

Called to Both Episode 010

Alright, in today's episode, I'm going to be sharing with you the tools, software's and programs that I use in my business every day, what I use them for what they cost, and why I chose each specific tool that I'm going to share with you. And if you're anything like me, you're going to love this episode, because I love hearing what other people use in their businesses to run the day to day operations, communicate with their teams, and just get more done. And that's exactly what I'm going to be sharing with you today.

Hello, and welcome to the call to both podcast, I'm your host Joy Michelle, and you're in the right place. If you're ready to grow your business, while also being the intentional and present mom, you want to be. This show will leave you feeling inspired, equipped with tangible tips and encouraged to go after your own version of being called to both. Let's dive in.

Now, there are no shortage of options available to you for tools and software's that you can use to run your business. So much so that it can actually get a little overwhelming to know what you should be using and how to make the right choice for you. That's another reason why I think today's episode is going to be helpful for you to hear what someone else is using to run their business and how they're using it. And just kind of talking you through this can sometimes give you some great ideas of things that you could tweak, or add or implement into your business. I was pretty surprised when I sat down to make a list of all of these software's and subscriptions.

It's a pretty good sized list. And I have slowly accumulated this over many, many years in my business. And one thing that I wanted to point out that you might want to start doing is what I do here in that every six months or so, I will do a complete audit of the tools and the subscriptions that I have in my business, making sure that number one, I'm only really keeping the things that I pay for that I actually use. So when I'm doing this audit, I'm doing two things. The first is that I'm only keeping and paying for things that I actually use in my business. And number two, I'm going to check that I don't have duplicates for the same tool that I could be doing with another tool. So even though I might be using it, I just check to make sure that there are no features that have come out that make it so that I'm really paying for more than I need to with different software's. So those are two things that I'm looking for. I just have a very basic Excel spreadsheet for this.

And I use this to go ahead and look at what I'm currently paying for what I'm using. And a really cool tip is I like to make sure that I'm doing a yearly plan, I'm paying for a yearly plan over a monthly plan as much as I possibly can, because there usually are some savings that you can get by doing the yearly plan. And sometimes you can just go in and find a new code to implement for a discount, or you can switch over to a yearly plan and find some savings. So that's something to look for when you do your audit as well. Okay, so to give you a little bit of context on my business and what I do in my business sell in my business, and why I would need these softwares that I'm going to be sharing with you. So my business is join Michelle co I help creatives and photographers start and grow successful businesses through weekly YouTube content.

I have Facebook communities and I currently offer business coaching for creatives with an emphasis on visibility marketing strategy, I also have a shop at [join Michelle co forward slash shop with digital courses and templates for photographers looking to go pro and attract wedding clients because of course photography and wedding photography specifically is my background](#). So the photography service side of my business is not my focus at this time. But so many of the tools that I'm going to be sharing with you today are things that I've used as a photographer and now in the education and coaching side of my business as well. So ultimately, I see a lot of what we do as creatives as a content creation strategy, and being content marketers.

So a lot of these tools that I'm going to share with you today are going to be great to help you leverage your content that you're already making to get greater visibility and greater reach. Okay, so let's dive in. I'm gonna link all the software's and tools below as well, so that as I walk through this list, if any of these items stand out to you, you can always go in the show notes and find them. Okay, starting off, I use HoneyBook for my client management software. I've used HoneyBook since 2017 for both photography clients and business coaching clients and it is a fantastic tool. For sake of time I will not list every single thing it can do but at a very high level. It's basically how I accept payments, get signatures on contracts, schedule appointments, send questionnaires and manage projects in side of my business on the client level. So I use the scheduling feature inside of HoneyBook to manage my calendar, my appointments and even now have started using it to schedule interviews for this podcast. So HoneyBook has a couple different plans, they have a starter plan for \$9 A month and a yearly unlimited plan for \$39 a month.

But I do have a 50% off code. So you can get the starter plan for as low as \$4.50 a month. So I will link that down below. It's a fantastic tool. If you have clients that you have a lot of back and forth with as far as bringing them on giving them a brochure with options, how they can work with you, they select the one that they want. And then you can structure payment plans, set automatic payment reminders, and really carry them through a whole project. Now, if you want to see a breakdown of how I use this in my business, I'll also have a couple of videos linked down below of how I use this for workflows and automations as a photographer, and what I do on the setup and the back end and things like that. So I have a lot of videos about this on YouTube. I have been obviously using this for a very long time. But I just think it's a fantastic tool and you need a client management tool in your business. The next tool that you're going to need is a project management tool.

