](#) or [eLance](#) and find a graphic designer to do it. If you need, you know, a 15 minute video transcribed and then have that text turned into an eBook to giveaway as an opt-in magnet on your blog, you can do that. That's a one-off task. But when you talk about real freedom, you talk about building a team, and if you need to do that, you need to focus on doing it role by role, very specifically.

Pat: OK. Yeah, I...one-off projects I think is also--a great place to start, because that's where I started and that sort of, as a Superhero Syndrome diagnosed entrepreneur, starting with the one-off projects was a great way to ease my way into it. So, you know, I wouldn't expect anyone to sit down and create this list and all of the sudden hire two, five, perhaps even ten people to just do all this stuff.

I mean, you're going to have to ease into it and of course there's a learning curve as far as how do you--like, communicate and talk to the VAs and how to work best with them and things like that. Which we talked about in episode 20, back in the day, so if you want to listen to that--smartpassiveincome.com/session20.

I believe, and correct me if I'm wrong Chris, we talk about the hiring process and how to make the best of that relationship with your VA and how to treat them, how to communicate and how to keep track and all that stuff. So all the nuts and bolts there--

Chris: Yeah. Which, you know, even though it was recorded, what, a couple of years ago, right? That is still so--I mean, it's evergreen content, because being nice to somebody, paying somebody on time, training properly, not expecting, not ASSUMING that they're going to work perfectly out of the box, all that stuff is evergreen. So regardless of whether you've heard that episode before or not, you CAN go back to that and devour that content right now and enjoy it, and you know, it would be quite funny just to go back and listen to that myself, actually.

Pat: Yeah, we should listen to it--



Chris: Yeah, it'll be fun!

Pat: I should listen to that too, when we were just starting out as friends.

Chris: **Yeah.**

Pat: So, there's probably a lot less jokes in that one, too.

Chris: A lot less goofiness, yeah.

Pat: Yeah, but--anyway, going back to...I think I said Superman Syndrome. I meant Superhero Syndrome. But going back to Superhero Syndrome, if you have that and you want to explore the idea about outsourcing, I believe starting with the one-off projects is a great way to do it. I remember my very first experience--and actually, this was back in 2008 when I had launched my eBook at GreenExamAcademy.com, started to make good money off of that and then I got advice from people in my mastermind group to do an audio book, to actually record the content of that book, turn it into MP3 files that I can then sell on its own and alongside the current eBook that I had.

And I thought that was a great idea. It made complete sense. And so what I did was, the first week, I recorded it myself. And I spent however many hours recording it, and it was the worse audio I've EVER heard. Like, I recorded it on my Logitech Headset that was meant for, like, video games and it was just like, super hollow sounding and for some reason even though I was reading, I was saying "um" and "like" and it was just TERRIBLE. I couldn't sell that.

And I went back to my mastermind and I was like "Guys, how am I supposed to do this audiobook? I tried recording it, and I don't have the equipment. It's just not working when I do it myself."

And they started laughing! They were like, "Haha, you tried to do this on your own?"

And I'm like..."What are you talking about?"

He's like "You should OUTSOURCE it."

And I didn't even know what that meant at that time! And they were like "Go to this site, it's called elance.com, put in a job--it's sort of like eBay where there's an option for



people to work for you. So, you share your job and different developers and people, voice talents, will come and say "I will do this job for this amount of money" and you get to pick the one that you like best based off of their portfolio and their feedback and you can even talk to them beforehand."

I was like "That sounds so cool!" And so I put the job on, and I remember getting bids for like...I talked about how many chapters there were, and how many potential hours it might take based on how long I took to record it, and I started getting quotes ranging from \$400 all the way up to \$4000.

Chris: Yeah, yeah. That'll happen.

Pat: And I was just like "Okay, now I'm confused, I don't know what to do or who to go with." And then I just started to talk to a lot of them. And I think this is one thing that I did really well in the beginning, because I didn't just hire the lowest price, which...you know, sort of side story, when I started my iPhone app business, we were so anxious that we DID higher the lowest bidder, and we actually went through [eLance](#), and that was a HUGE mistake.

But anyway, I hired somebody that I spoke to and I ended up having her record one chapter as a sample just to listen to it, and it was GREAT. It cost \$1400, and that was more money than I'd ever spent in my life for ANYTHING. More than rent, anything! It was hard for me to part with that money, because I couldn't imagine spending that much on something that I felt like I could potentially do on my own at some point.

