

Called to Both Episode 79

We're diving into a fun topic today here on the podcast, and that is getting paid sponsorships and brand deals. We can't wrap up the Diversified revenue series without talking about this one, and I am pumped about it. So in this episode, I'm sharing some insider tips, insights and some cautions for you so that you can make more money in your brand deals, maximize each opportunity and understand the steps for entering into these kinds of paid collaborations. Hello, and welcome to the call to both podcast. I'm your host, Joe 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 spoke. Let's dive in.

Influencer work is really common on the lifestyle and fashion side of things or from people who are bloggers and self described influencers. But business influencers, as I like to call us are also making money with brand deals. So I'm here to dish all the secrets on how to get started and what you need to know. First, what is a brand deal? Let's break this down. A brand deal also known as a brand partnership, or a brand collaboration is a business arrangement in which a company or brand collaborates with an individual or another company to promote their thing, that product or that service, or the brand in exchange for compensation. So brand deals can take place in various forms, such as sponsored content and endorsement, product placements, in videos, things like that, and sponsored social media posts, and so on and so forth.

So that's what I mean, when I say a sponsorship or a brand deal. This is a company coming to me and paying me essentially to create dedicated content for them in some way, shape, or form. And we'll talk about all the different ways that this can take place. But in general, that's essentially how it works. Now I'm going to share my experience with you all today about brand deals and collaborations. And I fully admit that I'm just learning as I go. I am hoping to continue to book more brand deals and expand in this area for my own revenue. This is something I'm really interested in. And I'm always looking to, like grow my understanding this area, I have invested a great deal of time and money into learning about this topic over the past few years. So I want to share some of the things that I've learned with you. So let's start from the top. Where do you start when getting brand deals?

This is something I get asked about a lot. It sounds like lots of different questions along those lines of how did you get started with this? How do I know how to price myself for a brand deal? How do I handle the back and forth with a company? Did I pitch myself or wait to be pitched. So that's what I'm going to answer each of these in different parts of this episode. So let's start with a good place to start. So I'm going to assume that you want to secure paid brand deals in your business and you want to create content that actually makes you money. And I think your first step should be to create a media kit. And a media kit is going to be a great centralized document that is going to contain everything that you want to share with a company when you are either pitching or they have pitched you.

This is a great way to like put your best foot forward professionally and showcase the many ways that you have built authority and visibility in your industry. So what kind of things should you put in your media kit? Well, if you are listening to this right now, and you actually want to see my media kit, I have

some examples of this in the show notes like the long form blog show notes of this on my blog. So I'm going to have screenshots of what this looks like and how I've put each of these elements into My Media Kit. So head on over to the blog, if you want to see this. But essentially, I think you should have four key components in your media kit, you of course need to introduce yourself and your company. But I think it's really important that you have your company mission and vision.

So those are things that are going to really help the company to understand who you serve and why you serve them, and what the deeper mission is behind your brand, even some of the values of your brand, because this is going to help you to either attract or repel the right and wrong partnerships. The other thing you can put in your media kit is the platform statistics. So your platform stats like audience demographics, reach all the little nitty gritty numbers that brands will want to know this is where you would put them and you'll see when you look at the blog side of things if you want to look at my media kit So how I have represented the different like ages and demographics in my audience with bar graphs so that they can see, you know, where are my listeners coming from, or where are my YouTube viewers coming from, or how many people are on my email list and things like that.

Because those are things that are really going to be relevant to your brand deal and to the negotiation of the rate. The third thing that you're going to have in your media kit is your rates for sponsorship, or a starting rate. So depending on how you like to handle your brand deals and how you like to negotiate, I think it can be really helpful to have some examples of rates included in the kit. The fourth thing is to have past sponsorships, or even case studies of times that you've promoted things and what that looked like for the brand. Now, one way around this, if you're just starting out, and you've never worked with a brand before, could be to put an affiliate partnership that you had used an affiliate link for a campaign. And the reason that this can look really good is you could still have click through rate, you could still have conversion rates, you could still have traffic information about what happened during that campaign. And this is a really great way to boost your credibility, and I think it just looks really nice. Otherwise, you can just start with what you have. And that's really my advice is start simple and build with what you have. And continue to add as you go. My Media Kit started out very short, very simple, super concise. And as I've gotten more deals, I add the logos of the brands that I've worked with, or examples of campaigns. Now Canva has some really amazing templates.

And truthfully, that's what I used for my media kit. So if you see screenshots of it, you can probably find the exact same template on Canva. If you just search like press kit, media kit, sponsor kit or something like that in the template area, it will populate all kinds of amazing graphs and just cool stuff and give you some really cool ideas. So you definitely don't need to be a super talented designer to create some pretty compelling media kits. The next thing that you'll need getting started and something that you should be thinking about is contracts. I actually didn't use a contract, the first time that I was doing a sponsored video with a company, and then I actually didn't get paid for that video. And this was years and years ago, I had created a YouTube video. And until recently, this is such a crazy story. I didn't get paid for the video, I reached out to the company a few times and I considered it a loss. I was like they're not responding. I'm just going to have to live and learn. And then recently, this year, that same company came back asking to collaborate with me again. And it was just a weird moment. I was like, Are you serious? Like I never got paid. so I gently but clearly reminded them that I never got paid. I sent them an invoice. It was super awkward. I guess it's not awkward.

