



## How to Find the Perfect Balance Between Creative Time and Marketing Time

THRIVE BY DESIGN WITH TRACY MATTHEWS

*There are going to be times when you need to be focused more on creativity like you're launching a collection and you have to spend every day of the week working on that until it's complete, and your sales and marketing activities might get on hold a little bit.*

*You're listening to Thrive-By-Design business marketing and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to flourish and thrive. Let's get started.*

Intro: You're listening to Thrive by Design, business, marketing, and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to Flourish & Thrive. . Let's get started.

Tracy: Welcome to the Thrive by Design Podcast episode 135. Hey there it's Tracy Matthews the Chief Visionary Officer over at Flourish and Thrive Academy and I'm here for a super fun episode. I had a question in our Laying the Foundation course about how do you balance creative time versus marketing time? I feel so stressed out all the time. I feel like the marketing is slipping away from me and I'm stressed and that's making me not creative. So, how do I find that perfect balance? And how do I move my business forward? So that is what we're going to talk about today. I am so excited about this topic. I love talking about it because you might be surprised at some of the things that I'm going to share with you today. Hopefully you will, you'll be surprise and delighted in a good way. Anyway, we have spent the last couple of weeks really talking about, actually the last couple of months I would say, really talking about kicking off the New Year with a start, rebooting your jewelry business, giving your jewelry brand a makeover. We had our Jewelry Brand Make Over Bootcamp. Now we are into our final round of Laying the Foundation Live which has been pretty amazing. The students are loving it. We've had so many ah-ha moments, so many revelations. We're going to be jumping into Collection Development Week really soon so I'm going to be bringing you a collection development episode soon because it'll be fun. And we're going to actually talk about how many collections you need to design in a year and all sorts of things like that. So, I'm looking forward to bringing you some great stuff, talking a little bit more about marketing your business online and some of the new things that are





coming up. Super excited about it. So, let's talk about this and before we dive in I'd like to take a word from today's sponsor.

Today's sponsor is Shopify. Shopify is one of my favorite e-commerce platforms, well it's probably my favorite e-commerce platform at this point for a variety of reasons. First of all, I think Shopify is a really robust platform there is so much that you can do with the platform to really build e-commerce sales. They have endless plugins, there are so many different opportunities to add apps to your store, to help you rescue abandoned carts, to help you send messages through messenger to live chat with your customers, so many things that you can do. It's just a really amazing robust platform that I've seen support and help many of our designers go from having a sale or two here or there to having multiple, five, six figure sales a month, which is pretty awesome. So, I'd love to invite you to switch on over to Shopify or build your website on Shopify if you haven't yet. The coolest part about it, you can have your own hosted domain, no problem. Flourish and Thrive Academy has negotiated a free 21-day trial with Shopify plus, 10% off your ongoing subscription to Shopify. Pretty awesome. You can impress your customers with a beautiful and secure online store. It is really a great home for your brand and we're excited to have you there. So, you can completely customize this shop, you have no design skills or actually no design skills are actually needed, you can move things around as you'd like. You can run your business, manage your orders, contact customers, track your sales, trends and more. There are lots of analytics and lots of features that you can really get a handle on what's working for your business. So, if you want to check out that 21-day free trial and also get 10% off your recurring Shopify subscription head on over to [flourishthriveacademy.com/shopify](https://flourishthriveacademy.com/shopify) that's [flourishthriveacademy.com/shopify](https://flourishthriveacademy.com/shopify).

Alrighty let's dive into today's episode. You asked, I'm answering; you want to know how to split creative time versus marketing time and find that perfect balance so that you're not feeling stressful. Well, first of all, I want to start this episode off by saying you will always be looking for the perfect balance because there are going to be times in your business where you're going to be required to be creative most of the time and there are times in your business when you're going to be required to actually get a lot of work done and/or do the marketing stuff or do the sales stuff. Every business has a season. Yours does too, so does mine. And so, you got to really start by embracing those seasons