Chris: Right.

Pat: But I spent the money and a couple of weeks later I got this amazing audio back and then I sold it on my site. I recouped the cost in two days, after selling that.

Chris: See, that's--this is what I'm talking about, you see. This is about utilizing the talent that is literally at a click or two away. You see how I said literally there?

Pat: Yeah, if you listen to episode--[Chris laughing]--uhhh, what was it that you were in? 74, we say that word at least 100 times.

Chris: Yeah. Different ways. Anyway, it's an inside joke. Some of you will get that joke and I know that a lot of you tweeted at us about that.



But no, literally, you have--there it is again!--you have, you know, the ability to find AMAZINGLY talented, experienced, skillful people to do this work for you all around the world, and as an entrepreneur doing business in the 21st century, you're crazy, you're almost certifiably insane, if you DON'T take up that particular business model when it comes to growing your business.

Pat: Yeah, I mean, it's been huge for me and now I'm outsourcing a lot more, I'm even doing--I'm hiring people to do things for me that I like to do and enjoy doing and even though it was hard for me to part with those things, such as editing a lot of my podcast episodes, which--you know, Ask Pat, that new podcast I have, it's...you know, the only thing I do is record answers to questions. That's it.

Chris: Love it. And that what's you're best at. That's where you as the business owner, Pat, should be focusing on, because people are sending in their questions to you based upon the fact that you are a thought leader, an extremely experienced, successful entrepreneur. That's what you should be doing. You should NOT be editing podcast episodes. Right?

Doesn't mean you can't or don't like doing it. The fact that you should not BE doing it. And that doesn't mean that that's a menial job that should be outsourced to somebody for peanuts, because I know you don't pay peanuts for it to be done, I know you pay very royally for it to be done because the quality needs to be there and you get a real person that focuses on that, and that's their role and that's what they do for you and that's exactly what Virtual Freedom is all about.

Pat: Yeah. Totally. I mean, and that's how I'm able to do a five-day-a-week show. I wouldn't be able to do it without help.

Chris: It's impossible.

Pat: But here I am hiring help so I can provide more value. I'm having more people discover me, more exposure on iTunes, and as a result my business' revenue is growing.

Chris: Love it.

Pat: And I'm making sure I treat my team REALLY well. I'll send them gifts once in a while--like, after ASk Pat was launched I gave a gift, just sent a gift to everybody. I



hooked up Matt, Matt Garland who's done a lot of the producer role type stuff for me, I hooked him up with a whole brand new podcast setup.

Chris: Oh, see, that's what I'm talking about. That sort of stuff? That's you investing in your team, and the relationships that you have with those individual team members. I love it. I had no idea that you did that! That's the first time you told me that. That's awesome! I love that!

Pat: And Mindy, who's doing my podcast editing, I sent her--you know how they have these subscription boxes or gift baskets you can buy for people? She has cats, and so I sent her stuff for her cats, and she loved that.

And my developer who's, you know, on the computer a lot, I got them these really high quality headphones, because I want them to stick around, they're doing GREAT work for me, and I want to thank them for all the hard work they put in, so. Just wanted to share that with everybody, and give you a little insight here on Team Flynn there.

But you know, I want to shift to--

Chris: That's a podcast, by the way. That right there? And I'm sure everybody listening wants that as an episode. Talk about Team Flynn! Talk about what you do to work with your team, and the way that you do it. That would be a great follow up to this particular section.

Pat: I could have them on, actually!

Chris: Yeah, you need to do that.

Pat: I should. We do these things called sprints. Every two weeks we meet and we do what is called a sprint, and Matt leads those discussions and he says "OK, let's talk about how the last sprint with, what we did right, what we did wrong, what could we do better, what do we need to pick up from the last time, and also "Okay, what do we want to accomplish by the end of this sprint, going into the next one?"

And that's how I've been able to get all of this stuff done. It's just amazing how, you know, this team has grown and how it's been so helpful for me, and my brand, and most importantly been able to help me help more people in the SPI audience. It's just, so cool. I'm able to do a lot more now that I have other people helping me out.



But I wasn't able to do that in the beginning, I didn't have the money in the beginning, so I started off small.

Chris: Right.

Pat: And just...sort of grown from there.

Chris: Yeah. And I think the sprints come from the agile--

Pat: Yes!

