FAQ MARKETING LOGIC

Steven Alvey Interview



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Steven Alvey Interview

Editor:

So, hello and welcome. This time we're speaking to someone who is rapidly becoming known as a bit of a game changer in the world of private label rights. In fact, the work he's been doing has already brought him to the attention of two heavyweights of the business world, the legendary Brian Tracy, and also Kevin Harrington, a former shark on US TV's Shark Tank. So this time it's a pleasure to welcome Steven Alvey. Hello, Steven.

Steven Alvey:

Hey, man. Thanks for having me.

Editor:

Hey, no problem. Now before we dig in to how you're shaking up the world of private label rights, perhaps we could start by finding out just a bit more about you and your background.

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, there's nothing super special or particularly interesting about my background. I was an army brat, so I grew up mostly overseas, in Europe. I graduated high school and followed in my father's footsteps. Did some time in the military, about 11 years and then punched out of that job and started the whole internet marketing thing. I live in the Midwest, married, got seven beautiful, crazy children. Live on a small acreage, and we tend to chickens, and hang around, and enjoy the good life for the most part out here. That's about all there is to me.

Editor:

Seven children though. I mean, how do you get anything else done when you've got seven children to take care of?

Steven Alvey:

It's that some miracle? That's what it is.

Editor:

It sounds like it. So you mentioned the military, 11 years you say in the military?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, 11 years active duty. And then until a little less than a year ago actually, I was also in the reserves. So about four years in the reserves.

Editor:

Well firstly, thank you for your service. And secondly, that's quite a career change, going from being in the military to having an online career. How did that change come about?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. Yeah, that's funny because I actually remember the exact minute that it happened. I was on, I guess you could call it a guard shift late at night at the squadron. I was at off at Air Force Base at the time. And my wife and I had recently been doing some dreaming, the dream home, the dream acreage, the dream lifestyle, all that good stuff where, you spend a week addicted to Zillow or realtor.com and just looking at houses that are way, way outside of your means. And so I was sitting there on that night shift and I realised, if I want to do this someday. And I really wanted to, I wanted it to have, I don't care too much about the house, itself. But I wanted a good old plot of land and be able to raise my kids with livestock and the whole hobby farm kind of thing. I really wanted that. Then I realised, if I'm going to do that, I need more income. I need more money.

And the enlisted Air Force salary what was not going to cut it. So initially it just started off as an idea of how to augment my income,

and I did that fateful thing, which a lot of people in this industry have in common. I typed in those words, how to make money online. I remember sitting there at that desk and I typed that in, and that was kind of like going down the rabbit hole. It just took me on a journey of learning about just this whole idea of being able to have an internet marketing, or a laptop lifestyle type of business, and all the freedom associated with that. And the potential for making a pretty sizable income from it. And so I tinkered with that for a few years, while I was still serving active duty, sort of on the side, with not too much success. But that's how it all came about. There was something in life that I wanted and I knew I would need more money. And then that's how I got into the internet marketing game.

Editor:

And what kind of timeframe are we looking at? So you typed into Google, how to make money online. When you started that, how long did it take you before you actually decided, no, this is for me, this is what I want to do full-time.

Steven Alvey:

That was maybe a year and a half before I decided I wanted to do it full-time. And of course, in the military you have enlistments, so I wasn't able to just quit per software. But my next enlistment end date was going to be March of 2016. And that was the big date. I decided in advance, you know what? I'm not going to do it. It's very tempting.

In the military, there's this whole assumption that once you get past the 10 year mark, you might as well stay till retirement because you get the pension and all that good stuff. It's a very tempting deal. But I said to my wife, "I'm not going to do it." I'm going to say no and I'm going to jump ship at year 11, when my enlistment ends. I'm not going to re-up and I'm going to do this internet marketing thing full-time. And it was pretty scary, but God's been good to us. And then we pulled it off, by golly.

Editor:

Well, I was going to say, I mean, to be in the military, you have to be brave to do that in the first place. But also then, to walk away from the military shows another side completely of bravery. Were your family worried about you making such a big gear shift?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. Yeah, big time. The kids were not old enough at that point to know what the heck was going on. But yeah, my wife was very scared of it. And I was too, honestly. We were both very anxious about it. It was bittersweet because on the one hand, we both knew what we wanted in life, and at the same time, the risk associated with leaving a steady job and starting on the entrepreneurial journey, goodness, it's incredibly risky. It's huge. And so yeah, we were both scared, excited at the same time, but it was definitely scary times. I said I have seven kids, but at the time we had the four kids and we just found out we had a fifth on the way. So the pressure was on failure was not an option.

