

# **Amelia Brazell of StrategyTalks.com**



## **Interviews Nicole Dean**



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**Amelia Brazell:** Hello this is Amelia Brazell the host of Strategy Talks and I want to welcome everyone that's either on the teleweb cast today or listening to the recording later to our talk today. And I'm very excited to introduce my guest today Nicole Dean.

She is often called the Queen of Outsourcing and as we get through today's call you'll see why and there are so many things you can learn from her. In addition to being the Queen of Outsourcing Nicole ranks among, I believe she ranks among many of the very successful internet gurus and has built a business that many of us are envious of. It's growing so fast and it's so expansive and she's going to have some unique perspective to share with us today.

Nicole, you there?

**Nicole Dean:** I am here and thank you for such a nice introduction.

**Amelia Brazell:** I'm so glad you are here cause this is going to be so much fun. We've been talking lately about, but of course if you have been online for any time at all you know that one of the biggest buzz words going around the internet is outsourcing and it's a topic people think they understand but sometimes they don't. They have misconception of what it is. You bring information to tell us how to do it both the effective way and the best way.

I do have a lot of clients that are not internet based and I've been sharing ways for them to outsource their business. For them it's a whole new way to manage, to run their businesses. So I'm hoping that some of those folks will pick up this call later or are on the line today.

So, let's talk a little bit about how this got started.

Nicole and I did a campaign where people were able to ask her a lot of questions about outsourcing and the mistakes that can be made and more important how you can avoid those mistakes and we got a lot of questions.

I know Nicole you have a lot of answers for us. We talked about some of those earlier and really there's just so much to this topic. On the surface you think it's a simple topic but it's very complex. It's very exciting to have you here to talk a little bit more about it.

Let's just get into our topic today ok Nicole?

**Nicole Dean:** Sounds good to me.

**Amelia Brazell:** The first thing I would like to do is I would like to put a little bit of perspective on you. Like who is Nicole Dean and how did you become to be known as the Outsourcing Queen?

I certainly have an opinion but I'd like to hear how you got started in this business. Where did it all begin?

**Nicole Dean:** Oh goodness. Let's see. I started online, working online and looking for home based opportunities and online businesses back in 2001.

**Amelia Brazell:** Long time.

**Nicole Dean:** It's been awhile and I always say that I crawled, clawed my way up the learning curve with bloody finger nails. I was put in a couple of "sink or swim" scenarios because right after September 11<sup>th</sup> of 2001 my daughter was born 9 days after and then my husband was laid off a few days after that.

**Amelia Brazell:** Wow.

**Nicole Dean:** We went from one very nice income to no income in a hurry with a brand new baby.

**Amelia Brazell:** You had a challenge.

**Nicole Dean:** And so I had a challenge and then it happened two more times, not the babies but two more layoffs. And so you know people talk about hard times and bad things happening to good people and it happens to everybody. We've had to rely on my income pretty much over the years.

**Amelia Brazell:** That's a motivator though.

**Nicole Dean:** It is a motivator. When you have no income and it's me looking at a computer screen all of a sudden you get kind of focused.

**Amelia Brazell:** You bet you do.

**Nicole Dean:** You do. And so I started to make more money, probably around 2004 is when I made a fulltime income for the first time. And since then my income has doubled every year and that's mostly due to outsourcing because I've only got 24 hours in a day and in this beautiful climate we have here; Amelia and I actually live in the same town and we are right next to the Gulf of Mexico and I would much rather be over there floating in the Gulf than be sitting in front of my computer.

I think that outsourcing is critical for a lot of reasons and one of the missions for my business has been to help others work at home moms to earn money and it's not just through my teaching but actually by giving them jobs, basically to be hiring them to make money on a hourly basis. Now I have about 15 or 20 ladies that bill me monthly and I'm very very proud of that. I started doing my 1099's for all my contractors and I saw the number and I was very very pleased with it because I had paid out that much money to women that are hard working and fantastic and they've become great friends of mine.

**Amelia Brazell:** Super. It is fun when you do your first 1099 isn't it? It's like oh I'm real.

**Nicole Dean:** Definitely. But yeah what happened is that I actually had some courses and I was teaching some internet marketing things and then I became the affiliate manager for Jimmy D. Brown who is a fantastic teacher.

**Amelia Brazell:** I agree.

**Nicole Dean:** Anybody listening if you haven't heard of Jimmy D. Brown go to [www.123WebMarketing.com](http://www.123WebMarketing.com) because he is fantastic. And I had the good fortune to become his affiliate manager and also his business partner for a project.

So I was able to see things from the client's side of things as well as the person who does hire the freelancers and the contractors. So I'm able to look at it from both perspectives which I think gives me a unique perspective.

