

Ep #245: Building Your Brand on TikTok with Julianne Taylor



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 245.

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.

Hello my friends, I am excited about today's episode. It is with my friend Julianne Taylor, and if you don't know Julianne, she is a woman of many, many talents. Her website says Julianne or JuJu Taylor, as she's known by is a Charleston, South Carolina based content creator, product designer and mindset speaker. I have known her for many of those things. We became friends years ago when she was really fully into the product design of Taylor Burke Home. And she has done so many things since then.

But she is a whiz at short form video and we talk a lot about that today. And the whole idea of using what you have and your connections to really create the power of being an influencer. And I know a lot of us don't think of ourselves as influencers, we even think of influencer as kind of a dirty word because we think of these whizz kid young people who just hopped up and popped up on social media over the last few years and became big deals.

But what Julianne is so good at is knowing that the people that really are the most effective influencers are those that lean into their experience, and expertise, and talents to help those that know them, and love them, and follow them really have a better life. So Julianne says that she does work based on her experience and her education as an interior designer and she has a master's in human resources. But what she really does is she marries that creativity and her strong business acumen to help her communities find joy in the everyday. I love that.

And to work harder, no, not harder, work smarter and not harder. None of us want to work any harder. So Julieann being that creator, content creator,

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product designer. She's even a mindset speaker because heck, does it take a lot of mindset work to really excel in these spaces and the online spaces. And I think you're just going to love everything we talk about today.

So if you've wondered about things like TikTok or Instagram reels, or how to leverage who you are in your own expertise in these ways, and it has seemed out of, you know, not in alignment with you, or maybe too hard or too much tech. You're going to love this episode because Julianne breaks things down and makes it so much simpler in the way that you think about it than probably you're doing right now in your own brain and complicating things.

So let me be quiet with the introduction of Julieann, let's get through the interview. I think you're going to love it and I'll see you on the other side of the episode where we'll talk about what you can do with this fabulous information. Okay, enjoy my interview with Julieann Taylor.

Tobi: Hey, Julianne, or should I say JuJu, welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. I'm so excited about this conversation we're going to have today.

Julianne: I'm so glad to be here. Thanks for having me.

Tobi: You're so welcome. So why don't you tell everybody about who you are and what you do because you've kind of done, like me, a lot of things. You're multi-passionate and multi-talented so let's start there before we get into sort of the exciting conversation we're going to have today.

Julianne: Well, like you and a lot of your listeners, I wear about 20 different hats. We are all humans and we have lots of different passions and things that bring us joy. And so I've been very fortunate in my career to be able to do lots of different things. And when people ask me sort of, "What do you do for a living?" It's several things. I'm not any one thing. But I am a product

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designer in the home décor and fashion space. I'm a digital content creator so I work with brands to create content. And I'm also a mindset speaker.

I'm super passionate about working with small businessowners, in particular female businessowners and helping them find their good JuJu.

Tobi: I love it. I love, love, love it. So if people have spent any time in the world of TikTok especially in home décor TikTok as I call it, they may have encountered you because you have what I would call a massive following. And you've done such a beautiful job really leaning into your brand, your personality, and really your whole approach to bringing more good JuJu to the world. So that's what I want to talk about today. I want to really help people think differently about this idea of being an influencer or being a content creator.

I think so many people have maybe one kind of thought about what that means. And they have that sort of vision of what an influencer is which a lot of details of that they don't really want they don't think. But you have such a fresh different way of thinking about being an influencer. So can we start there? Can you tell us how people should really or could really be thinking about leveraging themselves at a different level?

Julianne: Well, when we think about the word 'influencer' I think for a lot of people it's become this dirty little word. And there's this sort of stigma attached to being an influencer. But what I would say to people is if anyone has ever slid into your DMs, if anyone has ever asked you, "Where did you get that blouse from? Where's the recipe? Where did you stay last weekend when you were traveling?" If one person has ever slid into your DMs and asked you for a recommendation, you are an influencer.

