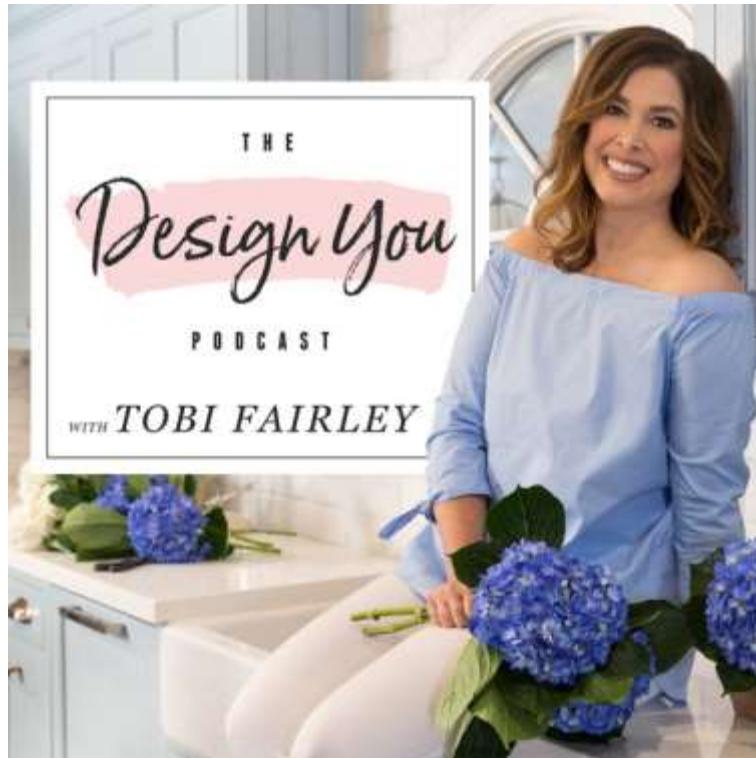


## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Tobi Fairley**

[The Design You Podcast](#) with Tobi Fairley

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Tobi:** You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 135.

**Female Announcer:** Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*, a show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth, and joy. Here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

**Tobi:** Hey, hey, friends. Today, I have a kindred spirit on the podcast. It's a new friend for me, Courtney McLeod and she is the Founder and the Principal Designer at Right Meets Left Design which means right brain, left brain. That's why we're kindred spirits. Courtney has a degree from the prestigious Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and she has a background in real estate private equity, but what she's been doing for the last eight years is building a thriving design firm.

So, we talk all about that and we get down to business with some specific tools Courtney is currently using to really, really maximize her profits and her client base. So, you're going to love this episode if you're a designer, but even if you're not, if you're a creative of some other type listen to these tools Courtney describes and the mindset she describes because they are going to serve you so well no matter what business you're in. So, enjoy this conversation with Courtney McLeod.

---

Hey, Courtney. Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. Let's talk money today and finances and the good stuff.

**Courtney:** Hi, Tobi. Thank you so much for having me. I'm really excited to join.

**Tobi:** I'm so glad you're here. So, we were chit-chatting before we started and talking about how we have a lot in common although my educational resume from the Sam Walton College of Business is not quite as exciting and prestigious as yours. But I'm going to let everybody tell you how you got into design because we did both come from a business background, a lot of finance, so tell everybody about you and we're going to get into some

[The Design You Podcast](#) with Tobi Fairley

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

conversation probably one that no one else really wants to hear, but they need to hear, right?

**Courtney:** Sure. We'll try to make it as enjoyable as possible.

**Tobi:** Exactly. Okay, tell them about you.

**Courtney:** Sure. So, I went to business school, I went to Penn. I have a degree from Wharton, but I always had a love of design. In fact, when I applied to school, I applied to business school and architecture school at the time, and I sort of got into my dream school and decided to go the finance route. I spent 15 years in real estate private equity, had an exciting career there. I got to that point where I got "job."

You sort of climb the corporate ladder and you get there and you look around and you say, "I'm really just not fulfilled." I knew it was time to make a big change and over the years I had still in my free time really pursued my passion for the decorative arts. I was a little crazy. I actually had eight apartments in 15 years just so I could redecorate.