That's just me being clear. But I sent them an invoice. They paid it and we did not work together again. And I think a lot of that could have been avoided. Had I used a contract. Or had I insisted on getting

paid upfront, which is what I do now in 90% of my brand deals going forward depending on what the company is and the scope of the project. But yes, all of this to say have an agreement have something in place. You can find contracts about collaborations online and put together specific terms in yours that you want to make sure that you are covering like, you know, content use. And are they allowed to use these videos and images and the things that you create, are they allowed to use those on their platforms for how long and lots of little details. So I really encourage you to look into sponsorship contracts. I think this is an area that like a lot of us want to just skip past because it's super exciting. The brand wants to pay us. But it's important and you can end up getting ghosted and not paid and you have absolutely no leverage whatsoever if this happens, so I am not giving you legal advice right now, you should definitely run all of your contracts by a lawyer.

Okay, so the next thing you will need in place is pitching knowledge, you will be pitching yourself in your business a lot. I think just in general, this is an amazing skill to have. But when it comes to brand deals, you kind of have two options here. So you can wait until companies come to you or you can start pitching yourself with brands that you really want to work with. I've done this both ways. I've reached out to brands cold. And I've also had brands reach out to me, and I've even kind of turned brands wanting to just give me free product or free access to his software into a paid collaboration. And this is important. This is where pitching is such an important like element of this kind of collaboration and getting into the right rooms and getting the right brands to partner with you. If you're curious about like how to word, these emails, I actually have pitching templates, they are brand new, I am so excited to talk about these. And this is actually the first time I'm sharing about them. So by the time this episode comes out pitch power email template pack is available is essentially 10 email pitches to get you visibility and the collaborations that you want in your business. It is a brand new product of mine, and you'll find this available in the show notes.

Or you can simply visit my website at joymichelle.co forward slash pitch power, just one word. So this includes emails for reaching out cold templates for turning free product offers into paid collaborations. And I think that it just helps to have a language and a framework sometimes to come back on when you're going back and forth with brands. It also includes an email pack for pitching yourself to be on podcasts, and collaborating with your fellow creators. So it truly has pitching from all angles included in the template pack. If you want templates that are both clear and kind, and give you the words and framework for asking for what you want in your business, you will definitely want to grab the pitch power templates. Now, the longer that I've been in business, the more I have come to realize that my ability to skillfully ask for what I want and propose a very compelling offer to someone is directly related to how quickly my business has grown. And that is why I've talked about pitching and you know all these types of things in the past because it is truly so so so valuable. So you have a couple of different options for waiting for brands to come to you or going out and getting the brand deals that you want. But I think your first step here is if you have a collection of brands that you can think of that you think your brand would just be so amazing to work with.

And that you would love to reach out and collaborate, start creating a list of the brands, your dream brands that you would love to work with, put them together in a project management tool or a Google Doc and create your pitches from there, you're going to be much more organized, you're going to know which brands you want to reach out to. And then you can really start to do your homework on contacting these people like who should you be reaching out to, and then making sure that you're pitching them with something specific that you'd like to work on together? Okay, so this leads us into the pay the pricing, and what you should charge? Because I know this is the question, right? The one that

holds, I think so many of us back from moving forward and even pitching ourselves because it is an intimidating thing to try to figure out how am I gonna price this. So I'll be the first to admit that this is something that I'm still navigating and learning. And it's actually it's such an interesting thing. And I want to break down some some tips that I have for you on how to price yourself, and what I've done and how my brand deals have evolved. I've started out with just taking free product or store credit for things sometimes companies will give you like \$100 in credit towards, you know, whatever it is that you are collaborating for.

And then after that I got paid, you know, a few \$100 for a brand collaboration. And I've also made \$6,000 Plus for a brand collaboration. And what I've learned is that this all comes down to what the brand is wanting, and how you can craft content to serve what they are needing while also making the money you want. So I've seen a huge variance in pricing and a huge variance in what influencers are able to charge for this. But I think that one thing that really helps is if you're able to work with a brand in a more ongoing capacity, and create more of a partnership and less of a one off piece of content that's really going to help to get higher ticket collaborations. And so that's what I'm angling to do. That's what I am aiming to do is really to create brand partnerships that span longer amounts of time and more content over time so that the brand deals can be more and more lucrative for me and my business and just make sense. Okay, so some tips for pricing your collaboration rates. I think first and foremost, as you're creating your media kit, you're probably going to be sitting down and looking at your engagement, your influence the value you're providing to your community and like details, like your follower count and things like that. So I think really start to assess the value that you've created and the trust that you've created with your audience. I don't think this should only be about follower count. This is also about the type of content that you create the level of content that you create and what your time is worth. And we need to talk about that because sometimes brands are want Taking content beyond just exposure, meaning they want photos, they want videos, and you're essentially creating that for them. And that alone, you know, producing a video or high end photos for a brand commercially is worth something outside of the brand deal itself.