and understanding what trends to sort of look for in advance as you're starting to grow your business and you know, create milestones for your business so you can really get to that next level. So, I know a lot of you really want like, tangible exact numbers to play around with so before I give you any of that because I have a little bit of a split that I want to share with you, is that you need to ask yourself a question first. You probably fall in one of two camps if you're asking yourself this question. The first, and it all comes down to one thing, like you're struggling to get consistent steady sales, it maybe that you've had consistent steady sales before but you maybe, your sales took a little bit of a nose dive so that's like one thing to look at. The other thing to look at is maybe you have made some sales but you've had a hard time getting outside the friends and family zone and you're not sure how much time to spend on the marketing and the sales piece or creating new stuff. So, these are two kinds of different parts of the problem and at different phases in your career you'll be hitting probably each or, I mean basically when you're starting out it's more like trying to get beyond the friends and family zone and then how much time do you spend marketing versus creating. As you start to grow like what will happen if you don't get on the consistent creative cycle your sales could slump because people don't have stuff to buy from you anymore, they've already seen everything you have to offer. So, those are two different pieces of the puzzle. So, let's dissect both of these. I'm going to take the first, or one of the scenarios first which will be like let's say that you are just starting out in business or you've been in business for a little while and you're really trying to get to a place where you're having very consistent sales like really consistent, like you can pretty much count what's coming in every month and even though it can be a little bit of a crap shoot you just kind of know and you're going with it. So if you're in that camp, you want to be focusing about 75% of your time on marketing your business, selling your product and getting the word out about what you do and you'd want to spend about 25% of your time actually in the creative zone because if you're just getting off the ground and not a lot of people have seen your work sure you might need to evolve your product you might need to make your collection little bit more cohesive you might need to get all that together you might also want to spend time thinking about creative marketing ideas. And when I use the word creative I'm generally talking about like making and designing jewelry unless you're making for production because that's a different thing. You're making for orders. So, this is like coming up with





new product ideas, like being in that sort of creative zone, which is great. It's very important to do that to actually build your business but if you're trying to build a business you also need money coming in the door, AKA sales and that's like one of the most important things that you can bring to the table. So, with that being said, wanted to mention that. So, if you're like struggling to get your business off the ground you probably needed to, you know, my best guesstimation probably need to be spending at least 65%-75% of the time working on sales and marketing to get the word out about your business of the time that you're actually working on your jewelry business. So if you're in the other camp and you've already had consistent sales and people have started buying your jewelry and you have a customer base but you're sales are sort of slumping and you're trying to figure out like, you're overwhelmed because there's a lot to do in your business and you're not really getting a lot of traction you're not really moving forward in the rate that you'd like to and you're struggling with that, I would say that you probably need to be spending more like 35%-40% of your time in the creative zone and here's why. At a certain point it's not just about selling, it's about having enough product to sell. So, if you've been around and let's say you have a consistent customer base but you're not evolving your collection, it becomes that much harder to get a reorder. And remember 80% of sales if done right, come from people who've previously bought your product. So, if you can nurture that fan base of yours, get those people coming back for more, your work building your business is reduced in half. So, if that's the case and you haven't had a chance to create new or create or develop new collections and you're not getting new product out at least two or three times a year then you probably need to be spending a little bit more time in the creative zone. But word to the wise, as creative visionary business owners of our business, we need to be spending a lot of time on creativity but I want you to reframe the way you think about creativity, whether it's designing collections, coming up with new marketing ideas, coming up with vision for the business, if you consider creativity to be those things, like, strategizing, moving your business forward, really laying that strong foundation and framework then you might notice that you're actually spending more like 50% of your time in your creative zone. But it's just about reframing what you think creativity is because it's not always just making jewelry, or designing your jewelry, or being at that bench and being a jeweler, etc.





So, with that being said, okay we covered this question so I want to tell you how to create this balance. So, the best way to create the balance in my opinion is to identify what your objectives are first. So, your objectives might be for a quarter to launch a new collection, or your objectives might be to get into a trade show, or your objectives might be to wake up to orders every single day, like get seven orders a day on your website, you know that's sort of a random number but that might be your goal. So, you need to think about what the objectives are like what you're trying to create and then you can frame around that the things that you need to do in order to get your idea basically to market is how I'm going to put it. But like if you think about it, like if you're identifying your objectives, you have a solid thing that you're working towards then you know how you can start splitting up your time. I think the problem is though that a lot of people go into their day, go into their business loosey goosey, they have nothing that they're working towards. They don't have a financial goal that they're working towards. They're just willy-nilly trying to get into markets here and there. They are making inventory as they go and showing people and selling it as they go instead of thinking strategically as a whole about how the parts of your business fit together. So, you need to really think about that first. What are your objectives? What are you trying to do? And in episode 133 we talked a little bit about how to be more focused and productive so this episode actually ties back to that, we're going to talk a little more specifically about how to frame your day and your week.