Editor:

Absolutely. Do you think that's actually spurred you on though, because of that, because as you say, you have got the big family that you need to take care of?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. Yeah, I think that's correct. I think having my feet to the fire and failure quite literally not being an option is probably the only reason I made it. I think if I had something to fall back on, I would have gotten distracted. I would've gotten lazy. I would have procrastinated and it never would've gotten done. And those are all things that I struggle with in general, anyway. But if I had had something to fall back on, I don't know that we would have made this happen.

Editor:

It's quite an inspirational story that you have so far. I mean, in terms of working online, what first attracted you to that, Steven? And also, what was the first thing you did in order to take that massive step forward?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. So the main attractive thing to me was the lifestyle, the lifestyle. The ability to be able to manage my own time, not to have a boss, not have to wake up at a specific time because I'm required to. I'm kind of a softie, I'm kind of a family guy. I like hanging out with the wife and kids and the idea of being able to carve out my own day and decide just on a whim how I'm going to spend my time and be able to have that extra time with the family was very, very attractive. And then of course, admittedly, there's the money side. It's a very lucrative place to be. And that was certainly a big part of it. But yeah, the biggest thing was the time freedom. That was the most attractive thing about it.

Editor:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), and in terms of the first thing that you did, obviously you typed into Google, how to make money online. What were the first steps that you took towards making this your full-time job?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, so after a whole bunch of dabbling and falling victim to shiny object syndrome, and reading this book ,and watching that course, and the standard story that everybody in the IAM space is pretty familiar with, when I finally left active duty, and I had to make this happen. The thing that I did was I joined a programme by a guy named John Thornhill, where basically the whole point of the programme is that it's a coaching programme on paper, but the most important part of it is that at the end of the coaching period, he and the programme will leverage their assets, namely their email list and their traffic, to help you have a profitable launch.

And that was in and of itself, that was a very scary thing, as is often the case, the solutions that work best are the high ticket ones, and that was high ticket. And we had no money, so I didn't even tell my wife about that investment. But that's what I pulled the trigger on. And I worked hard at it for about six months. Also, just to sort of bridge the gap between that and my first launch, I did some freelancing. Some explainer videos, sales videos, courseware, that sort of thing. So that was sort of the first step into the successful part of the entrepreneurial journey.

Editor:

Great and was that an instant success for you, Steven? Or did you have hustle and work hard to establish yourself?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, it was a lot of working hard, but it did go well, it went well. I'm one of the fortunate ones, whose first product launch had some pretty solid numbers. It wasn't life changing or anything, but I want to say on our first launch, we did probably around 25 grand and most importantly, we built a customer list of 500 people or so. So that went quite well, but it's a payoff that I only arrived at after six months of hustling, which I think is always going to be the case.

Editor:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), and John does have a good reputation as well. So I think obviously you backed the right horse there, so to speak.

Steven Alvey:

Oh absolutely, absolutely.

Editor:

And just for context, Steven, which year did you start the business, the online business?

Steven Alvey:

So this would be 2016, just about four years ago.

Editor:

Wow, so relatively recently, and in that time, you've established yourself now as someone who perhaps has really upped the game and raised the bar when it comes to private label rights. Can I just ask, was that where you started? Did you start in private label rights, or is that something that you've kind of moved into over the course of that timeframe?

Steven Alvey:

No, we actually started with a software solution. We had a lead generation product and that was pretty popular, but it was also kind of a headache. Supporting software can be kind of a headache. How I got into to PLR, it's funny because I did not intend to, it was kind of an accident. It was one of those situations where the market kind of tells you what they want. And so I knew PLR was an attractive offer. I knew people liked it. I loved it. I had used it myself quite a bit, but I had a PLR launch on the schedule between my first launch and my third launch. And I was expecting my third launch to be just this incredibly successful thing. And the PLR launch was only meant as sort of a, what's the word? A stop-gap, just to bridge the gap, just to make sure we can pay the bills between the first one and the second one. I was not expecting anything to come of it.