And so I don't think that that word needs to be this dirty little word in the industry. Now, do I lead with that? No, I consider myself a content creator. Am I in the influencing space? Absolutely but I don't lead with, "Hi, I'm JuJu, I'm an influencer." And what I really try to encourage brands is when

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you think about, well yeah, people do ask me, “Hey, where did I get this cup I was drinking out of when I did my live yesterday?” Or anything you’re doing, someone’s asked for a recommendation.

I always encourage business owners to think about how they can leverage the products that they use in their business, the things that they’re talking about when they’re on video in a way that can be an extra revenue stream for them. You may have a brick and mortar or maybe you are selling interior design services but you could also be thinking about hey, I use QuickBooks to manage, you know, as a software program. Or GoDaddy runs my website. Or I built my website through Shopify.

Those are all great companies that you can work with as a content creator that’s just an additional revenue stream for your business. And a lot of people that I work with don’t really think about that. We think about sort of the singular avenue of I sell this widget, or I sell these services and that’s sort of my focus, that’s all I do. But nowadays you can cast a much wider net and really partner with businesses that you love that you use every day that support your business and you can make extra income doing that.

Tobi: That’s so amazing. So I mean in theory I’m sure everybody’s like, “Oh my gosh, that’s so cool and yeah, that makes so much sense. And yes, I do not only use but recommend lots of businesses, and lots of products.” But it feels sort of like a big gap for us as I’m just a little interior designer maybe that nobody knows over in such and such state. Versus how do I reach out to this giant company or somebody that looks really impressive or powerful and have a conversation with little old me?

How does that even work? Is that a mindset shift? Is it just literally a step one, two, three, start doing these things? How do we become the person that thinks in a way that helps us monetize all the parts of our life?

Julianne: Well, I also have been in that phase of little old me. Why would they want to work with little old me? And I think that there is a mindset shift

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away from that because brands need a lot of little old me's to create content for them that they're able to use on their social platforms. And there's a couple of things, a couple of tips that I think are really helpful. If you're someone that's like, "Well, where do I even start?" One, Tobi, you and I were just talking about how you were at Highpoint market recently.

And I think going to market as an interior designer is really important. Now, do you need to go to every single market that exists? No. But the movers and shakers, and the big decision makers for all of these companies, they're at market. And sort of sidetracking into licensing, you and I both have collections with different furniture, I have wallpaper, tabletop, different companies. Those deals were made at market because the decisionmakers are at market. And people like to do business with people that they like.

And so going to market helps cultivate some of those relationship. Go to the cocktail parties, go to the showrooms. Start specifying those products. What I would do is go through your resource library and think about, gosh, I use this flooring company all the time. Or this is my go to tile company. This is my go to wallpaper company. Start tagging those companies when you do installs. And start specifying them. You've all got them. And then go to market and start making sure they know who you are. I have been using your product all year, I love it. I've sold thousands of dollars of your product.

They know who you are, those account managers know who you are. Start developing relationships and showing them that you want to partner with them in a way to create content for them. And then start pitching them. Find out who handles, ask, "Who handles your influencer partnerships?" Get the person and it's usually somebody who's the head of marketing, somebody might be the head of social media, whatever their title is. But ask, "Who handles your influencer partnerships?" You can either do that at market or slide into their DMs on Instagram and ask.

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“I would love to start a conversation, who handles your influencer partnerships?”

Tobi: That's such, yeah, such good advice because we don't even think about that being, it's almost sometimes like we forget that we're not bothering them or we're not asking for a favor necessarily when we're starting those conversations because it's definitely a win/win. A lot of times they come out even almost ahead of us in the short run as we're building our credibility, or our name recognition, or other things because they're getting a lot from us for a lot of times a not super expensive price. But it makes a big difference if you're working with multiple people in that way as a small business, right?

Julianne: And for interior designers it can be a challenging relationship because you have a client that is purchasing that tile from you. So you're not trying to get the tile for free and create content. You want to be careful about sort of what your intentions are. For first pieces of content your client has already paid for it. Think about how you use that content to build your portfolio, build a relationship with this tile company for example and tag them. Then you go in for the pitch of, “Do you have some new product introductions?”