**Amelia Brazell:** I agree and to me I think that is one of the most important things that you bring to anybody who wants to learn about outsourcing, is that you have played both sides of that equation. You not only have a business that you run and you outsource an enormous amount of your business and your work but you also have people that outsource to you.

I think standing in the middle of that equation very few people have been there and can really share what it feels from both sides. I think that's one of the things that I find very exciting about your content and the things that you develop because you do explain that very well in everything that you produce.

**Nicole Dean:** Thank you. One of the things that I also do, and I don't know if you realize this or not but I outsource Jimmy's work. Large portions of Jimmy's work I outsource to my helpers because I don't know how to do everything in online business. I may get it all done but that's not me doing it.

For instance I have never made a graphic to save my life. If someone said "Make a graphic or else" I would say "I can't". I have no idea how. I just outsource it because it's just something I

probably could figure out but there are other people that are so much talented than I am at that and I would much rather let them make me shine than for me to struggle through it and put out something mediocre.

Graphics are very affordable to outsource and the quality between what I could produce and what they come out with I'd much rather have a professional designer portraying my business image rather than me looking like a 1980's website.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly. And it does polish you and make you very professional. A lot of my business is working with experts and helping people position themselves as experts and what you are talking about is really letting the experts do what they do best. Whether it's graphics or writing or telemarketing or whatever it is, let the experts do it because you shouldn't have to do everything or know how to do everything. Just know what needs to be done agree on the end result and let other people run and take over.

Nicole it comes to mind that we are talking about outsourcing and a lot of people think they know what outsourcing is and perhaps they do, perhaps they don't but could you give us a quick definition of what you mean by outsourcing?

**Nicole Dean:** Sure. Outsourcing is to contract out parts of your business. And it can be a one time job or it can be an ongoing job but the person that you are contracting to is not an employee they are a freelancer and you can pay them hourly or by project but it's a contract between you and that person. And so you don't file taxes on their behalf they're a complete independent entity.

Some of the common things that you would outsource are graphics to a graphic designer, ghost writing to a writer, web design work or virtual assistants, customer support or as we were discussing before housekeepers and pool boys.

**Amelia Brazell:** You make a good point – that a lot of people think they are just outsourcing for their business but what I have found is that when I outsource some of my household needs I have more time to do the things I do really well in business. I was glad to hear you talk about that because I thought oh that's a very good point to let people know they can outsource in both areas to improve the things they do best.

**Nicole Dean:** And I think it does give people a better visual of how outsourcing works. Because when they see it online they think oh this is weird and scary but when they apply it to hiring a painter to paint your house ok I get it, it just makes more sense.

**Amelia Brazell:** It does. It makes it very understandable. When you start talking to people, people accustomed to outsourcing or using a tax accountant or CPA to do their taxes; that's just another type of outsourcing. So when you put it in those perspectives and make it very clear for people I think people open their thinking and see other opportunities that they haven't even considered.

**Nicole Dean:** Right. And in today's economy outsourcing is growing in popularity and at an astonishing rate because people are scared and so when there is work that needs to be done they don't want to hire someone as an employee because they don't feel stable, their business is stable and if there was a dip they would have to let that person go. So getting someone on a contractor basis can be a better option especially for small business people and that does carry over into online businesses like what we have.

In an online business when you are starting off your income can fluctuate tremendously so to have someone actually on your payroll that is depending on that income that's really scary so a contracting basis while you may pay more per hour is a much better alternative when you are starting off.

**Amelia Brazell:** Yeah and another thing about that, another point that I think is important to bring up is that when you outsource versus having a staff person there are a lot of tax benefits to outsourcing, you don't get into the benefits package and all those things, expenses attached to actual employees within an organization.

So there are a lot of financial reasons that outsourcing makes sense in business.

**Nicole Dean:** Another one is that you don't have to pay for the software.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly which can be quite expensive.

**Nicole Dean:** Oh my goodness I just bought Adobe Acrobat and Dream Weaver and Camtasia and the three of those was over two thousand dollars. Can you imagine if I had three employees and I had to buy them for them too? I mean that starts to get a little bit steep.

I'm very happy to contribute to software for my ongoing contractors because I believe very strongly in building loyalty but I don't want to be held responsible for doing so every time there is an upgrade or computer problem or something. When you have an employee in house that all becomes your problem but with a contractor they're the one that has to figure out how to deal with it.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly. We've been dancing around one of the big issues that came up in a number of our questions in our "Ask Campaign." And, that is around the budgeting topic and I'd like to get into some of those questions.

I think the first one we'll start with is, it's almost like a summary question but I think we'll get into all the others as we discuss it, and that is if I only have a limited budget and I have no web presence at all what is the first thing that I should do?