And it ended up being just this astronomical, huge success, way, way more successful than my thought. The conversion rates on the front end were phenomenal. The conversion rates on the upsells were phenomenal. And then people were coming out and saying, this is one of the best funnels they'd ever seen. Randy Smith actually was incredibly excited about how well it was going. And so you step back, you were planning on going in one direction, but the market told you something completely different. So you step back, and you scratch your head, and you rub your chin a little bit, and you just sort of

assess. Well, the market has literally told me that they like this and they want more of this. So what should I do? And the answer, in my case at least, was to continue down the PLR path and just keep cranking that stuff out. We're good at cranking it out. We make good stuff and the market loves it. So it's just one of those natural things.

Editor:

Oh yeah. I mean, the stuff itself, I mean, it looks great, the content itself is really solid. I mean, you've done some amazing work already and I'm sure right now, you're in a way, just getting started. I'm sure there's plenty more to come. For anybody who wonders though, Steven, why you would create such a great product, only to then give away the rights for others to be able to exploit that, instead of keeping those rights for yourself. Would you be able to just explain to me why you think that's a good thing?

Steven Alvey:

Well, there's a couple answers. The first answer that comes to mind, and this will sound shallow, but the first answer is money. It's lucrative because the market loves it and people love it. There's a whole lot of perceived value and real value there. And so it's a great industry to be in. It's what I call it, it has vertical appeal, okay? Meaning it's not something that only has appeal to one of the rungs of the industry. For example, if I come out with a course or a piece of software on, let's say collecting opt-ins on a WordPress page, that's going to appeal to newbies mostly. Maybe people one rung up the ladder from there. But it's not going to appeal to the rest of the industry per software, because they're all well beyond that, right?

You compare that to a private label solution. Everybody always wants PLR, everybody. The newbies, the veterans, the rock stars, everybody loves PLR, and they use it all the time. They use it as bonuses, they use it as lead magnets, they use it for content repurposing and all sorts of stuff like that. So the fact that it has vertical appeal all across the market, from top to bottom, makes it a

very attractive thing to launch. And then there's other aspects to it as well, as far as the relationship with the customer. There's nothing wrong with an info product or an e-learning or an e-teaching, I should say, relationship. That's great, and that probably defines most of the info product space.

But there's something interesting and appealing to me about a relationship in which what I'm providing to people is not knowledge, not, "Hey, go click here and then do this and this is how you do that." But rather, an asset that they can take and incorporate into their business and their operations. There's a difference in the relationship that you have with the customer, there's difference in the type of customers. Those customers tend to be a little bit more inclined towards being action-oriented people because they've recognised the need to acquire an asset and go take action and use it versus the entry-level folks, who are just interested in the knowledge. And like I said, there's nothing wrong with that by any means. It's just, it's a different type of relationship, a different type of customer. And it's one that appeals to me quite a bit more.

Editor:

I think one of the key things that you mentioned there, Steven, as well is the fact that you've opened up a much wider market. You're absolutely right that you've identified that. That here's a product now because it comes with PLR rights that actually, it's more attractive to the entire marketplace instead of just to a small segment of that market. So I'm not surprised you've decided that this is the way forward. Now at the time that we're having this conversation, you've just finished quite a big launch. Would you say that's your biggest launch yet?

Steven Alvey:

Well, it's definitely in the top three or four, yeah.

Editor:

Great, and could you just maybe talk us through the process? Because I guess there's a lot more to this than actually meets the eye.

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. The process of a launch, it's huge. It's a mammoth of a task. Obviously you've got product creation, the actual creation of the product in question, which may or may not involve a whole bunch of people, when people first get started, oftentimes they'll be making the entire things by themselves. That's how I did it my first time, I created everything myself. But it's good to have a team to help you with product creation, if possible. There's the actual customer facing, the public aspects of it. So your sales pages, right? The sales copy, there's coming up with a unique, or a novel marketing concept, right? A unique selling proposition, a unique mechanism, that sort of thing.

What are people going to see on your sales page and the first five seconds, for example, that's going to make them want to stay a little bit longer? Because they've seen sales page selling the same exact thing, probably a thousand times in the last month or so. So coming up with a good marketing angle, a need that you're fulfilling, something, preferably novel is certainly great. How you're going to express that in the sales copy is important, either yourself or again, a team member. And then you've got the backend, technological type stuff, like the member's area. Making sure everything's set up there, so that the customer has a smooth experience getting access to what they purchased. Determining how you're going to splinter the offer into a front end offer, and maybe some upsells.