“Do you have some things coming out in the next six months that might make sense for us to partner on?” “I've got this project, I'm redoing a project in my own home. I'm redoing my laundry room or I'm redoing this bathroom. Would you like to send me the tile and also pay me to create the content?” And there are lots of different ways that you can monetize it. Certainly there is product trade which in the interior design industry, I mean let's face it, a lot of these things that we specify are quite pricey.

So you get a Viking stove in exchange for some content, I mean that's a pretty good deal, right?

Tobi: Yes, absolutely, yeah.

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Julianne: But there are lots of other ways you can continue to monetize that. Say you do a product trade, they love your piece of content and they want to run ads behind that. They want to run an ad spend behind this, what we call whitelisting where your name is attached to the content so it's run through your account on the backend which is great for you. You get some great exposure because that ad runs, your name is attached to it. But when people click on it, it goes to their website.

You can charge for that. You can charge a monthly fee for them to run ad spend behind that piece of content that you created.

Tobi: That's so cool, yeah.

Julianne: So what may have started as a product trade arrangement can turn into a paid campaign because they want usage rights or they want to run some ad spend behind it.

Tobi: That's amazing. So you have obviously so much expertise here. And of course we'll talk about it in a little bit, that people can actually – a handful of people because you only take a few at a time but people can learn some of this from you as a consultant. But how do we even know what's possible besides listening to something like this? Do we just start asking questions? Is there something to read? Is there a course to take? How do we start to know, because we would have known necessarily there was such a thing as ad spend, or whitelisting?

How do you, I guess it's like anything else, you just start building relationships. But what advice do you have for those people who think, I don't even know what any of that means?

Julianne: A lot of small business owners will work with me on a three or six month type of arrangement where I'm sort of an extension of their business. And we really think about how we monetize different revenue streams for them. And give them action plans on here are businesses you can target. Here are products that you're already using or have you thought

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about this? Where you may be a graphic designer, or you own a brick and mortar, or you're an interior designer but you may not have thought about hey, gee, I do use this in my business. I could work with these other companies.

So we work on an action plan. We work on pitch letters. We work on how to negotiate what to ask for. And I'm a big fan of asking for the moon. Brands can always say no but I use open language when they ask for my rates. I always use open language around here is what I typically charge. Does this fit within your budget? And using language like that helps to continue the conversation along. I'd love to explore how we can make this work for both of us. This gives them an option instead of saying, "No, I can't meet your rate."

This gives them an option to come back to the table and continue to negotiate where there are lots of situations where I will negotiate down the deliverables because they don't have as much budget. There are lots of different things we can slice and dice. I've even worked with brands where I'm like, "Okay, you can't meet my rate, we'll make up the difference in some product." Because there's value in that product.

I just did a brand deal with a green cleaning supply company and they were off a little bit. And I said, "Well, send me a couple extra cases of cleaning products because there's value in that. I can use that." And they were like, "Okay, great, let's make it work." So there are all kinds of ways that you can slice and dice these deals. But when I work with clients is thinking about here's what you need to be charging. And what I find is in this industry it really is the wild, wild west. And I consistently see people undercharging for content creation.

Tobi: Yeah. That makes sense. I would expect people to undercharge. We also undercharge for our services in design or other things. So if we're going to not undercharge and we're going to be willing to ask for the moon, what do we have to remember in our mindset, or thinking about ourselves

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or our own value, how can we sort of – I mean I don't really even like the term fake it till you make it. But how do we live into that value that we actually have? Because I think we underestimate the value that we bring to the table a lot of times, right?

Julianne: Yeah. I think that there's a couple of things here. I mean, one, you do want to do some research. And I always encourage people to ask. Don't be afraid, "Hey, I saw you did that campaign with so and so. Would you be willing to tell me how you charged for that?" Call your buddies.