**Tobi:** That's fun.

**Courtney:** Yeah, it was something. So, I spent a lot of years really experimenting on myself. I spend a lot of time traveling and studying and it was really just something I did to relax and to enjoy myself. I realize that I had really built over time a wealth of knowledge, especially of the history of the decorative arts and interior design specifically.

So, I decided to pursue it and see what I could do with it and I took a year and really tried to build some technical skills by taking classes. I actually bought a textbook called *The Professional Practice of Interior Design* and just read that cover to cover.

**Tobi:** I think had that as one of my college courses in interior design, actually. Was it blue? Did it have a navy cover?

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Courtney:** It was blue.

**Tobi:** I know that book.

**Courtney:** It was great because I really had no understanding of what the business side of this industry really was and so it was really good to sort of provide a foundation and I really jumped in thinking I would intern with another designer and really kind of start that way and I got quite lucky and got a first client on my own. She took a real chance on me and I realized, "Okay, maybe I can do this for myself," and it really slowly built from there. I hung out my shingle and yeah, it's been eight years this summer. It's been a really exciting, wild ride and I just feel really lucky to be doing something that I absolutely love.

**Tobi:** Yeah, I love it so much. We do have so much in common. I actually did intern. Well, I had to because I went to design school and business school, so I interned in Las Vegas for a casino design firm for a summer internship and then I did one, I don't know, eight-week stint for somebody else, and then like you I was like, "You know what? Let's just jump in with both feet," and did the same thing which often I say, as you told me earlier, the hard way. I might not recommend it in a lot of ways, but there were a lot of things that were good about it as well. Do you feel the same?

**Courtney:** I think about that all the time and it's the painful way to do it, but in a lot of ways I feel lucky because I was able to ultimately craft a business that really fits me. I'm not trying to sort of pigeonhole into something that I think it should be. Over time through admittedly many, many mistakes and continued mistakes, of course, you ultimately craft something that actually is unique and that fits you perfectly. So, yeah, it was definitely harder to build without that base and that experience, but it's doable.

**Tobi:** I love that. I love what you said, and as you're saying that I'm thinking, "I think you still make the mistakes anyway, no matter what." I think that's part of the process. Maybe you have a little less gnashing of teeth because you at least had a blueprint if you had worked for someone

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

else and we're flying blind, but at the same time I don't know that a lot of the mistakes are totally avoidable because it's not always that we didn't know, it's just that we get busy, or we're trying to wear a bunch of hats, or we're trying to keep all the balls in the air, and it's just – sometimes you're just going to be human and things are going to happen.

**Courtney:** It's so true. It's so true. Did you sort of have a debate about whether or not to pursue a full design degree when you decided to make the change?

**Tobi:** So, I finished my accounting degree first and then I'm just the kind of person who I feel so confident when I have information. Now, you did that on your own while you were traveling and stuff, so I'm sure you maybe have even more knowledge than me, but I do – I always like the security that having the education or certification or some kind of a formal path of study it gives me. Of course, I know it's just my mindset, you don't have to have that. There are people every day that go out and do just as wonderful work as I do, but just personally I enjoy that.

I decided to go on back to school right after finishing my design degree and then I had so many hours – I mean, my accounting degree. I had so many hours from my accounting degree that I didn't need any electives. You can't squeeze a four-year design degree into two years because all the studios are sequential. You have to take that time. So, while I was doing that I was like, "Well, what am I going to do with all the rest of my time?" I was looking at minors. I was like, "Maybe I get a history minor or whatever."

I had this great alum advisor who had come to Arkansas, believe it or not, from California, and he's like, "I have a business degree and you're the only student I've ever had with a business degree. I think you should get an MBA." I thought that was just about the smartest thing I'd ever heard, so I got my MBA while I was getting my interior design degree which was all fun.

**Courtney:** Sounds fantastic.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Tobi:** Yeah, fun. I'm like you, I like both – I mean, definitely right brain, left brain. In fact, your business is called Right Meets Left, right?

**Courtney:** Yep, that's right, and I'm sure you found the same. I feel like going in I didn't even really anticipate how much of advantage it is to have that, the sort of the business side, that knowledge.

**Tobi:** Right, yes.

**Courtney:** And how incredibly applicable it is, not just as a business owner, but also just in terms of executing design projects and the organization of it and just dealing with all of the vendors and the whole process. Having that experience has been such a huge differentiator, so yeah, it's been a pleasant surprise for me, definitely.