Chris: Way of running meetings and stuff like that, so yeah. You're doing everything the right way now, because you know, this is the journey. It's what I'm talking about. It's an entrepreneurial journey that we go on, and unfortunately a lot of lessons we learn the hard way by burning out and spinning our wheels a little bit, but once we get our groove going like you have now with Ask Pat and the rest of the stuff that you're doing with your team, it's a beautiful feeling. Not only does it feel great, but it grows your business at a ridiculous rate, a way faster rate than you would've been able to do it if you were trying to handle everything yourself.

Pat: Yeah, absolutely. Thanks for that, because we could end the episode right there. Heh! But I do want to talk about your book a little bit--you know, your book is called *Virtual Freedom*, and I'm so excited for this because this is a book that everybody needs to read. It's about a lot of the things we talked about today, but in more depth, more actual items, more ways to help you and your business grow...

But I want to talk about the book writing process, because I know you're going to be real honest and upfront with this, and I'm going to be writing a book very soon--a traditionally published book, which is what you chose to do. Talk about how that process went. When did the idea for this book come about? And, you know, how long does it take you to get to this point? What were some of the struggles and...you know, talk about that a little bit.

Chris: Well, I mean, it was brutal, to be honest with you. I mean, I am going to be real. It was probably one of the hardest things I've done in my career was to write a book. I was originally contacted about two and a half or so years ago to do something, and I was in the middle of really focusing in on building [Virtual Staff Finder](#), which is our VA recruitment service company. So I knocked it back.



And quite frankly, the advance wasn't really worth a whole lot anyway. It wasn't much of an offer at all. But then late 2012 I was contacted again by another publisher and at that point I decided to get myself a literary agent and to put a proper proposal together and ship it out there through a few publishers and see whether or not this was a one-off kind of publisher just wanting to sort of ride on the back of my online platform, or whether there as genuine legs there as a potential book project.

We put together the proposal and we sent it out to sixteen different publishers and we had four offers within the space of two-three weeks, and I couldn't believe that I got a 25% buy-in from actual publishing houses. That for me was--

Pat: That's cool.

Chris: Yeah, it was huge. But it was--it was the exact push that I needed to literally put pen to paper and start working on it pretty much immediately. I remember speaking to you about it when I had signed late 2012, just before Christmas 2012. I knew it was super stoked for me and everything but I didn't know at the time, because the excitement was there, right? But I didn't know at the time how grueling of a journey it was going to be for me.

Now, I'm not saying that this is going to be the same for everyone who decides to sit down and write a book, because we're all in completely different situations. Remember that, right? So here I am, I have three different businesses, I have 270 odd employees, I speak regularly, I travel regularly, mostly because of the speaking, I'm a father of three kids, a husband to a beautiful wife, and I also blog and podcast.

So there's a lot on my plate, and then to sit down and say "Okay, now I need to come up with 60,000 words for a book project by the middle of this year" it was pretty daunting, and I did actually need an extension. I needed an extension on my initial deadline with the publishers, because I just couldn't get it done in time, plain and simple.

The thing was this--I love blogging. I love writing blog posts. I love sharing stories and my experience and my how-to knowledge for my audience. It's one of the most enjoyable things that I do as an entrepreneur, but writing a book is not like writing a bunch of blog posts and then sticking them all together. I found that out VERY, very quickly indeed! And, um...you know, it was a tough, grueling process.



As I got to the end of the manuscript, and I was ready after that extension, I promised myself I wasn't going to ask for another extension, so I really batted down the hatches and just went at it for about a week to finish the book on time. It went to the publisher about 70,000 words, and we've eventually ended up cutting it down to about 62,000. So, quite a bit was cut out.

And I'm pretty sure one of the reasons why that was, it wasn't because the content wasn't good, I think I just, because I was sort of in major writing mode and I didn't break whole lot for that last week, I think I just rambled plain and simple. It wasn't concise enough.

Pat: Was it most of the stuff that you wrote near the end that was cut out?

Chris: Yes. It was, yes. And, you know, there was other things that we thought--some great case studies, we've got some, some Freedom Spotlights in there, which you're one of them, and you know, I wanted to make sure that I included them and I actually over-delivered on those as well, which we ended up having to cut a number of case studies and spotlights out from the final manuscript because there just wasn't enough room.

The good news is that we've saved them and we're going to give them away as bonuses for people who end up buying bundles and all that sort of stuff for the book, so they haven't gone to waste, but it was an entirely different process to the one that I thought it was going to be, and it was very grueling, and very tiring, but once I got to the end of it there was just an overwhelm, a tsunami of accomplishment and pride that I felt and now, you know, the moment it was done, it was done.