**Nicole Dean:** We discussed this a little bit before the call. Anyone that does not have a web presence yet I strongly strongly encourage them to outsource their roadblocks, anything that is keeping them from getting up and running because projects that aren't complete do not make money. Even if it's not pretty and it's not exactly what you want just get it up and get it functional.

In a situation like that I would recommend that the person get some PLR like maybe, I talked to you that I actually sell PLR eCourses which are designed with a squeeze page, with an autoresponder sequence, they are all set to go and get somebody to set that up for you. And then you can work on marketing it and starting to make money from it. And if you didn't want to go with the PLR eCourse you can just buy PLR and have them set it up. PLR articles or even free reprint articles.

Are your listeners familiar with eCourses or am I talking above?

**Amelia Brazell:** No I think that's a really good entry level Nicole. I know I have used some of your PLR that I've picked up from your site. I find it's extremely high quality and has returned for me. So I think you are talking right at the right level.

**Nicole Dean:** Ok. And you've got the link available or you'll send it out after the call for where they can look at that.

So what I would recommend for that person is you don't have to go with fancy graphics, you don't have to do anything just get a standard squeeze page up – it's just a table website and it comes with a PLR eCourses and I even provide templates in the [Outsource Weekly](#) course too for people that are just getting started. And then you get an autoresponder, load up the messages in there and have that person set it up. And from there it buys you time. It buys you time plus it gives you leverage in doing JV's with other people, maybe selling advertising, maybe starting to do some affiliate marketing, maybe buy some resale rights products and promote them in your eCourse.

I mean from there you can really grow but you need to have that list in order to get started. And if you are interested in blogging just put your blog behind the squeeze page. Then you're set. As soon as someone signs up they can get into your blog and start reading.

So as long as you have that squeeze page up and running you are an internet marketer and you should be able to do that for under a hundred dollars easy. I'm thinking under fifty dollars you should be able to get someone to set that up for you. The only real expense would be your hosting, your domain name and your autoresponder and then beyond that under fifty dollars to have somebody set that up for you.

**Amelia Brazell:** Absolutely. If anybody is interested before they look at their notes if they don't see the notes you can pick that up at [www.easyplr.com/list](http://www.easyplr.com/list). That's Nicole's products. They are top notch so please take a look at them when you get a chance.

What were you going to say Nicole?

**Nicole Dean:** I was just going to say in lesson five of the [outsourcing weekly](#) course I also go through a bunch of ways to start getting money to outsource.

If you are a beginner you don't have any web presence then I get a little bit goofy but I mean have a garage sale because we are talking about getting a passive stream of income up and running that can pay you for the rest of your life. And if that's not enough of a motivation and you really are struggling to get food into your family's mouth then have a garage sale, sell some of your stuff, your CD's or videos on eBay. Just get it up and running.

I mean honestly this is such a small price to pay to be able to have your own business and to start building that freedom.

Another thing I recommend and I'm actually doing this with my mom. I recommend a two pronged approach and that's if you have a skill that you can do and charge money for it then get a client so you can earn money that you can then pay someone else that has a different set of skills or trade.

The bartering system is alive and well. I have bartered so much stuff it's ridiculous. I can write an article for someone, actually I do this - one of my clients is an esthetician in our town and I do a little bit of internet marketing for her every month and then I get a facial and I get my legs waxed.

**Amelia Brazell:** Nothing better than that.

**Nicole Dean:** Nothings better than that. She's getting internet marketing and I'm getting some smooth legs and smooth face.

In reality it is possible to outsource without spending money because honestly I wouldn't make the time to go get a facial and get my legs waxed unless it was built in to the system that I've got. I talk about systems a lot but it's so important to have systems set up because it keeps you productive and it keeps you responsible so knowing that I'm going to get a facial in a few days I better go and do some work on her site so I can go in and enjoy that.

**Amelia Brazell:** And I've done the same thing with a hair stylist, same kind of process.

**Nicole Dean:** Yeah. She's happy as can be she's on the first page of Google for her keywords and I'm happy as can be because I've got smooth legs.

**Amelia Brazell:** Can't beat that.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. So I do talk about for beginner students and I recommend some of those things and then for experienced students here are some things that are actually in the course. I'll read them to you.

The first one is set aside money from just one of your income streams. So if you're an experienced marketer and you want to start outsourcing more then look at one income stream in your business; for instance you might consider Google AdSense or Commission Junction, Click Bank, selling ads directly from your website, selling eZine ads, text link ads, Contara, etc, etc.

*"I make money from all of these and more. So if you choose just one of these streams of income to invest in outsourcing you won't miss the cash and you will be growing your business in the process".*

That's a direct quote from my course.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly. We haven't mentioned your course or told people how they can grab that course. It's in the middle of the webcast page there is a big link there that says [weekly outsource](#) - just click on that and it will take you over to learn a little bit more about the course.