**Tobi:** I think you're right. I think there's something about having confidence around money and numbers and figures and spreadsheets and that linear way of thinking that is definitely – not only helps, obviously, to be profitable, but just like you said, just the way you organize your mind, the way you think about other people's money as an investment, the way you put the project together. I definitely think that more linear thought process can be such an advantage like you said.

Let's get into what we want to talk about today which is you were telling me, which I love, that recently you've really been leaning on your pipeline and not just like a keep it in your head list of people or who happens to be on your current client list, but actually using a written down, documented, tract pipeline as a tool to grow your business and your profits, right?

**Courtney:** Absolutely. It's really something that I carried over from the world of private equity. As an investment firm the pipeline of potential deals is the lifeblood of the business.

**Tobi:** Right.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Courtney:** So, just kind of thinking about potential growth in those terms comes naturally. I think that we're all, to some form or another, thinking about it, but I think the actual writing down of it and having the list and really looking at it and really saying, "Okay, what are the potential top line and profit line do I have from each individual contact and then in total?" Seeing that total is very motivating. It's like, "All right, if I can convert all of these I could get to here." Or, "If I can get half of these I can get to there."

When you have an active, robust pipeline it's an incredibly motivating tool and it's a really, really helpful forecasting tool. I found in leaner times when the pipeline is not so robust it's definitely one of those kick yourself in the hiney and get motivated and get moving to change whatever it is you're doing because it's not actually working.

**Tobi:** Yeah, there's several things I love about what you're talking about. Number one, I think that in general, creatives and creative businesses don't do a lot of forecasting or looking at their pipeline because especially in a one-on-one situation, a high-end situation a business that mainly waits for the phone to ring, waits for referrals it feels sort of evasive and like there's not even really such a thing.

Kind of like we don't know what the pipeline is which is not really true and that's what you're saying and we'll get into that. And the other thing I think that's interesting and I think the reason that so many creatives avoid this approach is because the same way that they think they're not good at business or not good at money they also think they're not good at selling. So, this is a very comfortable place for anybody like you're saying in equity, in real estate, in any type of sales. They're so used to knowing who their leads are and working their leads and putting dollar values to those and it's not something at all that's a typical practice for creative businesses, I don't think particularly interior design.

So, I love this conversation so much. It's something I've done for years with my accountant and my strategist and I think that it is a very unusual thing that both you and I are doing that. So, let's talk about it a little bit more

[The Design You Podcast](#) with Tobi Fairley

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

because I think people – there's kind of a couple of prongs to it. First of all, you have to actively be paying attention to cold leads, warm leads, really hot leads, having conversations and following up on those and really working your pipeline.

Then, I think you also have to – there's the whole other piece, which we'll get into after that, which is sort of the marketing and the business development piece which is non-existent for a lot of creative firms who are like I said before just waiting for the phone to ring.

So, let's start by speaking about the documenting and this approach that you use to actually look at written names, numbers, projecting when they might start, all of that. Tell us a little bit more.

**Courtney:** Sure. It's really simple, I keep it in as part of – I have like an Excel spreadsheet that I do all of my sort of monthly, quarterly, annual forecasting in and it's really just a part of that and I have the potential project client. I have what's the potential budget, what do I think the potential design fees related to that, what do I think the potential mark-up profit would be and what's the overall potential bottom line to my business from each particular project.

Then, I also make sure that I keep notes. I have a line where I'm just either initial contact, scheduling an introductory call, or call went well, sending a proposal just to kind of know where I am with each potential lead and then I also make sure that I really track a few key statistics. First one – I actually classify it by type and so is it purely interior design? Is it renovation? Is it commercial? Is it residential? The bulk of my practice is residential, and then I have an actual section for status.

Is it preliminary, i.e. have I not really had any sort of phone or in-person contact? Are we in proposal stage? Have we signed a proposal, we're waiting for the deposit? That kind of thing, so that I know again exactly where I am. Location is another one, and the most important one is the source. Is it a repeat client? Did it come from a client referral? Is it a

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

broker? Is it Instagram? Is it directly from my website? Where am I actually getting these potential leads? That is, I think, the single most important piece of information that I'm tracking.

