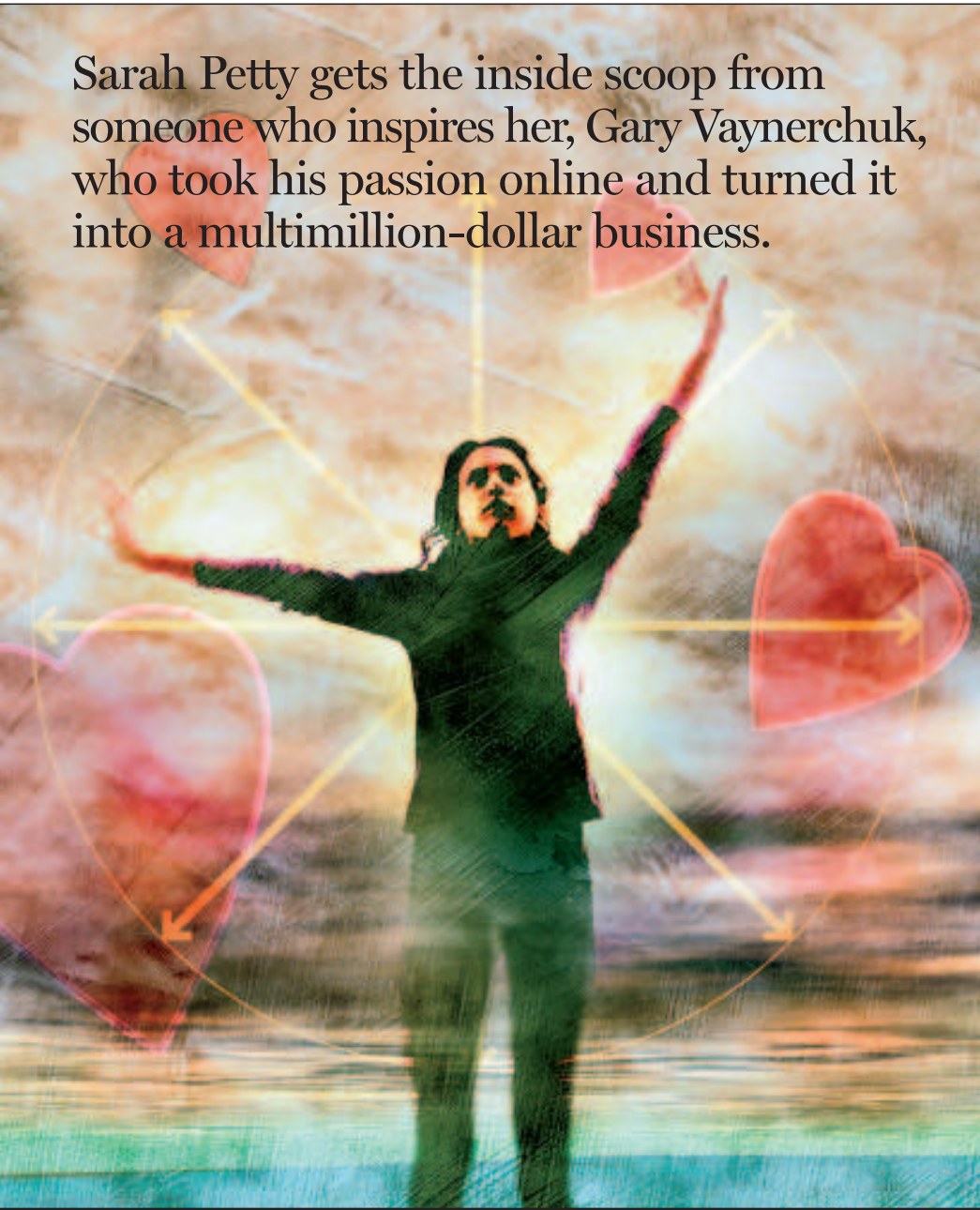


Sarah Petty gets the inside scoop from someone who inspires her, Gary Vaynerchuk, who took his passion online and turned it into a multimillion-dollar business.



Hustle

PASSION, THE INTERNET AND SUPERHUMAN EFFORT

INTERVIEW BY SARAH PETTY, M.PHOTOGR., CPP

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If you haven't read Gary Vaynerchuk's new book, "Crush It! Why Now Is the Time to Cash in on Your Passion" (HarperCollins), I recommend you find time to read it cover to cover. Every time I read this book, I get excited

about my business all over again. I recently had the opportunity to chat with Vaynerchuk about how one can use passion, hard work and social media to build a business.

Vaynerchuk built a multimillion-dollar business after creating a video blog called WineLibraryTV.com, a daily webcast on his passion, wine. He is unafraid to reveal his personality and feelings, even though it's brought some criticism. He will yell, get rowdy, curse occasionally, and is always undeniably real. Love him or hate him, there's no denying that Vaynerchuk knows how to harness his passion to propel him to success.