Tobi: Ask another designer or influencer.

Julianne: Ask another designer. I did a campaign recently with a major car company. And they were looking for influencers in North and South Carolina. And one of my buddies who did the campaign happens to be an interior designer in North Carolina. And because of the tags, you see who else was part of the campaign. And we talk to each other, I'm like, "Girl, what do you charge?" She's like, "Girl, what do you charge?" And I was like, "Can you believe they were offering this? That is way too much work."

And we both negotiated up on that campaign to make it worth our while. It was a lot of deliverables they were asking for. And so they have come back now and asked us to do the campaign again. And so I messaged her, I was like, "Are you doing that campaign again?" She was like, yeah." She was like, "I'm asking him for more." And I was like, "Me too." I was like, "That was a lot of work last time, that was a lot of deliverables to create that content." So I'll reach out to different people. I have several people that are in the influencer space and we're like, "What are you charging for that?"

So find some buddies that are doing content creation. And there's always going to be people out there who are scared to share but for every person who's tight lipped, and closed off, and not willing to share, you're going to find three more people that are willing to share. So find those people and

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create a circle of, “Hey, we’re going to be transparent about what we’re charging. We’re going to help each other.”

I tell people all the time that are buddies of mine, I’m like, “Just call me.” I’m like, “When you get a campaign, just call me, we’ll brainstorm together of what I think you should be charging for that and what to throw out at the brand.”

Tobi: So when people are like, “Okay, I get it and that’s making sense, and I can think of some people to go to, but am I going to be good at creating the content? And is that going to take too long? And do I really have time to do that?” What comes up in the actual fulfilment of if you’re a great negotiator, what goes into the fulfilment of the things you’ve agreed to while you’re also running a business or doing other things?

Julianne: Well and let me back up for a second because I didn’t fully answer your question before. I said there were a couple of things in terms of mindsets that I could think of. The second thing is really shifting away from a scarcity to an abundance mindset. And that for me personally in my own journey has been such a challenge for me but super important in where I am now and what I charge. And really the key to that, when you’re in a scarcity mindset and I mean listen, we were all in a scarcity mindset in 2020. All of our projects were cancelled, things were put off.

And I was in a state, I needed brands to say yes. I needed them to say yes. And so in doing that I undervalued myself. I charged less than what I normally would charge because I just needed them to say yes. And when you shift away from that to throwing out crazy numbers, you’d be surprised at how much money you’re leaving on the table because you didn’t ask for more. The key to doing that is your willingness to walk away. And that is the key from shifting from a scarcity to an abundance mindset is your willingness to walk away.

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And what's crazy is this car campaign that I did, started at \$1,000, they wanted to pay \$1,000 but they were asking for so many deliverables for this. That campaign I negotiated for 5500 because it was a ton of deliverables. And I talked to three other people, they're like, "Yeah, I'm charging five grand." "Yes, me too, I'm charging five grand." But there were several other people that I know took it for \$1,000 because that's what the brand was initially offering.

And so I always say to people, "Brands typically", and brands may be listening to this and they're like, "No, don't share that." Brands typically have more money but if you don't ask for it, you're not going to get it.

Tobi: Right. Yeah, well, they're like, "Well, we will pay up to 5,000 but if we can get it for a 1,000, we'd love that so let's start there." And on the flipside the influencer is like, "I might do it for a 1,000 if it's not too much work but I'd really rather have 5,000, let's start there." And then maybe you end up in the middle or somewhere else. But yeah, I love that, that's really good advice.

Julianne: Well, and my response to them was very polite but I just said, "This is a significant amount of work that you're asking me to do. I have to drive to North Charleston, rent the car for the day, set up all of these, I mean it's a lot more intensive than filming a recipe content in my kitchen. So you're looking at the time involved and I said, "I understand if this knocks me out of the running for the campaign, I just, in order to execute this campaign effectively, this is my rate for this."