I mean, possibly even more important than what the dollar figures are because that's how I know what I am doing within the mix of things that I'm doing what's really working.

**Tobi:** Right, yeah. A lot of people have no idea what's working and what's not working. In fact, a lot of people aren't doing anything. They're not really working at all. Maybe if they're showing up on social it's such an indirect approach that they don't know or they're not asking to really track what's working, right?

**Courtney:** Yeah, and I think, like many things, I've started to get here through a painful process of being that person that was – I knew to have a written down pipeline, but it was kind of empty.

**Tobi:** Right, yeah.

**Courtney:** And I was like, "Okay, well, - " because for me the part that I didn't have coming into this was the kind of entrepreneurial experience and the – especially the marketing a small business experience. So, I knew that I should have some kind of pipeline, but I had no idea how to actually start to fill it up. That has taken over time so that it's been a mix of building relationships. It's building a base of clients that you're getting repeat business. It's being proactive about building a social media presence. It's been proactive about investing in PR, investing in time to develop industry relationships as well which can certainly lead to opportunity and potential clients.

So, it's realizing that it needs to be a multi-pronged approach. So, understanding what does it mean to really kind of market your business on the one hand, but then if you aren't taking the time – and my little pipeline, it's very simple, but if you aren't taking the time to really see the fruits of

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

your labor you could be spending 90% of your marketing time setting up broker contacts and be getting 10% of your business from brokers.

**Tobi:** Right, yes.

**Courtney:** And if you're seeing that over time that is powerful information.

**Tobi:** Yeah, so there's a couple of things I love about that. One, you're right. If you're not measuring something like you have no idea if it's working or not. So, it's back to that old throwing a bunch of mud on the wall and seeing what sticks except you kind of don't even know what's sticking. And then the other part that's so important that you just said is the thing that most of us struggle with, I think, is that there's not enough time in the day.

The one thing we can't get more of is time, and a lot of us are doing things because we think they're part of the business, we should be doing them, we saw somebody else doing them, we've heard they work, yet we're not measuring them and we might literally be wasting hours a week doing things that just aren't working which doesn't make any sense at all.

**Courtney:** It's so true and I have 100% been there because you do seek out advice and lots of different people have lots of different ways that work for them. You may adopt something that is gangbusters for someone else and then you're like, "Oh my goodness, I'm spending all of my time doing this and I'm not seeing any actual results from it."

If you aren't really paying attention and tracking I think you just end up in frustration and then you don't know why. You're like, "I'm putting in all this effort and I'm not seeing any results." That just becomes this vicious circle and it's hard to get out of that.

**Tobi:** Yeah, I agree with that and I think even the thing – I mean, COVID kind of shut this down a little bit which was fascinating because we could start to see where we were doing a lot of extra things and believing we had to. "I have to be at this event. I have to go to market. I have to do these

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

other things.” Then we kind of were like, “Oh, interesting. Look how business can go on without some of that stuff.”

But I love what you’re saying because if you’re tracking the source and if you’re tracking your marketing and you’re knowing, “I met these last five major clients at live events in the city” then you’re going to know you want to do one-on-one, like old-fashioned marketing. Or if you’re like, “The last five best clients came from Instagram,” or if you’re a person in a company who’s getting into digital marketing and you’re like, “I got those through getting them on my email list and emailing them consistently,” then you’ll know where to put your time. I think that is just something that’s so important to everyone because you cannot be all things, do all things, try all things in the sales and marketing realm. It’s just not possible. You need one or two or three key things, I think, that consistently drive your business.

**Courtney:** It’s really true.

**Tobi:** Yeah, so what would you say are the key things that drive most of your business when you’re looking at it that way?

**Courtney:** Yeah, well, so at this point in my firm a big driver is referrals from clients or repeat clients. I think that kind of naturally happens once you’ve been in business a certain amount of time or maybe it should naturally happen if you’re doing something right. I’ve also found that increasingly Instagram has become a generator of potential clients and PR efforts. PR efforts have been a very big driver for me and really investing in PR is something that I started to do, gosh, about a year and a half, two years ago. I felt like I was at the right point in my career in design that I had the book of work and I felt like I was ready to really step up to that.

