

Prologue

Everything I learned about business started over a lap dance. Allow me to clarify. My entry into the world of business, began behind closed doors of America's greatest strip clubs. My first, real business insights, were gained over many nights, during countless hours, walking the floor of adult clubs, orchestrating shenanigans in black-light, dark, corners of champagne rooms, and dancing in dozens of strip clubs throughout the United States. Those insights became a foundation from which I've built a twenty year sales and marketing business career.

I entered the world of adult entertainment desperate for financial riches; an adolescent hungry for community, with a poor sense of self, and a belief that money was the panacea for all my life's ailments. A free spirit and a ball of energy, hiding behind crystal blue eyes and a contagious smile was emptiness desperate for fulfillment and aching pain that knew no release. I was a lost soul.

I began dancing as a stripper to pay my college tuition, and was quickly sucked into a lifestyle fueled by fast cash and greed. Before long, my sights were set on fame. I dropped out of NC State University, stuffed my worldly possessions, of mostly clothes and CDs, into cardboard boxes, and hauled them off to an 8x10 storage unit. What didn't fit in my storage unit was listed on online via Craigslist for sale. I hitched my future to fate and hoped for the best. It was time to hit the road. I was barely eighteen.

I took off on tour. Hitting the Adult Circuit with my first mentor and closest friend, one of North America's most published centerfolds. Who mind you, was a woman I barely knew. Yet, she took me under her wing. A blonde bombshell and a force of nature, my new friend was known as a money making machine. She built one of the largest loyal followings and brands, within the adult industry at that time. A feat of extreme magnitude, given the thousands of scarlet's who bare it all, on adult club stages and magazine pages during any given year. She wasn't a porn star with her own video

series, or a Playmate with a reality show - like the Bunnys' of today. A dancer and a business woman, at the pinnacle of her career she was recognized with the adult industry's highest honors - Exotic Dancer's Lifetime Achievement Award and induction into the Exotic Dancer Hall of Fame. She taught me the art of building and monetizing a personal brand, and most importantly about always honoring myself.

In seeking self-sufficiency through financial riches, I found far more than I could have ever dreamed. Like a deep level of interpersonal richness, including a profound shift in my ability to communicate, connect with others, and ultimately how a deep level of self-love and respect, are among our most powerful internal forces. Through the performance art, once known as burlesque, and under the mentorship of my new friend, I learned to build a business around my role as a Feature Entertainer. The insights and learnings I amassed became the foundation for my traditional business career as a sales and marketing executive, and ultimately who I am in life today.

My experience as an adult entertainer created crucial building blocks in my foundation for all my life's successes. Those who cross my path today, encounter a successful business woman living a life rich in interpersonal relationships with a deep sense of belonging, self, and purpose. A respected business contemporary, amateur triathlete with no signs of the depraved lifestyle so commonly linked to adult entertainment workers. Within the complex dynamics of life as an adult entertainer, I found a Petri dish of sorts, a testing ground for developing a keen business acumen grounded in rich communication skills. Those learnings grew into skills that seamlessly translated into a multitude of business disciplines, as well as personal life fulfillment. I credit my time as an exotic dancer, and the world of adult entertainment as paramount to the levels of success I have been able to achieve in my life.

Professionally, I've built a sales and marketing career spanning top tier global brands in hospitality, big data and digital marketing, out-of-home media (the outdoor advertising industry), and technology outsourcing. Seven of the most recent years have

been spent in home-based, telecommuting job roles. Roles, where I've enjoyed the freedom to work from home, or anywhere else in the globe, provided I'm accessible by phone and internet. All while safeguarding my secret past of the Adult World I left behind.

After all, Adult Entertainment has a seedy reputation; one that carries stereotypes of the worst kind. A world fraught full of danger, with a dark side capable of sucking away even the purest of souls, many enter - few escape. Sex, drugs, and a rock and roll lifestyle to the extreme – I lived it, loved it, and am grateful to have escaped unscathed.

The insights I gained within the world of Adult Entertainment, have never had more relevant application to the more traditional business world than they do today.

Whether you work at a publicly traded conglomerate trying to beat Wall Street's quarterly estimates, or are an artist taking your first step toward building a business around your passions, everyone is faced with business dynamics evolving at unprecedented speeds. Coming out of the worst financial crisis the United States has known since the Great Depression only compounds the sense of urgency workers and business owners feel to expedite their own success.

New uncharted territory of customer connectedness, content availability, and new media channels constantly emerge. The proliferation of social media has blurred once black and white boundaries of business to consumer communication, creating an entire spectrum of gray area for businesses and business owners to navigate. Consumers, as a result, are inundated with information while businesses struggle to break through the clutter. The bottom line for all of us is that the tried and true practices of approaching business (and within that our own careers) are no longer enough.

Newbies to the business world and veteran rainmakers alike, we all must challenge ourselves to adapt new practices to keep pace with the rate at which business is evolving. I believe in the eternal student mentality. This means, a lifelong consumption of knowledge building. I also believe that those who build a solid foundation across multiple

business disciplines will be better suited to quickly adapt to change, and ultimately more successful in their business pursuits.

We've never experienced a time when it has been easier for enterprising individuals to tap into their entrepreneurial spirit to start their own business. We've seen an explosion in the "me"-entrepreneur space with everyone from blogging new mommies who get book deals to grannies with Etsy shops. Look at all proliferation of Ted Talk speakers whose ideas worth spreading have exploded with upward of twenty-million plus views each, like Brene Brown, Simon Sinek, and Ken Robinson.

The number of people living the dream of turning their passions into purpose driven careers, and making millions in the process, has never been more prolific. Within that, are millions of people just getting started in their career journeys. People reentering the workforce after hiatus, people changing careers, starting their first business, and some, like me, tapping into life-long passions as access to building an intrinsically, fulfilling career. (This book, is part of my process.)

As someone who started my career as a stripper, and later went on to experience four job lay-offs in corporate America over the course of seven years, I have learned the power of self-reinvention. I no longer feel the need to hide my past, but rather hope my stories can inspire others in their own personal-career-business journeys.

I'm deeply grateful for my time as an entertainer, and to have broken through a barrier to a world, where I know anything I want for my life is possible through hard work and perseverance.

My heart breaks for anyone who stays trapped in their j-o-b by the fear of giving up immediate cash for long term career gain because I've experienced the reward of moving through that fear in my own life. Money is a trap. One, I believe that exists for everybody in different forms, and is prevalent for workers spanning industries well beyond adult entertainment. It's especially pervasive, in my hometown of Las Vegas, a hospitality driven town where the ratio of hourly employees who rely on tips to salaried

managers is upward of twenty to one. Think valet parking attendants, restaurant and cocktail servers, concierges, night club hosts, and even hair dressers.

For anyone working a job for a paycheck or the tips, but who feels the yearning for something more, I offer a glimpse into my experience of leveraging the skills I learned as a dancer into building a professional career that has now spanned multiple industries.

Adult entertainment was one hell of a training ground to start my business career. If you have the courage to take a close look at business basics through the eyes of a former entertainer, you just may be surprised by what you find. You'll learn the art of seduction as a business practice along with the business basics, the most successful adult entertainers tap into intuitively across sales and marketing. These easy to implement fundamentals will help you elevate your business game and transform your networking and relationship building skills, perhaps, even your career.