So it was very professional, polite but also firm of like, "I understand that if you don't want to work with me, I'm walking away, I'm not doing it for a \$1,000." And I know some listeners might be like, "Well, \$1,000, that sure is uppity of you to walk away from that." But when this is – this is a significant arm of my business. I don't create content full-time but it is a significant arm of my business. You think about I do about three campaigns a month with

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major brands. And those campaigns are anywhere from \$3,000 to \$5,000 a piece.

So do the math on that, I mean that's not mail money. That is a significant portion of my overall revenue for the year. So content creation is a serious business in the JuJu household.

Tobi: Yeah. Well, and when you're able to come back and say, "That's a lot of content, this is going to take x hours." This is going to take x work which you're going to learn over time as you get more experience doing this. It seems to be the brand would actually respect you more, be more impressed if, okay, this woman actually knows what she's talking about. And I mean we'll probably get our money's worth out of this, let's look at the other things she's doing.

So I think I love what you're saying because when we can own it and when we can be honest about it, a lot of times it actually commands more respect than turning people off. And I've had the same experience at times where, not just in partnerships but in other things where people say, "You know what, I hear you and I do think you're worth that and we can't do that right now but we're going to circle back to you in the future because we know we really want to work with you."

So there's a lot of things that can come out of you being willing to be honest and to own your value there, right?

Julianne: Well, and Tobi you know this as much as anyone. When we undercharge, when we devalue ourselves all that does is create resentment. We resent the work. We resent ourselves that we didn't charge more. And from my perspective, when you look at that from a holistic standpoint all that does is suck the joy right out of anything that we wake up every day and decide to go and do. And I'm at a stage in my life where we're not sucking any more joy out of me. We are showing up with our

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good JuJu every day. But undervaluing yourself, all that does is breed resentment.

Tobi: And you're not going to bring your best work and they want your best work. They absolutely want your best work. So if you're constantly compromising yourself you're going to kind of be a self-fulfilling prophecy of not getting more work or them not valuing you because your work's not going to be that great. You're not going to have the luxury of spending time on it. You're going to be trying to squeeze it in and doing the minimum viable version which doesn't necessarily help you or them either one, right?

Julianne: You've got it.

Tobi: So when you do go to the fulfilment of the work, I know you do a lot of this yourself and that's by design. That's how you run the process. Does it have to be done just by you or are there people that have other people helping create content? How do we make that fulfilment piece work when time is so valuable and there is a limited amount of it, how do we think about the content creation piece?

Julianne: Well, what I would say is don't compare yourself to people out there that you see on every single platform, that are on TikTok, reels, YouTube, blog, they're everywhere. Those are individuals that have teams of people managing all of their social media. So if you're a solopreneur there's no reason for you to compare yourself to that. People ask me all the time, "Do you have a YouTube channel?" I'm like, "No." And they're like, "Why not?" And I'm like because there's not enough time in the day for me to manage all that."

So I tell people, "When you're thinking about your social media strategy, sort of pick one and nail it. Be really good on that platform and then expand to three and get really good on those three platforms." And sure, there are different schools of thought on that but when you're a solopreneur I find that three is about the bandwidth that most people have. Now, I have a

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team of freelancers that work with me. But years ago I scaled down, I don't have full-time employees on payroll anymore. So a lot of the content that you see posted anywhere, the short form, that's me.

That's me creating that content. And I also think that for anyone that has a business online and they're showing up on social media, you have to try and test things. What works for me, the platforms that work for me and convert may not work for you. I don't have a YouTube channel but someone else might be like, "I'm crushing it on YouTube." Facebook, all these other things, you've got to try and test and see what works for you.

Tobi: Yeah. So you have done so well on TikTok, a lot of people are like, "Ugh, TikTok, I don't want to have another, I don't need another platform or it's just young people." But you and I are of the same mindset that there is a huge amount of opportunity right now on TikTok where maybe Instagram or other places were having trouble growing or reaching people. Can you talk to us a little bit about TikTok and maybe how to not be afraid of it, what to think about it.

It's not just 19 year old's, or 17 year old's, or 12 year old's. Tell us the details or the high level things we should be thinking when it comes to TikTok.