It’s led me to be able to graduate to higher budget projects and bigger projects and just kind of a different level of clientele which then also, like a virtuous cycle once you get some of those projects then those referrals are to other bigger clients and bigger projects. So, all the way you’re kind of stepping up at each stage to get yourself to the next level.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Tobi:** Right, and some of the things that are coming to my mind as you're talking is that in a lot of ways every business, including interior design, if you really want to hit some of your dream-level projects or really expand and create a profitable business is really pay to play if we're being honest about that. Because whether it's paying the PR agent, paying for advertising on social, paying somebody to help you create the whole brand online, any of those things, it takes an investment and money and I'm curious, and I would suspect because it was true for me, that coming from your background, especially your background that you worked in commercial real estate for so long, you were used to seeing companies that invested money in their success.

I think that one of the biggest problems for a lot small businesses including interior designers is when you just sort of set up shop and you're kind of starting on a shoestring budget that you don't have that comfort level or even awareness of spending on your business. I would say time and again, the people I consult in their businesses, the businesses I look at that aren't thriving it's because they're not spending enough money in the right places to really grow their business.

So, how do you feel about that? Do you think it did help you that you came from more of this bigger, more corporate environment? Because I think, generally, and do you agree that small creative businesses are more the starving artists and they're literally wearing all the hats and putting no money, no capital in their businesses?

**Courtney:** I mean, 100% and in all honesty that was me for a really long time because there was a fear to invest in my business. There was that, I think you call it a scarcity mindset –

**Tobi:** Yeah.

**Courtney:** I think I've heard you say that a few times and I think I really approached it that way and I think part of it, for me, was I came into this confident on the business side, but it took me years to really be confident

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

as a creative, to really own it to say, “Yes, I’m a creative person. Yes, I have a talent for this.” I think once I started to grow into that confidence I was able to start to really, truly have faith in myself enough to actually put my money where my mouth is.

**Tobi:** Yeah, that’s fascinating because one of the things – I hear so many creatives not confident in business and when they finally get confident there their businesses take off, but I also hear so many people like you that are always telling me, “Well, I don’t have a design degree, Tobi,” and it’s like some little, internal dialogue. A little bit of mean girl, a little bit of that kind of self-talk of, “Well, I’m not really legit,” and it’s not the client that doesn’t think you’re legit, it’s your own self-confidence and owning your creativity that really – when you can flip that switch on and pair that with the business acumen I think that’s where the real sweet spot is.

**Courtney:** It really is and since I made that connection it’s where things really started to take off and really my whole approach to my business and my goals for my business because for a long time I genuinely was like, “I love the freedom.” You know after working corporate life for so many years I could set my own schedule, I was just Holly Golightly out there, so I didn’t have dreams beyond maybe a quite small practice. Maybe it’s just me or maybe it’s just one other person and that’s fine. That’s great. You can have a very successful situation that way, but I think really when I started to grow into the dual confidence is where I started to say, “Okay, you know what? I think I do want to build something bigger. I think I do have the potential to create something bigger.”

I think that shift in mindset and shift in goals felt natural in a way. Once the confidence came it was like, “Okay, yeah, I can step up and try this. I can really do this.” I think all along I had been having my pipeline and I think I just have gotten better and better at managing it and interpreting it and acting on the information that I’m getting from it instead of having it and tracking it and seeing it and maybe still spending too much time on the wrong things or too much time on maybe things that maybe are easier.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Tobi:** Yeah, right.

**Courtney:** This way I can feel busy. We all fall into that trap.

**Tobi:** Totally. Like, why look at a pipeline and crunch numbers and try to envision how to find new leads when you can be playing in beautiful fabrics or paint colors or drawing architectural details, right?

**Courtney:** It's so true. It's so true. I think it was around a similar time where I had always had a home office and I decided to join a design coworking space. It's closed now, but there was one called Fuigo in New York and it was the first time I was surrounded by these more established design firms and really seeing how they work and just really getting this spark from it. I think that that was a big influence on me. I was seeing what they do, seeing in a lot of cases that I was working very similarly or the same and realizing that I actually had the systems and processes and structure in place to be able to be doing more than I was doing. Again, it just helped to build my confidence.

**Tobi:** I love that. Yeah, so basically you just decided to stop playing small and when you looked around and looked at other firms you were noticing that they weren't that different than you and I think that's true for so many people. The only thing that's keeping us from our dream business is us. We're the only one in the way of the next level of what we could be, I think.