Let's see, what else? Coordinating a backend webinar is huge. Having a backend offer, preferably something high ticket, and then the big thing, and this is what makes launches hardest to get into for newbies. The big thing is going to be the affiliate relationships. At least here in the IAM space, since most launches are affiliate driven in this particular space. Establishing relationships, and getting people essentially to drive traffic, and to recommend what you've put

together to their tribe. That's all the things that are included in putting together a product launch. Your first one might be a six month project. Even today, by the time I get to launch day, I end up wishing that I had taken six months to do it. But at a minimum, it's a good two months or so of work to get a product launch out there and on the market.

Editor:

And how many would you say that you manage to do per year?

Steven Alvey:

It seems like we average around two to three, two to three big public launches.

Editor:

Okay, okay, and that's quite a big commitment in terms of the time, effort, and energy that goes into them. But the rewards, as you say, are more than worth it.

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. Yeah, I'd say so. It's a great way to bring new customers into your tribe, grow your tribe a little bit. And also a great way to establish and maintain those affiliate relationships.

Editor:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), and your work hasn't gone a noticed either. As I mentioned earlier, you've been given some glowing testimonials by the likes of Brian Tracy and Kevin Harrington. That must make you so proud, Steven.

Steven Alvey:

I mean, it's definitely been a blast. It's been phenomenal, being able to hang out with them on a few separate occasions, and work with them. With Kevin Harrington, it was mostly centred around my story,

not so much in the PLR stuff, but specifically my story of leaving the military and starting a business and beating the odds, so to speak. And with Brian Tracy, there was more emphasis on copywriting. I was able to show off my copywriting chops a little bit with him in San Diego, as well as learn some just phenomenal things from him. So yeah, hanging out with those guys, collaborating with them. And most importantly, learning from them has been just a fantastic experience.

Editor:

I was going to say, are they kind of your mentors now, would you say?

Steven Alvey:

Not on the day-to-day, I've got other mentors in the IAM space, who work with me on the specifics of the internet marketing space and the PLR space, and so on, and so forth. But certainly in the broad entrepreneurial journey sense, they've been just great people to learn from, and certainly sources of inspiration.

Editor:

Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah, absolutely. And apart from those guys, who else would you list in your list of heroes?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, so my list of heroes, really right now, the big thing that I'm focused on about aspiring towards, as far as becoming better, whether it's in business or personal life, is work output, and diligence. And so my heroes for last couple of years have been a guy named Louis Martin, and a guy named Garcia Moreno, both of whom were alive in the 1800s. And both of whom were just tanks, just absolute machines, as far as being focused on work, having a good work-life balance, being diligent, disciplined. And yeah, those are probably my top two heroes right now, as I go through the process

of trying to become a better, a more disciplined, and more diligent person.

Editor:

Sure and how do you do that, Steven? Because I guess as you say, the work-life balance, it's so important, particularly when you've got seven children to take care of. Is that like a daily challenge or is it something that you've got into a groove with now?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, there's definitely a science behind it. It can be pretty difficult. And I'll tell you, for the first two years it was terrible. It was absolutely terrible. For the first two years, I did not do a good job of adapting to the fact that I no longer had a boss to be accountable to. And so life became on the one hand, fun. It's fun to be able to wake up one day and say, "All right, we're going to the zoo, everybody get dressed." But at the same time, it takes its toll. There was a lot of stress, a lot of chaos, a lot of hectic days and all-nighters, and stuff in those first couple of years, just trying to get that basic life routine under control.

So yeah, we've got things that we do now that ensure that we have a relatively orderly day every day. I've got little rules that prevent me from focusing on work during family time. I've got a couple of assistants, whose jobs are literally just to keep me on track and focused on work and to turn off my work brain at the end of the day. So yeah, it takes a lot of work if you're not used to it. There's other people who come into the IAM space and they were previously freelancers, or they were previously contractors. And I've even encountered some young people, who this is like their first thing in life.

So for them, it's not as big of a change. But if you're like me and your natural inclinations are kind of towards laziness and the only reason that, that was not a characteristic that you had for the last 15 years was because you were in the military and it wasn't an option.

And you had a boss, and you had subordinates, and all that good stuff. And suddenly all that disappears, and you're just your own man with no boss sitting at home. It's totally worth it, but it's something that you got to give careful consideration to, and prepare yourself for, to make sure that you adapt to it appropriately.

Editor:

So you would say maybe that discipline is key in order to be able to get stuff done.

Steven Alvey:

Absolutely, yeah. Discipline and if discipline is something that you lack, that means go outside of yourself and set up an infrastructure, set up mechanisms that force you to live a disciplined life. It's kind of like, I don't know if it was James Madison, or one of the founding fathers when they were coming up with the constitution and they were arguing about the different forms of government and stuff. There was big emphasis on vectors, vectors. How can you modify behaviour by creating these mechanisms that will cause someone to act a certain way and to not act another way?