I personally use and love notion and my whole business lives inside of notion. Now. I'm reading my podcast notes right now off of a notion page. So when I tell you that my business lives on notion, I'm not kidding. It's also where i How's my workflows, operations, brand images and files and literally like every idea for content and things that I want to work on in the future. And it's where I house all of my content, like this podcast and the YouTube videos. I also have a video on this on my YouTube channel, because it's very visual of a platform as you can well imagine. And it's kind of fun to see all the options of what you can do with it because the pages are very customizable notion is basically like a more custom, more automatable Trello. If you're familiar with a Trello board, and I used to use Trello, I've used a lot of different software's in my business, for projects like Asana, and click up.

And I've tried a lot of different things and nothing stuck with me and really felt like a good fit for my business like notion. So if you don't have a place that is one central location to organize your ideas, your content and your team, I strongly recommend that you check out notion, they have free plans, I pay for extra space on notion, and it's only \$5 a month. So super affordable. And just such a help. And I

seriously don't know what I would do without notion in my business. Okay, so next we have team communication. So all the ways that I talk to my team on a daily and weekly basis. The first is Slack. So this is just a messenger app channel, or a messenger app where we have like a channel inside of slack, where all of my team members are and really all is like three people. So nothing crazy. But my virtual assistants are in there, My Online Business Manager is also in there. And that's where we, you know, have our team meeting like links and talk about updates and what's going on. And whenever we have something going on. Like right now inside of my Facebook group, I have a big push going on for live trainings. And we're going through a whole series on HoneyBook inside of photo boss. So that's a topic of conversation that's happening inside of Slack.

So the other thing that we use for communication is actually notion. So I like to communicate project by project. And so everybody who's relevant to a project on my team is inside of that project on notion. So like this podcast, for example, has my podcast manager inside of all the notes and inside of the workspace for the podcast itself. So when we're talking about the podcast, we're almost always inside of notion, right where the stuff is irrelevant. So if we're talking about what images we're going to pull for the graphics, we're right there inside of the project, I think this is actually way more efficient than sending emails back and forth and referring to things where you have to go find it or youth link it. And so by doing most of our communication inside of notion, I think we're a lot more efficient.

The other app that I do use occasionally is Voxer for sending longer voice messages. And this is really, for if I can't get on a call right away with my like online business manager Dalia and I want to like just get out an idea, I'll just send her a message in Slack and say, Hey, I'm gonna Voxer you. You can also send voice messages inside of slack, but you can't listen to them in real time. So I like Voxer because as I'm talking, it's like walkie talking over to her side. So if she's actually there in real time, she can listen, she doesn't have to wait for the message to be over. So I actually find this a lot more like succinct and a big time saver if you happen to be right there in the app. You can also play the message back at like 2x 3x and 4x speed. So I'm just a huge fan of Voxer Okay, so for email, I use a custom email like inbox through G Suite, that's \$10 a month, I also have some cloud storage through Google Drive, that's also \$10 a month. And that's where I just backup a lot of my content as far as video and emails. And I really tried to use it as a redundancy for everything that I have on my computer.

So for my website, and my blog, I use show it, I absolutely love show it, I made the mistake in the very beginning of my business of having a brief stint of moving away from show it and I thought, oh, I can just have you know, a WordPress site, it's gonna be great. And it was honestly a disaster, it was constantly having, like, plugins have issues and things go wrong. And at one point, there was malware on my site. And it's just, it was a mess. And I don't have to deal with any of that with show it because it's a drag and drop. So it's super customizable on the creative side. But also they deal with the hosting and the security. And it's just wonderful. So I've loved having my website through show it I will never leave show it. And one thing that's really cool is that my blog that's on my website is actually WordPress hosted blog. So I get the benefits of both sides. And I know that WordPress is actually wonderful for SEO, and I'm able to install certain plugins that I use in my business, which I'll talk about next. And it's just really nice to have both sides. So show it you can get plans as low as \$19 a month, they have higher priced plans that have more robust blogging that are \$39 a month, or I think you get a free month, if you pay for the year.