Julianne: I think TikTok has gotten a bad rap. I think that people that are not on TikTok are like, "That's just for tweens dancing." It is not. Once you see a platform where the big boys are migrating to and I'm talking about the big box retailers and the big brands that you see. There's something going on. And I always say to people, "We need to follow where the attention is." And the attention is on TikTok right now. It's getting more and more saturated every single day but it still is the number one platform right now for the potential to go viral.

Doesn't mean that you will but the potential is there. So I always say to people, I'm like, "If the potential's there, why wouldn't you try it? Why

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wouldn't you try a platform where there's an opportunity for you to get a lot of exposure?" Now, I'm a big fan of community over virality. So I always tell my clients, I'm like, "Your plan shouldn't be to go viral. Your plan should be to get new eyeballs on your business that may not have seen you on other platforms."

And we want to be planful about that, what do you do when the eyeballs find you? Is your bio filled out? Is there a link there for them to go to purchase your products or services? I always tell people, "Be prepared for the eyeballs." What do you do with the extra eyeballs that find you? And I think that's more important than I've got to go viral, I've got to go viral.

Tobi: And when we're thinking about monetizing something like TikTok, can we monetize things like full service interior design or do we have to have smaller types of services or products to sell? Does it matter or do we just want to lean in and expect that there's a buyer for whatever we're selling if we connect with them in an authentic way?

Julianne: I think it's sort of like do all of the above. I think that for anyone listening, we talked about this in the Millionaire Mentorship group about before you show up online you want to think about why you're showing up online. And so there could be a brand exposure play there. Maybe you're selling a product or service. Maybe you're trying to build your email list for some other funnel that you're doing. There are lots of different reasons for you to show up.

But social media, whatever platform you're on becomes your credibility. It's your social credibility. So when a client slides into your email or fills out your contact form, that client already has made the decision that they want to work with you. They have gone to Instagram, they have gone to your TikTok, they've gone to your website. They've tried to listen to one of your podcasts or if you were featured on a local TV show somewhere. They have already done their research to figure out if they want to work with you or not.

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So by the time they slide into that contact form, all the selling has been done. So what I encourage people especially in a service based business to think about is every piece of content that you put out you should be thinking about that potential client looking at that content, is that selling them on why they want to work with you?

Tobi: That's so good.

Julianne: So any marketing expert would say, "Getting your face on camera is what creates that trust, that authenticity, the bond that your client is going to have with you before they even send you that contact form." They're making a decision, are we going to vibe? Are we going to work well together?

Tobi: Yeah. And I think what I notice when I'm coaching designers in our program so often is so many people are afraid to be seen or they're like, "Ugh, I don't like my voice, or I need to lose 15 pounds, or I sound like a whatever, fill in the blank, kick, silly. What if people think that what I'm talking about is dumb?" There's so much fear and self-judgment about showing up in the online space. But I love two things you just said. You're like getting your face on camera (a). And (b) this concept which you're so right of by the time they contact you all the selling has already been done.

I think that really shifts the perspective for me and I'd love to hear your kind of thoughts about this and the mindsets you use to get on there. Because if the selling's already been done before they come to you, you're not trying to be the world's greatest video star necessarily. You're just trying to be seen and connect in the same way that a lot of people say, "I do better in one-on-one conversations or in person meetings." It can really just be that but living in that online space, right?

Julianne: Absolutely. And I think that someone, I'm going to give a shout out to my girl, we both know Lori Paranjape.

Tobi: So good.

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Julianne: Who goes by Mrs. Paranjape online, she is a luxury interior designer. Now, I'm sure, when TikTok started people were like, "Nobody's going to be on there looking for luxury interior designers." She is crushing it on TikTok.

Tobi: Absolutely, she is, yes.

Julianne: And she's sharing information. She's been on there for maybe a year now, she's built a nice community on TikTok. She's sharing information like what is a scullery?

Tobi: Yeah, I watched that video last week, so good, yeah.