I will speak from personal experience. I've taken the course; I'm going through it right now. I find it absolutely fascinating. I learn something every single week that I get information from Nicole. If you are really interested in boosting your business quickly I would say check it out. It's at [www.weeklyoutsource.com](http://www.weeklyoutsource.com).

Ok Nicole this is all great information. Another one, I guess one of the other questions that came up about budget that we wanted to talk about is when do you know you can afford outsource? Is there a formula or percentage of your income?

I think you've kind of started talking about that but do you want to touch on that question a little bit.

**Nicole Dean:** Well every situation is really unique. My opinion is that you should really outsource from day one because if it gets your website online faster, if it gets your business up faster; most people wait too long to outsource, they really do. You don't have to invest hundreds of dollars. You can really find people, there are highly talented that would be happy to help you out for a very reasonable price.

As far as a percentage of your income, say less than 100% (no I'm just kidding). As long as, well it really depends because if you are outsourcing your roadblocks then you need to get past those roadblocks. If you've run into a script that you can't figure out and your site is broke then goodness sakes go get help and get somebody to fix it for you. If you can't figure out how to get your website up in the first place then outsource that. The roadblocks are just critical because they are keeping you from having that dream of passive income.

So that I don't really see as being optional. Even if it's not done perfectly. I mean the great John Reese who had the million dollar day says that and excuse my language but he says that crap sells. And while I don't encourage you to have crap you can't wait until it's perfect because it never will be.

So get passed the roadblock even if you have to cut some corners initially just get your website up, get your business started and you can always work on perfecting it over time. My business, my life, my personality, my kids, my house, everything is a work in progress. If you wait for things to be perfect you are going to be waiting until you can't wait any longer because you'll be gone.

So you've got to get passed those roadblocks and get over the notion that it has to be perfect because it never will be so the time is now.

**Amelia Brazell:** Great advice. That's really good. I keep thinking that some of the things Jimmy D. Brown says is like it's ok if it's not perfect just get it out there, good enough is good enough to get it out on the road.

So that's great advice.

**Nicole Dean:** As long as you are offering value and you are working on always improving then that's good enough. Really that is.

**Amelia Brazell:** Absolutely.

**Nicole Dean:** I'm not perfect. Never will be.

**Amelia Brazell:** I think that is a challenge for a lot of people because as a culture we can tend to be perfectionists and it's really hard to let go.

**Nicole Dean:** Yeah but unfinished projects do not make money.

**Amelia Brazell:** Absolutely and that is a great quote. And people will quote that with you. That will be the Nicole Dean quote to use over and over.

**Nicole Dean:** That's my ongoing mantra with my coaching clients. My coaching clients, I'm like just get it done. Stop. Stop over analyzing it and get it done. You can change it later but right now it's not making you any money so get it done.

**Amelia Brazell:** Perfect.

**Nicole Dean:** By next week I want that done or else you are going to be hearing from me.

**Amelia Brazell:** That's great advice. It's really good direction and motivation to keep people moving forward. Business isn't going to handle on its own, you have to do it, you have to do something.

**Nicole Dean:** Yep. My grandpa Leroy said you gotta do something even if it's wrong.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly.

**Nicole Dean:** I think I even quoted him in my course.

**Amelia Brazell:** Another one of the questions that we got that I thought was pretty important is that what are the three worst outsourcing mistakes that can be made?

**Nicole Dean:** Oh goodness. I think the first one is the one I mentioned already which is waiting too long to start and just being stuck. The second one I would say is once you get started outsourcing is outsourcing too fast.

So one is too slow and one is too fast.

But what I've seen people do repeatedly is make the mistake that they want to have an eBook written so they go on Elance, they take the cheapest bidder and they give that whole

project to that person and then it goes sour. Instead what you want to do is pick three people, have them each write one chapter and that way you're not putting all your eggs in one basket and then the person that does the best you can task more things to.

So you really need to kind of test the waters especially with writers because they can plagiarize and get you in trouble. Once I find a writer that I love I try to put her on retainer because I want to be able to keep her happy and keep her steady, give her steady work on an ongoing basis and build a loyalty there.

Which brings me to the third most common mistake which is jumping from provider to provider and just constantly posting on Elance finding the cheapest person and starting the relationship over every single time. What I instead recommend is to build an ongoing relationship.

I have people that have worked with me for three years now. Some that have been with me two years now, some that have been with me three years and I have been working on teaching them, encouraging them – working more as a mentor and helping us grow together and growing their skills. I know that their families do rely on our business relationship. I'm helping them build their passive income in partnerships too. And so as their learning skills we are developing off shoot partnerships as well. And of course I don't do that right away but it also helps me to pay for my outsourcing because I've got income coming in from these side projects that are with them.