Sarah Petty: *Do you hear this a lot: Okay, my ducks are in a row and I've got a business. I'm on Facebook and Twitter and more, so why aren't things happening now? How do you respond?*

Gary Vaynerchuk: Those are tools, not tactics. They're not marketing strategies or employees. Facebook and Twitter are a marker and a pen, a fax machine, a cell phone and a laptop. It's how you use them—that's the game.

Do you recommend being everywhere? Everywhere you can physically handle. Everyone's threshold is different. Some people can only manage Facebook and they're tapped out. Some can do Facebook and Twitter. Some can do YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. I recommend working harder, and I'm not joking. If you're trying to build a business and make a living

“I want to accomplish superhuman things. Not everyone has to go insane Gary V. style, but I hope people recognize that if you do 10 push-ups you get 10 push-up results, and if you do 500 push-ups you get 500 push-up results, right?”

Vaynerchuk, right, built a multimillion-dollar business with his video blog, WineLibraryTV.com.



ARE YOU READY TO OPEN?

Here's Gary Vaynerchuk's checklist for building your brand

1. Identify your passion.
2. Make sure you can think of at least 50 awesome blog topics to ensure stickiness.
3. Answer the following questions:
Am I sure my passion is what I think it is?
Can I talk about it better than anyone else?
4. Name your personal brand. You don't have to refer to it anywhere in your content, but you should have a clear idea of what it is. For example, "The no-[boloney] real-estate agent," "The connoisseur of cookware," "The cool guide to young-adult books boys will love to read."
5. Buy your user name—.com and .tv, if possible—at GoDaddy.com.
6. Choose your medium: video, audio, written word.
7. Start a Wordpress or Tumblr account.
8. Hire a designer.
9. Include a Facebook Connect link, call-to-action buttons, share functions, and a button that invites people to do business with you in a prominent place on your blog.
10. Create a Facebook fan page.
11. Sign up for Ping.fm or TubeMogul and select all of the platforms to which you want to distribute your content. Choosing Twitter and Facebook is imperative; the others you can select according to your needs and preferences.
12. Post your content.
13. Start creating community by leaving comments on other people's blogs and forums and replying to comments to your own comment.
14. Use Twitter Search (or Search.Twitter) to find as many people as possible talking about your topic, and communicate with them.
15. Use Blogsearch.Google.com to find more blogs that are relevant to your subject.
16. Join as many active Facebook fan pages and groups relating to your blog topic as possible.
17. Repeat steps 12 through 16 over and over and over and over.
18. Do it again.
19. And again.
20. When you feel your personal brand has gained sufficient attention and stickiness, start reaching out to advertisers and begin monetizing.
21. Enjoy the ride.

From Gary Vaynerchuk's book, "Crush It! Why Now Is the Time to Cash in on Your Passion" (HarperCollins)

PROFIT CENTER

... are you trying to do this working 9 to 5? People have families and all that, and I get it, but you'll have to debate long and hard with me on what happens between 10 p.m. and 2 in the morning.

In your book, you give your e-mail several times—are you encouraging people to e-mail you? I tweeted you when I saw you on Fox and Friends, and you tweeted me right back, so you're obviously engaging with people on a level I think is superhuman. I want to accomplish superhuman things. Not everyone has to go insane Gary V. style, but I hope people recognize that if you do 10 push-ups you get 10 push-up results, and if you do 500 push-ups you get 500 push-up results, right?

I believe it's hard to get involved in smaller markets, but you're out there talking to everyone in the world, and that's got to be a challenge, especially in a saturated marketplace. In our industry, some people think, Oh, this is fun. I'm going to open a business. They don't define who they are and what they're good at. I feel you need to do that before jumping into the marketplace. I think you're right. We're going through a massive culture shift and people need to recognize that you have to zone in on your strengths. You need to be honest, to tell your story and be active in the community to gain new customers—they're there.

How do you think the whole online strategy works for a new business versus a mature business? Can they both use it successfully?
It's for everybody. It doesn't matter if it's your first day or your last. This is our world. This is where we now interact. This is where the world interacts—how is that not part of everybody's business?

Even if you do B2B. ... Last time I checked, human beings make [business-to-business] decisions.

What about people who are feeling frustrated because they're not making the progress they want?

It's about business, not photography. The quicker people wrap their head around that, the quicker they'll understand they need to spend more time engaging and interacting with people to scale their business. The quality of photography is clearly something that matters. However, if you're just taking pictures and you're silent to the social Web and interacting with people, you'll have a tougher time scaling your business. Too many people think it's just about taking the pictures, and everything else will work itself out.

You're honest, true to who you are. Is that realness something you see as changing in all businesses?

Yes, because the platforms are so much more real. There's no filter, so there's no editor who can save you. It's not tape-delayed. It's so much harder to be filtered in this transparent Web-authentic world we live in. It's going to be a huge factor going forward.

Would people be crazy not to hop in and make it happen online?

It's the biggest mistake they could make right now. ■

The best place to be inspired by Gary Vaynerchuk is Facebook.com/gary. Get free marketing inspiration from Sarah Petty at thejoyofmarketing.com/inspire.