Now you can get a free month of show it through my link, I will go ahead and share that below. But it's just if you ever wanted to play around with it, want to see if it's a good fit for you, I do have a free month

through my affiliate link. So one blog plugin that I use that I strongly recommend to all of my coaching clients, and everyone that I talked to you about blogging is the Yoast plugin, and they have a free version, I think is wonderful. If at the very minimum, you use the free version, I think that's great. But I also think the premium version of this plugin is worth it if you're going to be blogging weekly or bi weekly, because you really want to get the most out of that actual piece of content. And so I like Yoast because it just it really walks you through. Here's what your title should be. Here's how many times your focus keyword needs to appear in the text or in the name of the photo. And it just, it walks you through everything so that your blog post is built out for search and that your likelihood of being discovered in search is actually a lot higher. Alright, so a couple of other apps or programs that I use to boost everything that I'm doing on social media are tailwind for Pinterest. I guess tailwind, you know, Pinterest, this might be considered a search engine and not social media.

Either way, I think it's important to be on Pinterest, I think Pinterest is such a powerful platform. But you have to have a lot of pins in in circulation, you have to have lots of boards. And it's something that I don't want to be doing even weekly in my business. And tailwind is an app that allows you to schedule out your pins super far out, you can loop your pins, you can have pins go to different groups at different times. It's amazing saves so much time. And that subscription is something I pay for every year. So the tailwind Pro Plan is \$10 A month or 119 for the year, which I think is totally worth it if you're going to use it like I do to just load up the queue with lots of content and kind of set it and forget it. So next we have to buddy This is a Chrome plugin that I use on the YouTube side of things. So just like I talked about how the Yoast plugin was going to be amazing for search engine terms. And knowing how to rank in search for your blog to Buddy is kind of like the equivalent in the YouTube world. And so I'm I'm able to do so much with to buddy I can AB test thumbnails and it will literally run these two thumbnail options on the same video against my crowd for like weeks on end and then it will come out with like data telling me which thumbnail is better and what I should move forward with but on a very practical level. As I'm uploading a video it has suggestions and checklists and things like best practices for me to know. Okay, I should title this differently.

I should add these keywords to the description I need to put my tags here. This is what I should do for the cards and if all of this sounds like another language, it's because it's all like YouTube lingo. But if you are on YouTube or you have any idea of starting on YouTube or utilizing YouTube in some way for your business, too, buddy is a must must have. I do have a discount code for getting started on to buddy and I will link that down below. But it is just such a valuable tool and The I think demystifies a lot of YouTube because YouTube can be a little overwhelming to figure out all the ins and outs of like playlists and how do you get ranked in search and to Buddy is like the solution that I give everyone that I work with, even in my coaching for channel kickoff sessions, one of the first things I have my students do is get to a buddy install that get it up on your channel, because everything gets easier as soon as you install to buddy, because you'll see this too, buddy suggestions right there as you're uploading your videos. And as you're optimizing, doing all the things, and there are just so many cool features that make making changes to your descriptions, like across like, you know, multiple videos at the same time possible, and so much more so, to buddy.

Amazing, definitely you want to check it out if you're a YouTuber. So for my education, business, all of my courses, my newsletter, my email newsletter, landing pages funnels, like everything on that side of my business, I use one hub software called Kajabi. Now, this is an all in one. And it is absolutely incredible for what I do with my online business. And if you're looking for something that's kind of just an all in one solution to host your programs, courses, templates, downloads, have checkout cards, and

build your email audience all in one place without having to have tech that talks between multiple platforms, you will absolutely love Kajabi it's incredible. And if you add up the costs of having, you know, landing page software, an email marketing software and having something for like coaching client portal pages, like I use it for that as well.

And then also, your courses and your communities like you can do so much. But if you were to add all these up of being in different places, it would be a lot more than the investment of Kajabi. Their monthly plans start at 150. But I will leave a link down below for a FREE 30 day trial to get started. Now, if you're not ready to jump completely into like an all in one software, but you know that you need to get started with an email marketing software. My recommendation for you is Flo desk, it's a little bit more affordable, it's super easy to use and has a lot of automations. So I think that is a great option. If you're not quite there ready to like launch courses out into the universe and get landing pages and freebies and all the things you can get started for a lot more affordably on something like flow desk. So when it comes to planning and scheduling my Instagram related content, I have gone back and forth on so many software's, but I always come back to Planoly,

