The Placement Diaries: Week 27 - Rewriting the Business Plan, and Attending a Social Media Workshop

18th March 2022

After having written a thesis of a business plan a few months ago, only to realise that it read more like a five year plan and was too overwhelming to even know where to begin with it meant that I've had to just leave that business plan alone, and create a new one entirely from scratch. Whilst I've preserved the original business plan (since I didn't want it to go to waste), so that I can pick it up again at some point in the future, I've had to leave it for now in order to focus on the easy option instead.

Funnily enough, creating a business plan focusing on what you've actually done (along with what you can actually do), and creating a business plan focusing on what you want to do, simply because the idea itself sounds really interesting, are two wildly different things. Sure, it's easy for me to come up with lots of ideas which sound interesting and throw them into the mixing pot in order to be able to come up with a business plan, but writing one about the things that I can do, and the things that I've done is a lot harder than it seems, because now I've got to focus on being realistic about it, as well as seeing what I can realistically achieve with what little time I've got left on this placement year. I've made a start with it, and I'm gradually adding to it; I've got about 2 months to fully complete it, amongst other things as well.

Another thing which happened this week was that I attended a social media workshop, and whilst I did find it helpful, it also made me question whether it's worth it to be on social media in order to market myself (and consequently, my business, which happens to be an extension of myself), since I kind of have a love/hate relationship with social media, especially since my ethos is to avoid falling into the hustle culture trap as well as refusing to be a content creator since I have zero desire to be one, along with trying to avoid comparing myself to others, which if not checked, can become really unhealthy.

However, it'd be strange not to be on social media, especially when it comes to marketing yourself and your business, since it's a given, and that everyone should be on there. Why pass up a really good opportunity to get yourself in front of as many people as possible? Using social media in this way sounds really good in theory, but is horrendous in practice, especially if you already happen to hate being in the spotlight as it already is, not to mention constantly keeping up with the needs, the demands, and most importantly, the ever changing algorithms that each platform has, just so that people can see your posts, which they will instantly forget as they scroll over with glazed eyes, move on to the next post, rinse and repeat ad infinitum, which in my heart

of hearts isn't worth it one bit. Sure, I'm on the social media platforms, but I rarely use them anymore, and to be honest, I'm only on them out of obligation at this point, and if it weren't for that, I would have deleted those accounts within a heartbeat years ago. In fact, I wouldn't have even bothered signing up for them if I knew what those platforms would end up doing to me.

Who am I obliged to keep those social media accounts for anyway? It's not like I work in social media marketing or anything, nor do I have the desire to work in that area, so why am I still clinging onto those accounts, which I rarely use, but want to delete, even though at the same time, I'm fearful of deleting them? At this point, it's mainly peer pressure. I don't enjoy my time on those platforms anymore. I don't think I ever did, since they all feel like corporate hedonistic treadmills where they control what you can see, and stuff ads in wherever they can. At this point, it feels like I'm a puppet on strings, and I want out. I don't want to be ruled by ads or algorithms. I've had enough of it, but at the same time, I don't want to look like someone who refuses to keep up with the times.

It's a mighty dilemma, but at the end of the day, social media is just one of many marketing tools. I don't have to be on it if I don't want to, because I'm sure I can find other ways to market myself, which will probably make more of an impact than just posting things to the void, and having an inconsistent following which neither grows nor declines, having it feeling like a revolving door where people come and go, occasionally liking a few posts along the way before moving on to the next person.

I'm sure I can survive without social media, and maybe I'd ironically stand out because I'm not on there anymore (that would be the dream for me), because one thing I've realised is that everything is saturated and repetitive on there. Everyone does the same things, buys the same things, go to the same places, and pretty much has one big hive minded personality where it's hard to be able to tell the individuals apart anymore. I'm sick of it, sick of being part of echo chambers, and most importantly, sick of being surveilled and having my every move tracked just so that the platforms can send me targeted ads left, right, and centre.

So, that's the end of this week, and whilst I'm in the process of choosing to forgo social media altogether, I'm also thinking about being creative in my marketing techniques, whilst also being subtle about them at the exact same time. I've realised that I have no desire to be on social media anymore, and whilst that social media workshop was helpful, it didn't sit right with me because I don't want to spend my time playing to appease a faceless corporate platform who would delete or suspend my accounts in a heartbeat over some arbitrary thing. I'd much rather own my own platform at this point.