So, the next thing that you want to do is to create a daily priorities checklist. You could do this for every single day, you know if you have a standard thing that you do every day but you also want to do this around the big priorities or the big objectives that you have going on in your business. I like to call them commitments or goals like, call it whatever you want. You can call it like fuzzy little warm hats or something like that if you want to. But thinking strategically about that because once you kind of know like, exactly what needs to happen you need to prioritize that stuff. So, you might have certain things that you do every single day to stay creative, like I wake up in the morning, I go to the gym, I write in my journal, I meditate, I try to do all these things to keep my creative container fresh. That sort of like my little bit of creativity every day, it helps keep me like on point and strategic, but I also know that when I'm working let's say on recreating course content for Laying the Foundation or getting an engagement ring done for a customer I know that I have certain things that have





to get done that day in order to meet the timelines that I've set for myself and also my customers. So, if you think of it from a customer frame, like, you know how am I going to serve them better? If you could structure your days around even if it's hypothetical customers at this point, how can you get things done and delivered to them on time, etc. That's really important to create framework and structure into your day. So, you'd want to have your top three priorities of the day, you'd also want to have your routine checklist of the day, like the things that you routinely do on your checklist, make sure that you check them off. In fact, I'm going to start creating one for myself, maybe I'll just create a checklist for you guys, a creative balance checklist. I think I'm going to. Why not? And you'll be able to find it over at [flourishandthriveacademy.com/creativebalance](https://flourishandthriveacademy.com/creativebalance). I see this forming into something amazing already so that'll be fun. You can grab it over there; I'll also have it in the show notes. So, you create your daily priorities checklist and then you take a look at your weekly schedule. So, you also have your weekly commitments but we're not talking about necessarily achieving goals right now we're really about the balance of time that you spend working towards your goals.

So, I've done this so many different ways and so many different scenarios and I found that the best way to structure your week and your days is to have certain days for certain things. So, I'm recording this on a Friday. Wednesdays and Fridays are my creative/production days. Mondays and Thursdays are my call/meeting Facebook Live days. Tuesday is sort of like a wing it day but I say that because sometimes I need to take more calls and sometimes I need to work more on content or creativity or design and so Tuesday is that day for me. And I actually do work on the weekends too, and the reason why I work on the weekends is because sometimes I like to start my day a little bit later or I'll leave early in the day to go to dinner with a friend, like, to meet them at 6 or 7 and maybe I haven't worked a full 8ish hours. I'm a little bit of a work horse, I do work a lot. Sometimes I work 10-hour days; I don't like to admit that. Sometimes 12-hour days, I really don't like to admit that. But sometimes I also need to catch up and I actually like taking a few hours on Saturdays and Sundays, not the whole day, just a few hours here and there, to catch up when it's quiet when no one else is bugging me on my team. And I love you all, team, hash tag team FTA. But, you know it's hard to sometimes get done when you're being interrupted all the time. So, you schedule the same times every week for





similar activities. So, and then you could take this down into what you're doing every single day. So, let's say you have, you know that you have certain things that you do every day, like you have your routine in the morning and let's say you check your social media at noon and at five in the evening and maybe also in the morning and you're posting and commenting at that time to your followers. So, that could be on your daily plan it could be like a hash item on your daily plan, you have it built into your calendar, you make sure that you do it every single day if you're doing everything. Now, hopefully at some point you have a social media manager who can take over some of that stuff for you but you get the point. This is like for solopreneurs who are doing it all themselves in the beginning. Then let's take your days where, I would take at least two days a week to focus on sales and marketing only. Those would be the days that you work on marketing content, you batch writing content. I like to write so my writing is part of my creative times, I work that into a creative day but this is like when you're actually doing the work, you're picking up the phone and calling or you're writing your sales emails or you're writing out your newsletter for your business, or you're reaching out to previous customers for customer service to see how their order went and if they want to place a reorder. These are all like the customer service kind of days. Then you have probably afternoons for production, if you're doing, if you're making consistent sales already, you want to make sure that you're getting the orders out especially if you're doing it all yourself. And then I want you to create at least one full day a week where you're focused on creative thinking, creative ideas, making, getting stuff done, or at least a half a day. So, you can decide what time of the day to do it. Fridays is usually a good day for that because it's usually one of the quieter days of the week but I also like doing it midweek as well. So, you decide. And then you also want to schedule some time in your week for the business administrative stuff. So, this might be dealing with your books, handling receipts, filing papers, getting your office in order, cleaning it up, like all the stuff that no one really likes to do but you have to do as far as running a business and you must be dealing with the numbers too. So, make sure that you do that. So, I like to call like, you know, the scheduling your day actually time blocking because you can schedule like an hour here, you can time block in batches, like I'm going to focus two hours on sales but you take like a ten-minute break in the middle of the two hours. You're going to spend two hours on marketing and PR. You take a ten-minute break in the middle because





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you're working in sprints and that helps map everything out. So, schedule the same task for the same day every single week so you have your call days, marketing and sales days, you have your creative days, administrative days, you have time scheduled probably, hopefully, every day to actually make product that's shipping out for orders and then you move forward like that. But structure is very important. Trust me on this.