I don't know there's something about it, it just makes sense to me. And I think they've made a lot of updates in the last couple of months that just make it really clean and beautiful as the user and I just have a free plan with them. I think you can do 30 uploads every month to like the grid and save your captions and all of that in under the free plan. So I like that I save hashtag lists, I save like caption ideas. And it I just liked it so that it can help me visualize the feed itself. Because I do like to know how it's going to look almost like at a glance when you're looking at all the little thumbnails, depending on your business. And if the aesthetics of your feed matter a lot to you or not, this would be more or less helpful. But just having something that you can save all of your, you know, planned posts, images, graphics, and, and those captions is a really helpful thing to have. And that's what I use it for primarily. Okay, so for design in my business, I have not touched in design in years. And as you know back context to this, I went to graphic design school I attended Savannah College of Art and Design transfer to the ended up graduating from the University of Maryland.

Background is design and you know, photography, and graphics and arts and all things creative. So I really was, you know, in with all of the Adobe softwares. And I loved them, but let me tell you Canva has come in and just made most of the software's irrelevant to how I conduct my business, which is saying a lot. Because I'm very picky. I want custom fonts I want clear, you know, PNG back, like export settings, I want all sorts of customization and Canva has all of that. I'm on a Canva Pro Plan and you can get free like a free trial to the Pro Plan through my link. But it's so worth it. I think it's like 100 bucks for the year. And you can do so much you can even edit video and create reels you can do animations, and basically every graphic that you've ever seen in my business, from the YouTube channel to the podcast art to everything that goes on in my Facebook groups. It's all created inside of Canva and a lot of them are just pulled from the templates that they have inside of Canva itself. So I really don't reinvent the wheel here. But one of the things inside of Canva that has saved me so much time is that I can set my brand colors and my fonts and like all the hex codes, one time, I can set that up as like my brand settings for the whole account.

That way when I go to actually design, it's, I don't have to dig around and try to figure out okay, what's my exact brand color where I'm like, where are my fonts, where, where are my photos, my headshots like, I can load everything into this software, make it really, really fast. And I have team members inside of Canva as well. So they can go in and grab what they need when they're, you know, writing blog

posts with me, or maybe they're helping me manage Facebook group prompts or things like that, I go in, I create the template, and then they can pull from that inside of Canva. So, so amazing, they also have an app. So when I'm on the go, I will literally just pull up Canva on my phone, and grab whatever it is that I need. So it's it's amazing. So So highly recommend it. So for professional photo editing, this is pretty much the only Adobe software that I still use. And that is Lightroom classic, I will always use Lightroom. I love it. I have tons of videos up on my YouTube channel about how I use Lightroom different export settings for social media or high res, I'll link a bunch of those video options for you as well.

But essentially, this is like my ride or die go to editing software for professional photos. So for gallery software for clients, for myself for archiving, high resolution images, I still use and love pixie set. It's fantastic. And I've used it for ages and ages for masterminds interviews and coaching, I use Zoom. They have lots of different plans. But I'm actually on a free plan, I can record the calls, I can archive the calls, I can do everything that I really need to do with my coaching on the free plan, if I were doing calls with more than one person, so most of my coaching is one on one strategy and visibility coaching for creatives. And so because of that, I don't need to pay for the Zoom plans that are better and higher because it's just one other person. Now when I do open up group coaching rounds or masterminds, I upgrade my plan to the Zoom like Pro or whatever the next level is for the months that I have that because I will need to be able to have more people on the call, record the call and have it lasts longer than 40 minutes. So not super limiting. If you're doing calls primarily one on one like doing consultations. It's perfect for that.

Alright, so next I have a few apps that I use constantly that I'm constantly going on my phone for. So the first one is toggle track. Now this is a Chrome plugin and an app for time tracking. And a couple months ago, I heard about this and I thought this is going to be so eye opening for me to track what I do in my business for a month. Every minute of my day in my business, I decided to track so that I could really see practically speaking how am I spending my time like literally is is YouTube or admin or team communication taking as long as I think it's taking, because I think so often we what we actually do in our businesses and how the time that we actually spend looks totally different in practicality than in our minds. So if you want to track your time and have a total wake up call as to what you're doing in your business. And really it's going to reveal to you things that could be maybe outsourced things that are sucking a lot of your time that you had no idea was as big a time suck as it really is. Get toggled track, it's free, they have a paid plan. But for everything that I was using it for I didn't even need that. And you could also use it if you want to track how long a given project is taking you. Or if you want to track your hours and invoice someone for a certain amount of hours that you've been working. It's fantastic for that as well. But I think it's really, really cool.