Then the editing began and that was a whole different process, and you end up reading your book 20, 30 times in certain sections, and then you end up NOT seeing the spelling errors or the grammatical errors, because you're no longer reading, you're now skimming, you know what I mean?

It's like "God, I've got to read this book again! I wrote the thing, why I am reading it for like the 9th time this month?" You know what I mean? It was just a nightmare! But it was the process that needed to be done and you do need to do it. You can't escape it, particularly when you go to the traditional publishing route, right? So I really...I have to get to the point where I just have to suck it up, quite frankly, and just close doors and lock myself away.



And I actually ended...and this was a nice sort of twist to the whole story. I ended the entire process in exactly the same location that I began it in. When I wrote my proposal, not even the first chapter or the introduction or anything, the actual proposal of the book, I wrote in the Radisson Blue hotel here in Cebu city in the Philippines in one particular room on the business class level. And for my final edit, I went back and I checked into the EXACT same room.

Pat: That's cool.

Chris: And finished the entire writing process for the book in that exact same room at that exact same desk. I hope they changed the sheets prior to that whole time [inaudible]--the towels and stuff like that.

But no, I ended the writing journey in the exactly same place that I started it and it felt good. But then the book marketing planning started literally, I mean, you know, I popped a cork and then BOOM! Here we go, we've got to start the book marketing now.

Pat: Right? I mean...

Chris: That's where we are, yeah.

Pat: You spend all this time writing a book, you're struggling with it, and then you have to edit it and then it's done...and you can't just expect to sell at that point. You have to do a lot of work. And I know, I mean we've been talking about this. You've been doing a LOT.

We've had people like [Jeff Goins](#) on to talk about book marketing and things like that--

Chris: I love that episode, I love that.

Pat: Yeah, that was the Back to the Future episode, because I was actually--we recorded two sessions with Jeff, one before I did some stuff and one after and we talked about that. That was very cool.

But anyway, can you give us some insight on some of the strategies that you're using? I mean, there's a ton of authors here and future authors here who are listening and I think they would benefit a lot from, you know, especially because you're doing the traditional thing and people will be interested in--"Okay, how do we get this book that



we finished that we're proud of that we know will help people, how do we get that into people's hands?"

Chris: Right.

Pat: What are you doing--obviously, well to be honest and upfront, you're here on the show right now and we're talking about it and that's one thing, and I know you've been doing a sort of...a run on other people's podcasts as well, and, um...so I know that's one strategy. Scheduling and trying to get other people who you have connections with, and even people who you don't have connections with who have an audience in your target audience to, all at once, talk about the book.

I know that's one strategy. What else are you doing?

Chris: Yeah, I mean, that is--you know, we call that the podcast tour, so--yeah, the tour. It's around, I guess probably by the time we're done by the end of April, the book comes out April 1, which is today!

Pat: Based on our schedule. We're recording this in February.

Chris: Right, right.

Pat: For those who are listening.

Chris: So I'm not Marty McFly? I thought I was in the future for a minute! But now I'm here, I'm back in February! Yeah, so, no, I mean the book comes out today, according to this recording right? Going live, that is.

I wanted to do something more than just podcasts. Because we probably could've left it, literally, at that and still sold a load of copies, because if you get in front of influencers and thought leaders such as yourself, and you talk about something, people will naturally buy. But I didn't want to leave it at that because I also believe that people will come to their own assumptions and decisions based on their own opinions, right? We'll always believe our own opinions before the opinions of other people.

But you know, there's something to be said to being placed into the earbuds of tens of thousands, of hundreds of thousands if not millions of people over a certain space of time. So, the podcast was really the first thing that we worked on, the podcast tour, in terms of making sure that we could get on all of the shows that I really wanted to get



on, and you know, we haven't just blitzed it and said "Let's just get on as many shows as possible!" We've been very, very selective, because you also have to be extremely careful with your time around a launch like this, as well. You don't want to burn out and end up just spinning your wheels, right?

So the podcast was one side of things. We're also doing a certain amount of guest posting, which I very rarely do. I will very rarely write a guest post for another blog. It's not in my strategy to do it. So we're on about five or six decent quality blogs as well in the next few weeks or so. So, we did that.