Julianne: And I think lots of people might argue, your audience is not on TikTok. People are not on there looking for people that are going to do a custom build scullery. But what she's doing, is she is educating people. And positioning herself as a person of authority when it comes to luxury interior design. And I would beg to differ, I would say that her clients are on TikTok.

They're the ones who are scrolling through mindlessly and they're like, "We've got our third home that we're building in the Bahamas. I saw this lady on TikTok and I love her style and she knows what she's talking about. Her vibe is great, I'm going to book her." So I'd love to know if Lori has, you know, what kind of conversion she's had from TikTok. But it is a new way of thinking about this platform where what she's sharing, it's educational. She's positioning herself as a person of authority. So when people go, they're like, "This lady knows what she's talking about. You can book her."

Tobi: Absolutely. And they're not saying. "She has a such and such accent, or she sounds whatever, whatever judgement we would have. Or I wish she would lose 10 pounds." They're saying, "Oh my gosh, she absolutely knows what she's talking about. Her work is beautiful. She's showing the process. She's helping me understand what's involved here." I agree with you. It's so amazing.

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Julianne: I was just going to say, one more thing to sort of, you know, this idea around TikTok and building a community. You're going to have a certain amount of trolls, you know as you build a community you get the trolls. So I tell people all the time, I'm like, "Troll all you want to, I have gotten some incredible opportunities because of the community that I've built on TikTok." I mean I and a lot of people that I've shared this publicly, the Today Show found me on TikTok. I filmed a segment for them in May. They found me on TikTok.

I have booked some amazing clients that have been on retainer for six months, they found me on TikTok because I'm sharing information, I'm talking about, I'm just sharing my knowledge. They see what I'm doing and they book me. So I tell people all the time, I'm like, "Talk to the camera as if you're sitting down with your best friend having a cup of coffee." Not that thousands of people are going to see this, just create something that brings you joy, shares your knowledge and it's like you're having a cup of coffee with your friend."

And don't get so caught up on there's dirty dishes in the sink or that one thing on the bookshelf behind me is not styled perfectly. Don't even worry. TikTok is casual. You don't need to worry about the perfection of Instagram over on TikTok. It's casual.

Tobi: I love, that's probably my favorite thing about it. And it's so interesting because on Instagram I'll be myself completely in all kinds of ways and I'll have people come and say, like you're saying, I'll have middle aged women saying, "You don't need to share your politics or your thoughts on that." Completely opposite of TikTok. They're like, "Bring all of it, be yourself, talk about things that light you up, things that make you mad, things that you're invested in."

And so I love that casual nature and that you can be yourself and that you can really just be more relaxed about showing up, which I think people want more now. That's probably why TikTok's so popular, because the

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Martha Stewart perfect took 50 people to make it but you pretend you just whipped it up this afternoon has lost its luster. And over on TikTok people are telling the truth about how to make things and how long it takes, and what's happening, and what went wrong, and all the stuff which is really refreshing I think for sure. Yeah.

What I was going to say a second ago was I just did, when I was at Highpoint, I was on a panel about licensing, and ecommerce, and other things at Woodbridge where I have products, and Lauren Liess who also has products was on the panel with me. And people were asking a lot of questions about getting licensing deals. And the people at Woodbridge were like, "Let's just be honest. One of the first things we look at is your social media following, not just that but we notice it."

And as you and I have talked about, it can be so hard to grow on Instagram now. But when you look at what you've done and which I think the last time I checked, I don't remember, you had probably over 150,000 I think, followers.

Julianne: Well, on TikTok I'm at 120, so not quite there yet but hopefully soon.

Tobi: Okay, 120, so it was still, it was more than 100. And Lori, I think the last time I looked at hers she was 60,000. I mean these are tens of thousands of followers. Yours are over 100,000, which the Woodbridge people were saying, "That's kind of a number that they look for is that 100,000 mark of are you influencing and being followed by a large number of people?"