**Courtney:** It's so true. Getting out of your own way is the biggest challenge.

**Tobi:** It absolutely is. Yes. I love it so much. Okay, so if you were going to help people get started with this and they're like, "That still sounds scary to me," or they're like, "I don't get it. Why am I going to track it? There's nothing in my pipeline. I'm just going to be looking at the same blank paper for weeks." I mean, there is some of that, right? But it's kind of like anything else, you've got to start the habit first.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

It's kind of like when people say to me, "Well, I started doing Facebook Lives and only two people showed up, so after three weeks I quit." I'm like, "No, you just got to keep going with those two people until you get 30 people or 200 people and it takes time." That's kind of the same thing with tracking a pipeline. If you get bored with it, if you're not consistent with it, that's the main problem, I think. But what do you think and how do people get started with that?

**Courtney:** Okay, so when I really needed the boost, this is a little embarrassing but what I did was I actually said, "Okay – the last 10 projects that I'm either currently working on or had worked on, just take 10, I put those in my "pipeline," I filled in all the information, I understood where they had come from, I did my little signs and highlighted so that my pipeline looked really full and motivating.

**Tobi:** Yes, which I love.

**Courtney:** [inaudible] silly, but –

**Tobi:** No, it's not silly at all. It's great because it's really – honestly, it's kind of like what I do to practice abundance which is the opposite of scarcity. So, I love what you're saying because you looked at and you're like, "I just wrote them all down, I already had all the clients, I was grateful for the clients, I was staring at those names and numbers feeling super successful," right? And that's coming from a place of abundance instead of staring at a blank pipeline because you don't have any new ones going, "There's nothing there." That is so genius, actually.

**Courtney:** Exactly.

**Tobi:** I love it.

**Courtney:** And it was, again, it accomplished a couple things. It made me feel good about myself. It boosted my confidence. But I also started to see, "Okay, I'm actually getting a good bit of clients from either repeat or

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

referrals from clients or also from contractor relationships." I was actually surprised by how many were coming through contractors I had worked with over the years.

So, that was kind of interesting to me and I said, "Okay, that's kind of new." I had never really done any outreach to contractors. I had only – if I'm doing a new job then I would sort of connect with a new contractor. But after that I started to actually research contractors and if I saw someone I thought was interesting I would reach out, not necessarily with a current project, but to meet them, to get to know them.

**Tobi:** Set up a meeting.

**Courtney:** Yeah, say, "Oh, I'd love to maybe come and see a current project. I have something that might be in the pipeline." Whether I did or not, but they are always really happy to meet designers as well and you make that connection. The next step is maybe your next project comes in and they – you call them, but a lot of times it can be they have a project that comes and they need some help.

So, that was actually one, for me at that time, that was the surprise. I think more recently, and I think that this has certainly been driven by a lot of the sort of things that have been happening this year and the expanded exposure that's come from the diversity initiatives that are happening within the industry and honestly, I think, I don't know this, but I feel like there's some kind of tweak in the algorithms because I just feel like my Instagram has had much more exposure than it's had previously.

I have a business Instagram and so they do give you the analytics around that. So, I've seen a sharp change in that over the last three to six months. So, Instagram has now become a much bigger driver than it had been in the past.

**Tobi:** That's great.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Courtney:** For me, that's somewhere where I'm kind of looking now and Instagram has become not just a client lead generator, but it's also become an influencer revenue stream as well. So, it's been an interesting secondary stream of revenue and also establishing relationships with vendors leading to licensing and things like that.

**Tobi:** For those influencer things, do you mean that you're actually using affiliate links and selling things or you're having people come to you and say, "I want you to be like a brand ambassador or that kind of thing?"

**Courtney:** Yeah, I'm having people come to me and say, "I want you to be a brand ambassador. I want you to do this. We're doing this marketing campaign on Instagram. We want you to create content for us." In fact, I'm working on a few of those right now that will be coming out soon.

So, I had done one or two of those things over the last few years, but it's really this year where it's become like a five-figure kind of thing which isn't nothing.