And I want to highlight this one thing that I mentioned earlier. You want to make sure that you're creating ample space for creativity. Let me tell you a little story about something that happened to me recently. I had a little bit of creative meltdown. I got really upset with my team because I kept getting, I had made a boundary for myself that Wednesday was going to be my creative day and I started all of a sudden meeting started getting scheduled in that day because my meeting days were already full you know. Different things with the team like writing projects and all that stuff were creeping into my day and I had no space to actually get any work done and/or think of ideas and so I was like literally my podcast editor was calling me saying where are the episodes we don't have one for like the next two weeks? And you know I batch these in advance, so stuff like that was happening, or a customer was asking for designs, like where are the designs you asked for and I didn't have time to focus on sketching them out, like so much happened and it was, it's interesting to look back on it, like how when I didn't keep that boundary for my creative day how things kind of went a little bit array and haywire. So, it's really important to create that boundary, to create that structure in your schedule and stick to it which is the most important part. So, I think also at least once a month especially if you're working full time, you should have a day to just be like, I just want to say creative oblivious, that's just what's coming to mind. That would be a day where you could go and like go to a museum and get inspiration or go like do something that actually like inspires you and creates new ideas for you. If you don't get enough of that in your regular lifestyle, like I travel a lot so I get inspiration and creativity a lot, but for those of you who don't, or don't like to travel, or go to museums, like make sure that you put that into your daily plan is to do things to get you outside of the box that aren't actually work so that you have free space to think. This is really important.

So, as I sort of, and then you want to map out things like collection launches, big promotions, and any big things on your calendar so that you can work





backwards towards that. Because at times, there are going to be times where you actually need to be focused more on creativity like you're launching a collection and you spend every day of the week working on that until it's complete and your sales and marketing activities might get on a hold a little bit. You still want to be able to schedule them in and get a little bit of that done as you're working on it but, you also might be more heavily focused on creativity, but then, and you might be booking out weeks to completion, but then, that's going to shift and you might be spending 90% of your time, only 10% being creativity, only 10% being creative excuse me, I kind of combined two words there. Because you're focused on selling and marketing the new collection you just created. You spent a lot of money on it, you invested in it and now it's time to actually, sell it. So, you can see like, business is really abs flows and business leaders and gurus say is there's never really balance but it's finding that right balance for you and for some of you it might be more in the creative side and for some it might be more on the business side but I want to remind you that you need to always keep coming back to your objectives. Do you actually want to have a business? A business is defined as a for profit entity that makes profits over expenses and if you are not making profits over expenses you likely have a hobby which could sometimes be an expensive hobby. In fact, you've probably heard me tell this story before, but I was in business about 6-7 years and I had an accountant, new accountant that I hired, and he was like well I really think you need to read this book it's called *The E-Myth*, which is on my book list from last week, and he said to me, you know I think you might be surprised you kind of have an expensive hobby and I was like what? I was totally insulted, but then when I read the book I was like well, for this year in particular, this is not a for profit business, so I'm losing money because of all the investment I've made into growing the business and in order to make this a profitable business I need to make some changes. So that was huge. So, I want you to really evaluate, like is it important for you that your jewelry passion actually is a money revenue generating thing? And if it is, do what it takes to make it happen. Read the books on my book list from last year, or last week, excuse me. Go over to [flourishthriveacademy.com/episode134](http://flourishthriveacademy.com/episode134) and I have some of my favorite books, the *10 X Rule* great book, about success and actually making your objectives and your goals a reality. Super awesome.

So, I wanted to talk a little more about this balance we were getting a lot of questions from people just starting out in their business about this and I know





that some of you have been in business for a while, might also feel the same way about this because at time to time over and over we all need to keep coming back to what it is we stand for. What are our objectives? What are our goals at this point in business time? How much time do we want to be spending working and how important is the financial reward of that sales and marketing effort to us? Like for me I'd rather spend a lot of time on that and make more money than going to a museum to be inspired because I find other ways to get inspiration. Creativity is still important, I'm not saying it's not but like, running a successful, profitable business is extremely high on my priority list. So, get really clear on that and decide for yourself what you want for yourself.

Alright you guys, this has been a fun episode. Hey, if you're not following us on Instagram I'd love for you to head on over to @flourish\_thrive and check us out over there, we've been doing some fun team stories and really kind of showing you behind the scenes at Flourish and Thrive and to kind of see what's going on it might inspire ideas for stories of your own for your jewelry company and also you know, on the fly I decided to create a little download freebie for you so let's do it. It's called the creative balance checklist, you can grab it over at [flourishthriveacademy.com/creativebalance](https://flourishthriveacademy.com/creativebalance) that's [flourishthriveacademy.com/creativebalance](https://flourishthriveacademy.com/creativebalance) and I'm, we're just going to kind of frame out all the things you need to be thinking about in your week and also that you need to be approaching per day so that you can easily just whip through those things and get 'er done. Alright you guys, thanks so much for listening today, until next time this is Tracy Matthews signing off.