And there's this phrase, "To the vectors, go the spoils." And so if discipline is something that you lack, or even if it's not something that you lack, if you can come up with mechanisms that sort of force you to do the right thing every day, that's particularly helpful. I'll give you an example, just because that probably sounds very abstract. I have a hard time not hitting the snooze button in the morning, right? So what I've done is I have taken my cell phone, my alarm, and I have placed it in a room next to my bedroom, which has a glass door joining the two rooms, right up against the glass.

But I have to go out of that room and into the other room in order to turn off my alarm. And that sounds silly. In fact, it even sounds a little bit sad and pathetic that I would need to do that. But that's what I needed to set up in order to vector myself, in order to make sure that, that portion of my day is orderly. I get up, I get out of bed,

turn off the alarm and I start my day. And I could list plenty of other examples, but that's something that people should really think about and plan for before they take the big plunge, the entrepreneurial plunge, quit their day job and that sort of thing. And if they do a good job of planning for that, they'll have a lot of success, I think.

Editor:

Yeah, absolutely and it takes what it takes, as you say. To put the phone, the alarm next to a glass door, so you have to get up out of bed to stop it from vibrating and making noise. I totally get that, totally understand it. Steven, who's your biggest motivation, would you say, or what is your biggest motivation perhaps?

Steven Alvey:

It's just the family. I know that sounds simple and probably cliche, but it all comes down to the wife and kids. Being able to maintain a great lifestyle. The most important aspect of it isn't so much the stuff or material, but the most important aspect of it is the time, the memories. I want my kids to not only grow up comfortably, financially speaking, but I want them to grow up with great memories of awesome quality time that we spent together and that sort of thing. That's sort of been the big driving factor for the last several years.

Editor:

Yeah, makes total sense. And what's next for you? I mean, is there something that you're already working on, or something that you'd like to do?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, business-wise, we've got a few ideas. What I try to do is I try to come up with a new angle every time, whether it's for PLR or any other product that we launch, something that isn't currently being offered, or has not been emphasised by the market already. And so we've got a bunch of those, but the biggest thing coming up, the

biggest out of the ordinary thing coming up is actually a hiring decision.

I've been in talks for the last couple months with a potential general manager to come on board and basically take over most of the workload associated with product launching, so that I can sort of step away and work on a new aspect of the business. And if that were to happen, and I think it will, in January, that would be probably the biggest milestone in my business after four years. It would be the most transformative thing that we've done since starting. And so that's the biggest thing on our radar right now.

Editor:

And I think in terms of business sense, it makes a lot of sense to do that kind of thing, because again, it means then you're working on the business and growing the business as opposed to being the boots on the ground, having to get the stuff done. So completely, completely understand why you want to take almost that step upstairs in your own business. Yeah, totally.

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. Yeah, it's a difficult thing to do. It's very hard emotionally, to let go of certain aspects of the business, the day-to-day stuff, the creative stuff, all that stuff. It's very difficult to let go and hand it off to someone else. But I remember one of the things I learned from John Maxwell was, and I don't have the exact quote, but basically what he says is, "If you can find someone who does what you do at least 80% as good as you do, then you should hand it off to them."

And that's because he knows that for most people, they want it done 100% as good. And if they can't find that they're liable to continue doing the grunt work and slaving away inside their business, instead of working on their business, until they retire. And you just, you can't have it. You can't wait for perfection. So if you can find someone who does it 80% as good as you, hand it off and move your attention elsewhere.

Editor:

Great advice, and delegate, and trust, I think is the key to being able to do that as well. So really good advice. Steven, thank you so much for your time. How can people find out more about you? How can we find out more about your products and you, yourself?

Steven Alvey:

Yeah. Yeah, people can head to stevenalvey.com to check out the business side of things. But I'm also happy to always just hook up with people on Facebook. They can just look me up on Facebook, Steven Alvey, just my first and last name and shoot me a message. Always happy to make new connections.

Editor:

Great stuff. So again, that's stevenalvey.com if you want to find out more about your product range, or just to kind of reach out in general.

Steven Alvey:

Yeah, yeah.

Editor:

Steven, thank you so much for your time today. It's been absolutely wonderful chatting with you, really appreciate it.

Steven Alvey:

Hey, great talking to you. Thanks so much.

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