**Tobi:** No, I love it.

**Courtney:** It's pretty straight to the bottom line kind of money.

**Tobi:** I know. That's what's so beautiful. I teach people not only to digitally market their business to help the one-on-one boots on the ground that you've been talking about, but to actually use the Internet even for their one-on-one services to market their businesses, but I also help people create scalable products or other revenue streams and it's for that very reason. Because when you do a long-term interior design product, yeah, the total budget might be huge, but you might be making 30% of that and you do something like what you're talking about and you're making 90% or 95% and so that's a huge, huge difference to your bottom line if you're putting \$10,000, \$20,000 to the bottom line it can really make a difference.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

So, I love to hear that. That's so good. So, as we wrap up, keeping your pipeline, considering PR, showing up on Instagram, what else? Anything else that's really been – that you want everybody to be thinking about that's really been beneficial for you?

**Courtney:** Yeah, kind of like what you said, look at what has worked for you in the past. If really doing that broker outreach has worked, do it. Get consistent. If you haven't tried reaching out to contractors, I highly recommend that. They're very, very, I found very receptive to establishing those relationships because it's such a win-win. So, if you have not tried that please do.

I think the whole social media thing, find your platform and really devote some time and investment in it. I think, for me, the differentiator was to really have a very specific point of view on social media. I think that the people that kind of – and I think brands are attracted to social media platforms where your very well-defined style fits well into their very well-defined style.

So, don't be afraid to be very niche on social media. I found that when I stopped trying to be all to everyone and just really was like, "Okay, this is my brand. This is who I am. This is who I'm going to be up on social media and it feels authentic because it actually is me."

**Tobi:** Right, yeah.

**Courtney:** It feels like me. I think that's when I started to get seen and noticed by brands, especially.

**Tobi:** Amazing. I love it. Well, thank you so much for sharing this. I love hearing your thoughts and connecting with other right brain, left brain people like myself. There are some of us out there, right? There are others. We're not the only ones.

**Courtney:** Yep.

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

**Tobi:** But if you don't happen to have that background or experience, you totally can learn to be confident using tools just like what you're talking about today, right?

**Courtney:** Absolutely, and I speak from experience because I came in with confidence on the business side and no confidence on the creative side. I figured out a way to make it work. So, if you're the opposite, you can figure out a way to make it work and get there.

**Tobi:** I love it. Okay, so how does everybody find you? You've talked a lot about Instagram, is that the best place for them to connect with you?

**Courtney:** Yeah, so you can find me on Instagram, I'm @rightmeetsleftinteriordesign. You can also find my website, I am rmlid.com and I'm also at Right Meets Left Interior Design on Facebook as well.

**Tobi:** I love it. Okay, well thank you so much for having this great conversation with me today. I know that there will be lots of people who heard many pieces of gold in that and I just enjoyed it so much.

**Courtney:** Thank you so much, Tobi. I really, really enjoyed it and thank you for everything you're doing. I have to say, I'm going to fan girl a little bit because your podcast is one of my faves.

**Tobi:** Thank you. Thank you, yes. Well, you're welcome. I love it. As you can probably tell, I'm passionate about helping other people make a lot of money and really create thriving businesses and lives, too. So, I'm glad that you like it. So, thanks so much. That means a lot.

**Courtney:** Thank you.

---

**Tobi:** Okay, pretty cool, right? I love how Courtney just is so calm, but at the same time takes things that could seem complex and makes them just simple. I think my favorite part was where she talked about her little

## Ep #135: How to Manage a Thriving Business with Courtney McLeod

abundance strategy for making herself excited to use her pipeline because she puts all the clients she's won in there and those give her confidence. Such an incredible way to approach this work that otherwise could feel so daunting to a lot of us.

So, you heard where to find Courtney if you want to reach out to her on Instagram and if you want help building a business that's really thriving, especially in the digital marketing area reach out to me. You can get on my waitlist for Design You so when we open next you'll be ready to go because creating the kind of business we talked about in this episode is the kind where things get really, really fun. It's where you can create financial freedom and time freedom and all those things you really dreamed about, okay?

Thanks for listening today. I hope you loved the episode. I sure did, and I'll see you back here next week with another great episode of *The Design You Podcast*. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for listening to *The Design You Podcast*. If you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model there has never been a more important time than right now.

So, join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my Design You Coaching Program today. You can get all the details at [tobifairley.com](http://tobifairley.com).