So I've got these little feeders; for instance like Yummy PLR is one of mine and it's just PLR recipes and food articles and I started that site with one of my fantastic assistants Arika. She handles most of that and I act as a supervisor and brainstorming and help her with the marketing but she runs it for the most part but it's still a partnership. So the money that I get from that also ends up being used to pay Arika for the service that she provides me on my other projects, if you followed that.

**Amelia Brazell:** Absolutely. That's a brilliant way to set up a partnership. Nicole I'm just curious is that a legal partnership or is it more like a joint venture, a strategic alliance? How do you set that up with her?

**Nicole Dean:** It is a joint venture. I actually have an entire course on how to do partnerships because it's been one of the great ways that I have increased my income. I'm going to be getting into it in the [outsource weekly](#) course as well. I have a lawyer that's writing up a section on that too.

Since a lot of people can't afford to outsource a lot of their business it's another option, joint venturing with someone. I also cover interns because I have a lot of interns. I've had four or five interns that have worked for free for me for a period of time while I teach them and then afterwards if we are a good fit at that point they get a job to work with me.

**Amelia Brazell:** Super.

**Nicole Dean:** Not a job, I shouldn't use the word job.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly.

**Nicole Dean:** But they get the opportunity to do freelance work for my company.

**Amelia Brazell:** Which is a paid opportunity.

**Nicole Dean:** Yes.

**Amelia Brazell:** What a learning opportunity.

**Nicole Dean:** So I do trade mentoring for some of my outsourcing too. That's coming up in the course as well.

**Amelia Brazell:** Cool. That's very exciting.

**Nicole Dean:** I'm pretty much busted because I keep saying coming up so you know that I'm only a week ahead.

**Amelia Brazell:** And that's ok. That's all you need to be. I think that's something people don't understand in the business world Nicole – is that you don't have to have everything complete before you actually introduce it to the public.

**Nicole Dean:** No not at all.

**Amelia Brazell:** You can have parts of it complete. The initial parts of any project are the first things that the client needs or the customer needs but you can continue to add to it as that grows and evolves.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly.

**Amelia Brazell:** And I think you are doing a good job of that.

**Nicole Dean:** I am staying ahead. Barely sometimes but I am staying ahead.

**Amelia Brazell:** And that's when you have people behind you to help you stay ahead.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. And you know if I do fall behind then I'll just record something and give a surprise bonus and everybody will be happy.

**Amelia Brazell:** You bet. You know I'm a big believer of audio. Love it.

You were touching on a couple of points and one of the things that I find really fascinating and you actually talk about it in your course is the concept of out tasking versus outsourcing. Tell us a little bit about that and delve into that topic a little bit for us.

**Nicole Dean:** Sure.

**Amelia Brazell:** What is the difference and what should we be doing and how do we know what we are doing? Which are we doing?

**Nicole Dean:** Ok sure. Well I really want to give credit where it's due for the out tasking versus outsourcing and I believe it was Rich Schefren that coined that phrase out tasking. So I'll throw his name out there because I believe he's the place where I first heard it.

The difference is that out tasking is where you are in the center of everything. It's kind of like playing fetch with your puppy. You throw the ball and he runs it back to you. You throw the ball and he runs it back to you. You throw the ball and he runs it back to you but if you stop throwing the ball the "work" stops being done.

So out tasking would be like a one time job that you would need done. And that's just fine especially when you are starting off. If you are just going to have one website and you need a task done once then out tasking it is fine.

The goal of my business and many others like Bill Gates does he out task or does he outsource? He outsources. He does not connect with different people; he has systems in place and managers in place and a flow in documentation and training to keep this big conglomeration running. And now I'm nowhere near Microsoft but what my goal with my business is to have these systems in place that things run themselves.

For instance I started back when there was no such thing as blogs. Well there probably was but I didn't know of it, they weren't popular at all so everybody was using FrontPage. So all of my writers would have to email me or email my assistant an article after they wrote it and then my assistant would have to put it up on the site and some of my sites are still in FrontPage but what I'm doing instead as a system is trying to move any site where I have contributors over to WordPress and give them their own logins so they write and add their own articles to the site. So the system just allows that to be running smoothly while my assistant can just keep an eye on things and kind of connect with those people and make

sure everything is going ok. Rather than me being in the middle of everything or even her being in the middle of everything, running off doing these little tasks it's just a smooth running machine.

And actually that's the first lesson. You probably remember my big lecture about automation. I know we are having this talk about mistakes and one of the biggest mistakes I see with outsourcing is that people outsource things that either shouldn't be done in the first place or should be automated, they should be handling themselves.

For instance, let me think of something, what's something that is automated?