And if TikTok is the place that you can still grow, why wouldn't you use that to create as you said, that social credibility by just being willing to show up now instead of waiting until it gets so crowded that it's also harder to grow. Timing can be everything. So anything to add about that as we wrap up that people want to think about?

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Julianne: I think I, especially as I also own Taylor Burke Home which is how we initially met years ago. That company is 11 years old. And we get hit up all the time from designers that are like, “Let’s do a collection together, ABC Designer with Taylor Burke Home.” And I always tell people, I’m like, “Companies get hit up all the time with designers that want to do product collaborations and collections.” And what companies, their number one thing is, what are you bringing to the table? What are you bringing to the table?

And so because a good designer is a good designer, is a good designer. There are so many great designers out there but they are looking for, do you have a social media following? Are you converting? Are you using our product right now? I tell people, I’m like, “Never show up in a showroom of a company to ask for either to do some sort of content creation deal with them or a product collaboration and you’ve never once specked their product.” They know. They’re not dumb, they know that you never bought from them before.

So that’s a huge no. You want to cultivate that relationship over time and really think about when you do target a brand, look at it from their perspective. What are you bringing to the table to make the deal make sense for them?

Tobi: Absolutely. I completely agree. It’s exactly what I use to get licensing deals. And it’s now in this world of leveraging your influence and getting these other content creation deals, it’s the same rules apply, yeah, so good. Well, this has been amazing. I’m going to hear so much about this and so many people are going to be like, “That’s one of the ones that I’m going to listen to over, and over, and over again. Which is also what they say about Lori’s episode, so funny you brought her up.

Because you all are both, so of that abundance mindset that you’re willing to share what works for you and what doesn’t work for you in just such a straightforward and generous way. So thank you so much for doing that. I

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know our listeners will love it so much. If they're like, "I need to work with JuJu, I need her to consult with me or I just want to follow her and see what amazing stuff she's doing." How do they find you? Where should they go? Is it TikTok, is it someplace else? What do they need to know?

Julianne: Yes, if you go to TikTok or Instagram it's @julieannetaylorstyle. You'll see a link in bio that's a way to connect with me if you want to book me. I typically like to work with clients on three to six month retainer relationships because I find that it really helps us get into their businesses in a more meaningful way, and really an extension of their business for a period of time.

However, on occasion there are individuals that are like, "I have got to have a couple of hours of your time. I've got an immediate need. I need help negotiating a contract. Or I need advisement on something." I will absolutely do some of those one-offs.

Tobi: Awesome, amazing. You're so kind and it really elevates the whole industry and others when people do that, so thank you from myself but collectively for the community for being willing to make such a difference, so good. And also just for being here because it's always so fun to talk to you and you're just the expert of all experts in your area. So I mean, thank you.

Julianne: Well, you're super kind. I feel like we could just talk for hours about so many things. We have a lot in common, so thank you for having me.

Tobi: I know we could and we will be. I'll be hitting you up again on the backend for our regular conversations we've been having lately. But it's such a joy to bring just a little bit of you to the world and share with everybody. So again, thank you so much.

Julianne: You're welcome, glad to be here, thanks for having me.

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So are you kind of starting to think that showing up and influencing other people or using content creation to influence people might not be as hard as you were making it out to be or at least that there might be some possibility for this in your future or to do it in a different way? If so, I hope that we have inspired you at least to lean into what's possible. You don't have to do anything yet. You don't have to show up yet. It's going to be interesting. You'll notice all of the negative things that probably come up for you when you think about being and showing up in this way.

But it's possible for all of us, and it is the future, whether you're an interior designer, a product designer, another kind of creative, or something like a lawyer or an accountant, the future is in the online space. And so the sooner that you can understand what might be possible for you the better it's going to be for your business. So go check out Julieann, let she and I know what you thought about this episode.

And if you start making short form videos and you haven't done it before, please tag us, we want to know. We want to see it. We want to know that we inspired you and we're here to help. Alright friends, we'll see you next week with another great episode of *The Design You Podcast*. Bye for now.

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