Then there's the, you know, the bundle strategy, the mini-site strategy we put together, and I wanted to do a mini-site. I didn't just want to have a landing page or two on my blog. I wanted to create--you know, I want [Virtual Freedom](#) to have its own identity on the internet, and so we put together [virtualfreedombook.com](#).

On there we have--you know, there's a cool animated video trailer for the book, there is a podcast, we're doing a limited podcast run for Freedom, you can find it in iTunes and everything, and then there's also additional content on there as well about VAs and working with VAs and there's a press page and all this other sort of stuff as well.

So, we built that out and we put that up, and then, you know, there's other things like--we actually are going to be doing some kind of book signing tour in some capacity when I'm in the United States, there's a lot of speaking coming up, but it was--there's been a lot of different things that we've done. Oh, I should mention also the Virtual Freedom tribe, which we kind of run on the back of your success with the Let Go Day ambassador group that you put together. That was such a cool idea, and I love the idea of having a little bit of an inner circle. Everybody rooting for you at certain times, and that was really cool, so we did that as well.

Other than that, it's just a matter of reaching out to people, being present, we've done a lot of, you know, images that we're sharing on social media and, you know, I've changed the cover image for my Google and Facebook page and my Facebook account and all that sort of stuff, and it's just generally getting the word out there and just branding the book and getting the word out as much as possible, you know?

Pat: Yeah, I mean, absolutely. That's definitely a lot of stuff. But I've seen people mention the book, I've seen people tweet about it, and you know, not just from you but other people out there who are--



Chris: I should hope so!

Pat: Yeah. I mean, at this point we are a month and a half before launch at the time of recording this, when this goes live of course it will be out there, and it will be interesting to see how high it goes, because I know it can go high, I've read the book and it's great. And so I think when--obviously the product that you sell or the book that you create has to be good. Like, if it's not good it's never going to take off, and--

Chris: And that was the other reason why I didn't want to do it earlier. It wasn't that I didn't think I was experienced or qualified enough to write it, it was honestly because I didn't think I was a good enough writer to write it as well. And it's amazing what three years of blogging can do for you in that particular side of things, and I--for me now, I love to write. I would honestly like to get it to the point where all I did as an entrepreneur was blog, write books, and speak. Those--that trifecta of entrepreneurship is what I want to try and aspire to in the next 5-10 years, because I thoroughly enjoy the writing process.

Now, I hated it for 5 1/2 months, but now I really enjoy it and that's exactly the sort of--the angle I want to go with now going forward, hopefully, if things will work out.

Pat: Yeah, man. I am excited to see what's in store for you in the future, Chris, and I couldn't be more proud, and I'm going to be here to support you all the way, so make sure--

Chris: Thank you.

Pat: -- For those of you listening, head on over to VirtualFreedomBook.com. All the information you need is there to get Chris' book, and you know, this is my buddy! I'm going to--I'm going to ask you to support him if you believe in what he's talking about, and it's been extremely helpful for me. I know people who I've shared Chris with, not just with this book but through his own blog at ChrisDucker.com and of course [Virtual Staff Finder](#), you know, it's always--you know, you're changing lives, Chris, in your own special way. And you are the sort of King of virtual assistants and helping people learn how to outsource and, you know, change their lives in that way. It's changed mine, for sure.

Chris: Well, thanks! I appreciate all the kind words. I mean, we're buddies and everything, everybody knows that, but it's nice to hear that from--not just from a friend. We were talking about this before we hit record--I'm a Pat fan, too. You know



what I mean? Like, I [only?] literally ["li-truh-lee"]--I love saying that, that way! Because I know it just hurts you every time I do it.

Pat: It HURTS me every time you say it like that, Chris.

Chris: Okay, I'll do it like Pat for a minute. I LI-ER-ALL-Y--is that better? Okay?

Pat: Not much, but...

Chris: Not much, I know. I literally--I only subscribe to a handful of podcasts. SPI is obviously one of them, and Ask Pat is another one. It is probably, out of all the ones that I do subscribe to, probably the only one I listen to verbatim with every episode that comes along.

And that's not--first and foremost, because you're my very, very best friend, right? But the other thing is that it's just SO darn GOOD. Like, your content, man, is JUST so good. I'm the biggest Pat fan.

If people listening in, if you want to take me on with that title, I want you to take me on via Twitter, tell me why you're a bigger Pat fan than me! Because it's nice to be able to be friends with him, but I'm a big fan of Pat, and to hear those words from you, bro, and just the way that you so eloquently put them together, it just warms my heart up. So thanks so much for all the support. I want to say that publically, and to the SPI crowd as well, you guys are awesome.