**Amelia Brazell:** Your list. Your mailing list.

**Nicole Dean:** Your mailing list. Exactly. Can you imagine if every time you went to send an email or you would actually personally email every single person on that list? That would be ridiculous. And could you imagine outsourcing that? You would pay someone 8 hours to individually email – Dear Name, thank you for blah blah blah. Or an eBook. Every time you sell an eBook personally emailing the person or paying someone to personally email the person. That would be absolutely nuts. Instead you set up a system so that it's automatically delivered.

**Amelia Brazell:** Absolutely.

**Nicole Dean:** So there are all kinds of places in your business where you want to be as efficient as possible and also as automated as possible before you start outsourcing on a regular basis.

**Amelia Brazell:** Let's talk a little bit about things that shouldn't be done at all. How have you seen that play out in people's businesses?

**Nicole Dean:** Oh let me think. I think I'm stuck. Let me think.

Well for me and this isn't something I shouldn't do at all but I'll tell you anyways, for me I have some of the things you should outsource and one of them is emotional drainers. One of the biggest things that freed me up emotionally was outsourcing my customer support.

And that doesn't really answer your question but I just looked down at this paper and realized I didn't mention that yet.

So I found that yes I'm very capable of offering customer support to people but that it was emotionally draining because you are personally involved in your products and the quality

and you want to provide the best customer support possible but you get a stinker on occasion and I'm such a softy it can ruin my whole week. I've had people bring me to tears.

So now I have my VA's handle those for me and I'm like don't even send them to me, if you get a stinker don't send it to me I don't want to know. You can summarize it and ask me the question or let me know that someone is unhappy with something but just tell me in your words don't copy and paste it for me.

**Amelia Brazell:** Take the emotion out of it and just give me the facts please.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. If it's something I need to fix or know please tell me but tell me in your words because they love me and I know they will be nice.

**Amelia Brazell:** And it's nice to have that cushion between you and people that are really angry because you do have to keep going and those emotional charges can just deplete you so quickly.

**Nicole Dean:** Oh they can. That was one of the things that really helped my business because I stopped questioning everything and was able to have that focus where I didn't feel like I was running off train to look up things or deal with things and being distracted or upset or confused or am I good enough or am I smart enough or am I doing the right thing here? I could just stay the course, follow what I was supposed to be doing and get it done. And that's really helped a lot too.

**Amelia Brazell:** It sounds like it. And I think all of us learn that at some point that we just have to; there are certain things we should and should not do just stay the course. Very good advice.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. A lot of people don't want to outsource their customer service because they don't know if people are going to do it well. And I always use the example of Bill Gates – does Bill Gates sit and answer the telephone all day? No of course not. That would be ridiculous.

**Amelia Brazell:** Another question. Sounds like you do an enormous amount of outsourcing and I know that you do. How do you keep it from taking all of your time?

**Nicole Dean:** Well I have two project managers right now that are acting as a buffer between me and the majority of my people. And this makes it sound like it's this big conglomeration but it really isn't. What I do is with like Easy PLR, is one of my websites so I have writers and then I have my project manager for my site. She handles everything. She sends out the request to the writers and I've got regular writers that I've worked with for

years too. So we know what their skills are for each person, she gets them back she edits them personally loads them to the site puts them in the shopping cart and then loads it up in a program we use called Basecamp. When it's in there I get notified and then I can send out a mailing to my Easy PLR notification list about the pack that was just loaded so that they can know that we have a new one. So all I really deal with is the mailing. And I like to do that because I'm doing some JV's on the side so I like to load it up into the autoresponder myself.

And then with one of my other sites, [www.showmomthemoney.com](http://www.showmomthemoney.com) which was my first site I have a site manager for that too who handles the customer support and works with all of my columnists and goes out to find additional experts that would like to write for the site, handles any issues that come up and works directly with my husband on that one. He edits the templates and things and I don't touch any of that because it's so customized.

That really helps me a lot. And like I mentioned Basecamp is a fantastic program because it's a collaboration program but it's also a project management program and so I can see what everybody is working on at one time. And different people have access to different projects in there. It helps keep me organized.

As far as not letting it take up a large portion of my day, if I do find that I'm spending time interacting with one person then that's an issue and I need to resolve that and either move that person under somebody else or I need to provide some training and put it online and say go watch this. And actually the training is very important too because as you grow if you lose somebody you want to be able to point your new person to the training and not have to do it yourself.

**Amelia Brazell:** Exactly.

**Nicole Dean:** It's constantly being modified based on the people because it is so fluid that I just keep tweaking things and seeing how they work and experimenting and making sure my people are happy.