So take the whole project into consideration and really think about what are you delivering? Is this talking about something in your stories creating a dedicated video? Or are you also taking a lot of product photos creating a video that they will use on their page, so know the value. The other thing I like to do is research similar audiences. So look at some influencers in the niche that you work in that have a similar size audience or similar engagement, and just look at their social media platform, do some research, are they blogging? What is their website look like? And if you can find out what brands they're working with, or how that they're charging for collaborations that can be really helpful, simply in getting some data points. Now, I like to take other people's pricing with a total grain of salt, because someone else's pricing is not going to influence exactly what I ended up pricing myself at, I think it's just important to know what's out there. And a lot of times, you might be surprised to find people are making a lot of money at this stuff. So you should not be charging what you're initially thinking in your mind, because there is a lot of work involved in this. And that leads me to the next tip, which is scope of work. So really consider the type of content that you'll be creating the effort and time that's required. And many times it's a little more complex and time consuming than you might think. So video content, for example, you should absolutely be charging more for and anything that's going to be a custom piece of content that doesn't just integrate with whatever else you're doing with your content, you should be charging more for. We also talked about usage rights.

So whether or not the brand will have rights to use that content and it whether it's theirs, like can they repurpose it on their platform, can they keep using these images and videos for forever, that kind of thing should be in the contract and the agreement and should be influencing the price of what you're charging. So something that I like to do is really establish my rates ahead of time. So you want to know what you're willing to work for ahead of time. And I think this makes negotiating a little bit easier. So have that in mind, have it in your media kit, and know what you would like your rates to start at. Because that's just going to help you to not waste time with these brands. If they're not, they don't have the budget, they're not willing to pay for these posts, then you have that in your media kit. And you can just skip all the meetings in the back and forth.

A great thing to do, and I talked about this in your media kit, but a great thing to do is to provide analytics when you're talking about your pricing. Because having your insights into what your audience is like the demographic, the engagement, the past engagement performances is really going to help you to justify those rates, and show the value of what you're bringing to the table. I think something to keep in mind, though, is that you can play around with this, you can use trial and error to play around with the rates to start with something. A lot of times when you're just starting out, you take what the brand has offered. And that's okay, like I'm not, you know, no shade at all, like I've taken free product I've taken the first here, here's my first offer I've taken that first offer before. And now I'm in a place where I have a little bit more of a grip on what my audience how they're going to engage with that thing, what it is worth to, to put my time into this. And so now I come at this with a little more confidence. But in the beginning, I think we should be allowed to, you know, raise our prices, lower prices, and just gain the experience necessary to grow in your confidence.

The other thing to consider is the future of that brand deal relationship. So if you are really wanting to work with this brand, again, in the future, sometimes it can make sense to take a lower dollar amount to prove you are a great creators to work with that your audience converts that you deliver on time that they would want to work with you again. And so having the long game in mind is also really relevant as you're working with brands. Because sometimes these things can be repeat deals every single year. And I've seen and learned in a lot of my research that sometimes the best deals are arrived at after you've worked together a couple of times and they become some of your highest paying brand collaborations because you have that relationship. And that takes time and that takes trust and really delivering on all the things that you're promising. So I think that's worth mentioning is that sometimes you have to have a long game in mind when you're starting these relationships because the potential down the road load is so great that you don't want to lose that over a couple \$100 In the beginning, the last thing that you should know is that there will be negotiations.

And I mentioned that I took a brand deal, you know, the first offer that they gave me, I took it and, you know, rookie mistake, I didn't know what I was doing. And I will say that if you are not negotiating, you're probably leaving money on the table. There's this great book that I read called never split the difference. And it is a great resource on building your skills in negotiations so that you can get what you want, they can get what they want. And you don't feel like you were walked over by the brand and sacrificed you know, the what you should have been paid and then end up begrudging the whole thing. Okay, so quick recap. First steps are to start with creating a media kit. You can see examples of my media kit on the show notes for today's episode. Step number two is have a contract in place so that you can protect yourself and actually get paid. Step number three is learn to pitch yourself effectively. Step number four is when you're building out your pay structure. Consider some of those tips I gave you about your value researching similar audiences and understanding the scope of work. I would

absolutely love to hear your thoughts after listening. Are you interested in getting more brand deals this year or next year?

Share this episode on your stories and tag me I would love to share it on my stories. And be sure to take a look at the pitch power email template pack. It is all new and it has got the best pitches for collaboration, getting visibility and securing your next brand deal. You can find that in the show notes or on my website at [joy.michelle.co/pitch power](http://joy.michelle.co/pitch-power) just one word. Thank you guys so much for listening, and I will see you next week in the next episode. 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.