Pat: Yeah, they are absolutely awesome, and you know we're here to support you, Chris.

So, thank you all for listening, Chris. Thank you so much for coming on and spending your time with us today. Best of luck to you at the launch. I'm sure we're going to hear about it in other places as well, and you know, I can't wait to see how high it goes.

Chris: Yeah, you and me both, brother. Thanks again!

Pat: My pleasure, peace.

All right, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Chris Ducker, one of my best friends, from ChrisDucker.com, and also brand new author of the book [Virtual Freedom: How to Work with Virtual Staff to Buy More Time, Become More Productive and Build Your](#)



Dream Business. As always, the show notes for this episode can be found at smartpassiveincome.com/session103. Chris, congrats to you. You are awesome and I'm just so inspired to write my own book now after reading this and holding it in my hands. So cool!

You're even more awesome, because listen to this everybody, Chris and I worked together, he wanted to give additional value to those who are listening to the SPI Podcast, and I wanted to do that too, and I of course want to help Chris get to sell as many books as possible, so here's the deal--

If you buy one book, if you buy ONE of Chris' book, and you can--or you don't have to, but if you can go through my affiliate link for that, which is smartpassiveincome.com/VF. If you get at least one book, you get the following--

You get the book, whether it's paperback or Kindle. You get 3 additional case studies that aren't in the book, and then access of the reader-only section of the site.

But beyond that, you get access to a free webinar that Chris and I are going to hold together, where I'm going to be talking bout how I run with my virtual team and how Chris has helped me. So that's if you buy one book. All you have to do is, if you buy one book through Amazon, again whether or not you use my affiliate link, all you have to do is forward that receipt that amazon sends you to giveaway@smartpassiveincome.com. That's giveaway@smartpassiveincome.com. You're going to get an immediate auto-response from me with more information about how this is all going to work and the emails you're going to get in the future for that webinar and all the other things that Chris is giving away.

Now, if you buy five books or more, you can keep one and give the others to your friends or reads or subscribers--if you buy five books or more, you get not only the case studies and the reader only section but you get a Virtual Freedom companion handbook, exclusive video series, a mini-training course to help you work with VAs and also--this is the big one--you get \$50 off Working With [Virtual Staff Finder](#) to help you find your VA. So, you're essentially getting the books for free, if you've used Virtual Staff Finder to hire your VA, your general VA, or...

So, that's a great deal and you also get access to the webinar as well. So whatever the case may be, you buy one or buy five or more, sent that receipt to giveaway at SmartPassiveIncome.com. I won't be able to respond there until I send you an email with registration and all the links on how to get access to those giveaways and stuff.



So Chris, thank you so much for that. As always, I try to get the people on here to get more value than what they can get elsewhere, because you know, I'm just so thankful for you for being on the show.

I had a lot of people ask me in preparation or anticipation of this episode, Pat, is Chris' book going to be on your Sponsor's platform, audiobooks.com? Of course, audiobooks has been amazing. I've been listening to Adam Braun's book, who was in episode 102. His book, the *Promise of a Pencil*, and it's great. I love the platform, it is really, really easy to listen to books on the go. I listen to podcasts but also books like Adam's book.

Chris' book isn't yet on there as of this date, April 1st, but he and his publishers are working on it so it will eventually be there, and I hope you can get the free trial for Audiobooks.com, a 30 day free trial, if you go to audiobooks.com/SPI you get that, you get one free credit to download a book, whether it's Chris' book in the future or Adam's book from last episode or whatever. Any book, really! And you get free access to listen to *Let Go*, my best-selling book, which isn't available in the audio format anywhere else except audiobooks.com.

Again, that's audiobooks.com/spi, and that will get you all those goodies.

A lot of goodies to give away here, and again, Chris, thank you so much for coming on the show, providing a ton of value and also giving away a little bit of extra. For everybody listening, you have until April 4th, the end of Friday, April 4th, to send me those receipts. Again, send those receipts for one or more books to giveaway@smartpassiveincome.com. You have until the end of Friday, April 4th to qualify for the webinar and also those giveaways and everything I just mentioned.

So, Chris, thank you. For those of you listening, you are amazing, thank you so much for all the support and I will see you in the next episode of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. Thanks, take care, and all the best.

Announcer: Thanks for listening to the Smart Passive Income Podcast at www.smartpassiveincome.com!

show notes at: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session103>