One of the things that I really try to do is whenever I find somebody that's very talented and I want them on my team I ask them what they like to do rather than asking them what they are good at. If it's a ghost writer then I say what do you like to write about and then I try to find things for that person to write about on that topic or if it's a Virtual Assistant I say what do you enjoy most during the day, what do you look forward to and then I ask what doesn't get done in your business or for your clients, what tends to be put at the end of the list because then you find out that that's something they are either not comfortable with or that they're not good at so you can kind of adjust based on their answers there too.

**Amelia Brazell:** I call that the excel passion intersection, when people are really working on things that they love and they excel at. You can excel at a lot of things but you may not love it.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. And I want people to like working for me and that makes a much more positive interaction. So if I put something in Basecamp for somebody to do and it's not getting done then I'll connect with that person or I'll have my project manager connect with that person and say is this a skill you're not confident doing, is it a skill that you don't enjoy doing, is something going on, why is this not getting done? And that really helps put some more perspective on that, whether I need to move it to someone else, whether it's a confidence issue.

Like I have one writer right now who is very talented but she's not confident so I'm working with her on that to get her some more confidence because I think she's worth it and she'll be a great asset to my team once she stops questioning herself about whether she's good enough.

**Amelia Brazell:** It's part mother part mentor.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. Some people I really don't have the time to be a mentor to and it's do this, get it done let me know when it's done or the project manager when it's done. Other people you know they are going to become a huge part of your team, they are going to grow, they ask questions they don't just say yes, yes, yes and do things exactly how you ask they actually come back and go ok I'll do that but what about this? And people like that I'm just like oh my god I love you. I absolutely love you.

**Amelia Brazell:** I know when I find somebody that actually comes to me and they are thinking and thinking two steps ahead of me I want to just hang on to them for dear life because they will make your business expand so rapidly.

**Nicole Dean:** Exactly. And I always say that people, I hire people that are going to make me look better than I am. Because isn't that why we do it?

**Amelia Brazell:** That's why you do it. And if you hire people that know more about what they are doing than you do; they will make you look brilliant.

Nicole there was another question that came up I thought was pretty interesting that I think we should touch on and that is what's the best tactic to take to convince my clients they should outsource to me? And because you do both sides of the equation I thought you are the perfect person to answer that.

**Nicole Dean:** Well I'm not sure the person's skills set asking that question but I would say to them to really revisit your website and to make sure that it is portraying you as the expert that you are or the skilled person that you are. Also make sure that are specializing in one area because if you're specializing in one skill you are going to be even better at it, you are going to be quick, you are going to be good, you are going to get known for that as opposed to trying to be everything to everybody where you just kind of fade off and don't stand out.

So I would say to look at your website, make sure it's portraying you as somebody that I'd want to hire and make it easy for me to hire you. Because a lot of contractors you go to their website you don't quite understand what they do, how much they charge, what their skills are or how to contact them. And usually what I'd recommend too is to have someone sit down at your computer and look at your website and navigate it while you are watching them because that gives you a really great perspective of what the average person sees because you only have about 8 seconds of someone's time before they're going to leave your website.

I have my mom come in a lot if I have a new website. I'll have her sit down and I'll say just talk out loud while you are going around and I'll watch where her eyes are and where her mouse is going and if it hesitates I know she is confused and I need to clear something up on there.

So I would definitely recommend that for any contractor.

**Amelia Brazell:** Let's see. Nicole would you give us the website that you use, your personal website that would be a good example of that for people to go and look at when they listen to this recording or they are on the call?

**Nicole Dean:** As far as the contractor website?

**Amelia Brazell:** Yeah one that would really show that you are the expert, what you're specializing in, how much things cost, that kind of thing. Do you have a website like that? Yours personally?

**Nicole Dean:** I do but I think it says across the top not accepting clients at this time but you can go look at it anyway.

**Amelia Brazell:** I'm just thinking for a good example for people because if they are using this to help them build a business they might want to model somebody.

**Nicole Dean:** Oh certainly.

**Amelia Brazell:** Ok.

**Nicole Dean:** They could also go to [www.shelancers.com/find](http://www.shelancers.com/find) and look at the freelancers there and that would definitely help because there are a lot of people over there that have put time into their website. See what you like and don't like about them and tweak accordingly.

But yes mine is [www.affiliatesuccesscoach.com](http://www.affiliatesuccesscoach.com)

**Amelia Brazell:** [www.affiliatesuccesscoach.com](http://www.affiliatesuccesscoach.com)

**Nicole Dean:** Yes.

**Amelia Brazell:** I will put that in our notes so people can just get to know more about you.

**Nicole Dean:** And at [Shelancers](http://Shelancers) which is my site that helps the freelancers to get more clients, I do teach specialization but I also have a course there about how to package, how to offer packages because people get to websites like that and they can't come up with what they want and they get confused easily and then they go oh I'll go back there later I don't know what I want. But if you offer packages that say I will do exactly this and take it from beginning to end of whatever it is that you do it really makes it a lot easier to say yes.