And I found that it made me more productive every time I was tracking my time. And I just hit Start Timer, it starts gathering like okay, now I see the timer starts going, it's like one second, two seconds, three seconds, and I'm like, Oh my gosh, I have got to get into this and focus on it. And it was just making me a lot more accountable for the time I was spending in my business. So if you feel like you need that boost, check out toggle track. The next app I'm pulling open all the time as audible, I think is the best way to consume books in your business. I'm huge into like self help books, marketing, branding, business, all things in that category. And I do listen to like parenting books and some other stuff. But for the most part, I listened to a lot of business and self help in that category. And as much as I wish that I could be in real books all the time. I just can't and I'm most of the time when I can listen to a book. It's like I'm driving, if I can, if I have the ability to get into a book It's usually not like the tangible

physical book. So this has allowed me to listen to books, when I'm on walks, you know, with the kids, I'm trying to get in some exercise, but I'm with them. And I'm like, can't physically be holding a book. And it's just fantastic for that.

So if you want to get started, I think you can get your first entire download of your first book for free, I'll have that link down below as well. Another app that I'm always pulling open is the Amazon app, because I am an Amazon affiliate. And so a lot of times, I'll get questions from clients or customers about, you know, a microphone or a piece of gear or, you know, even a household good. And the best thing that I can do is just go into my Amazon app and grab that affiliate link from my phone. So I'm always looking for ways to create more revenue streams. In my business, I have an entire episode about this actually about diversifying your revenue through affiliate marketing. And I have a free guide for getting started as an affiliate because I know that can be a little bit daunting. So I have this guide to make it so much easier for you. So I'll link both of those down below as well. The next app that I love that was actually something that I used as a photographer, and now I still use just for write offs in my business is called Mile IQ.

One of the best software's I personally think for tracking your mileage as a business owner. And then creating reports that you can just give to your CPA or your financial team so that you can get the most amount of business write offs for your mileage. I tried tracking my mileage in a notebook or my phone. And that just it was not going to happen. Like it was the last thing I was thinking about when I'm driving around to meet with a client or to go do a walkthrough or you know, drive to a wedding like no, that was the last thing I was thinking about. And so MileIQ makes it so simple to categorize your drives as either a personal or business, you can also add in things like tolls and lots of other stuff as well. So really, really helpful, especially if you do a lot of driving for your business. So two other apps that I love, for photo editing, in my phone, specifically, our focus, and Snapseed. And I have a little demo video on how I use Snapseed and focus in my business.

But the coolest thing about focus is that you can get those creamy, like bokeh backgrounds on your cell phone photos, without having to use portrait mode. So I really like portrait mode. But my phone is very finicky about portrait mode. And sometimes I can't get my kids to be perfectly in focus because they're moving around. So a lot of times I get the better photo on my phone, if I just use the regular photo mode. And then I pull it into an app like focus and Snapseed to just do a little bit of magic, clean it up and it looks so much better. So if you want to see how I do this, I actually have a whole demo video on my YouTube channel. And I will link that as well. I'm absolutely positive that the second I send this to my podcast editor, I'm going to think of like three more tools or apps or things that I use in my business. And if I do, I will add them to the show notes as an additional thought. But if you're listening to this, and I haven't listed some of your favorite tools, I want to hear from you.

I want to know what you're using in your business, what you're loving, what is helping you be more productive in your call to both journey. So if you're listening, take a screenshot of wherever you're listening right now, tag me over on Instagram, and then tell me what tools you're using and loving and maybe a new one that I haven't used before. So I'm excited to hear from you guys in here because I feel like I get the best suggestions from you all. So I cannot wait to hear from you. As usual. I will see you all over in the call to both Facebook group where ambitious moms are hanging out and connecting every day. And I will see you all next week in the next episode. Bye guys.

Thank you so much for listening to the show. If you enjoyed this episode, please help me get the word out about the call to both podcast by taking a screenshot of this episode right now and sharing it on your social media. I would also appreciate it if you would subscribe and leave me a five star review. Thanks again and I'll see you in the next episode.