And I also highly recommend retainers. I teach how to do this, how to upsell and do retainers and things. For instance if you are a ghostwriter then offer a package on your site that says I will write 5 articles per month, submit them here and here, also add them to your blog and your affiliate center for this much per month. Make it just boom this is what I'll do instead of I charge this much per article and then the person has to go oh I don't know what I want. And even if you say I'll even come up with a topic based on keywords then boom sold! Make it easy for people to outsource to you and take a project from beginning to end and have them paying you automatically every month so you don't have to worry about billing.

That's the way to do it.

**Amelia Brazell:** Perfect. Good advice. And you did mention a site that I have used, [shelancers.com](http://shelancers.com).

And there were a number of questions about where to find good people and what are the organizations that are reputable?

And I certainly think you covered that in the last question that [Shelancers](http://Shelancers) is just a terrific place to find people and I find they have higher quality people there than some of the other

sites that are out on the web. But there are some other good ones I just like that one the best myself. And it's a she.

**Nicole Dean:** It also depends on what kind of position you are looking for. If you are looking for someone that is going to help you get past a roadblock then yes go to [www.shelancers.com/find](http://www.shelancers.com/find) where you can find a Shelancer or the Warrior Forum where you can hire people to do things there too. But you just need someone to do data entry or help with customer support then you can local, put a classified ad in your newspaper, go to the local college, go online to forums, there are so many people out of work right now that you can get help with a lot of that stuff very affordably. There are moms that would kill for \$10 an hour right now so just start networking, asking around and you'll find somebody pretty quickly.

**Amelia Brazell:** I have found the same situation. Ok I have a couple more questions before we wrap up because then we'll be getting close to the end of an hour. If you've got a few extra minutes we can touch on those and the first is you've mentioned a number of times your outsourcing program that you teach and it's a yearlong program. Tell us a little bit about that, give us a synopsis so that we can actually get people to go and look at it and see if it would work for them. I certainly have found some success with it.

**Nicole Dean:** Oh I'm so glad. The course is a year-long program to help people to get the help that they need to grow their business, either to start their business or to grow their business. We discussed this a little bit before we started the call that I ran into an ethical issue immediately after I started teaching the course and that's that I didn't feel it was responsible of me to teach how to outsource a task unless I first taught what that task was and the benefits of it.

So for instance, article marketing. When we get into the section of the course about article marketing so many people waste tons of money on article marketing that isn't being done correctly and effectively. So in the course we actually go over how to do article marketing effectively from the title through the resource box and then how to get extra mileage from your articles before I go over how to outsource it.

And the reason why that is so important is because if you just go to Elance and say I want to hire you to write 20 articles for me cheap and you get them back they may not be effective at all and you may have just wasted your money.

So I was saying to Amelia that a few of my friends have threatened to slap me for teaching an entire internet marketing course in a year for such a cheap price but in essence that's what it has turned into. We are going through everything from Twitter to copywriting to

graphics and even housekeeping, how to outsource your housekeeping, how to hire an intern and do partnerships. We are getting into all kinds of stuff in this course. I definitely bit off more than I had planned to with it but I think it's becoming quite a valuable resource.

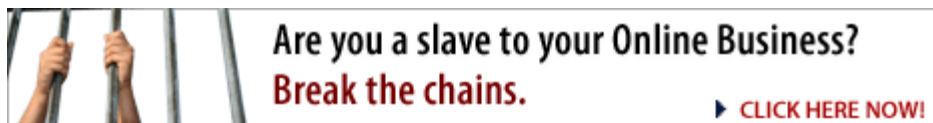
**Amelia Brazell:** It is incredibly comprehensive.

**Nicole Dean:** Well good I'm glad you think so. I definitely drained my brain on several occasions on those pages.

**Amelia Brazell:** And we hope you continue to do that. And then one final question that I would like to ask you Nicole and that is: Knowing what you know today, what would you have done differently to grow your business? Say 9 years ago when you started your business if you knew everything you know today what would you have done differently to grow faster?

**Nicole Dean:** Oh that's a fantastic question and not on the list. So let's see. I would have focused more on one topic rather than spreading my net so wide. I would have focused more in one area. When I started off I have recipe websites and mom websites and exercise websites and I have a hundred websites and they are across the board and yes they all make money but it's just a tremendous amount of things to maintain and keep track of. So I recommend getting success in one area before you branch off into others.

I also would have partnered sooner or rather JV'd sooner and come out with a product. I would have built more e-courses initially rather than trying to do a newsletter. E-courses are fantastic because they run themselves which is also why I sell them because I recognize the great benefit and I was kicking myself for not figuring it out sooner but e-courses are phenomenal. And then instead of sending out a weekly newsletter you just add it to the end of your e-course.



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